

# Youth band competes in South Wales

After winning the Annual Greater Gwent Youth Brass Band Festival in 2006, the Great Western Youth Band travelled down to South Wales for the contest in 2007 in which the entry was stronger than ever and was adjudicated by world famous Euphonium soloist Steven Mead.

The Gwent Music Festival has become such a success over the last 30 years, that it attracts bands competing in different sections from Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Wales and Cornwall.

This year the contest was won by Camborne Youth from Cornwall who visited South Wales for this competition for the first time this year.

The Great Western Youth Band competed with a varied programme including an arrangement of Thine is the Glory, Victory from Cry of the Celts, a Trombone solo played by Richard Overton called Berceuse de Jocelyn, followed by Swing Low and Kalinka.

The band endured a long delay before performing which, was spent by some, listening to other bands performing. Players from the Youth Band also admired the uniforms worn by some of the other bands. This was especially interesting as the committee are currently reviewing the uniform and investigating the best design for a new one for the near future.

As with most bands in the contest, the band played the maximum number of adults allowed, to boost the sound.

Steven Mead commented on the full toned opening, excellent percussion in Cry of the Celts and effective



performance of Swing Low. He also noted that he enjoyed the exciting piece, Kalinka. The comments can be seen in full on the GWYB website and the positives and negatives have been taken on board by the band.

The adjudicator's comments also mentioned that it was a shame that Kalinka went slightly off the rails near the end.

This was due to a number of factors, but the very dead acoustic appeared to affect everyone in a negative way. Although this was the same for all performers in the contest, it was a completely contrasting acoustic to the acoustic that the band currently rehearses in.

This made it hard for the players to hear each other and in particular, their own sound seemed very dominant in what they heard.

Before the section 1 results, Steven Mead also impressed the large audience at the end of the day with some unaccompanied virtuosic playing on the euphonium which left everyone mesmerized!

The band is now trying to learn from the experience and find ways in which they can improve their performances and contest results in the future.