or a week, they labored to prove to the drywall industry, the world and especially the judges that they were the best. For days, these skilled carpenters and painting apprentices revelled in the world of competition . . . where the best usually come out on top and the losers hang their heads for the long journey home.

There was little head-hanging, however, after the 7th Annual International Drywall Contest held in Denver, Colorado in late October. In fact, everyone from management to labor lost little in the latest renewal of the contest.

Participants this year were drawn from all over the U.S. and Canada, a far cry from the contest’s 1973 beginnings as the First Annual Western Regional. In the beginning, Oregon challenged California to a little friendly competition and the two teams got together at San Francisco’s Union Square Hyatt Regency to settle the issue.

Criteria for Participation
Each participating member state or province must select their contestant representative from completing apprenticeship or training classes. Once the representatives have been selected, their names and entrance fees are submitted to the International Drywall Contest Committee for review and eligibility certification.

Scholarships Available
AWCI, through its Apprenticeship Coordinating Committee and Board of Directors authorized the necessary funds for scholarships for young people from states that had never participated in the contest previously. These scholarships, in all probability, will be available next year, along with ten additional new scholarships already pledged by the National Joint...
Painting, Decorating an Drywall Apprenticeship and Training Committee. Each member state or province is now welcome to take advantage of this scholarship opportunity.

The Contest

Each contestant’s work is evaluated in terms of quality and quantity. Workmanship tells, as quality cannot be sacrificed to quantity.

Contestants are rated on their ability to perform the work processes required for the project. Skills displayed in the use of tools and the final quality of the finished product are major judging criteria.

This seventh renewal of the contest opened at 7 a.m. in Denver’s Northglen Shopping Center, with the installers poised to follow an intricate set of plans and specifications. Structures used in the contest were eight-foot cubicles with openings for doors and windows, soffits, radius wall and an acoustical tile ceiling.

Installers were given the full Monday and until noon on Tuesday to complete their projects. Meanwhile, finishers were taking a written exam and were undergoing judging for their supplemental portions of the program, texturing and patching. Tuesday afternoon, the finishers were at work on the finished modules, while the installers were returned to the training center for their written examinations.

Wednesday found the installers back at the training center for supplemental judging on power tools, lasers, and welding. The finishers were back out at the shopping center for application of second and finish coats.

Thursday, the contest began its wind-down, as the finishers sanded and demonstrated match texture.

Friday, the contestants got the day off to explore the beauty of the surrounding Rocky Mountains, but judges were hard at work making final evaluations and totalling up points earned by the contestants in various phases of the week. Prizes were awarded Friday night during the annual closing banquet.

And, the Winners Were . . .

The judging was very close, with only ten points separating first and third places in the finishers contest. Colorado’s Jack Weber was the finisher apprentice overall winner, while second was won by Minnesota’s Jill Ann Behrendt, and third was awarded Oregon’s Monte Lowery. Behrendt also won the supplemental for both texturing and patching.

To complete Colorado’s sweep of the first place finishers, the state’s Thomas Urban captured the top prize in the applicator’s segment. Hector Zorrero, Jr., who won the supplemental in power tools, gave California a second, and Gary Eobiles of Hawaii placed third. In the supplemental for lasers, Michael Carter was judged to have the edge.

The real winners of the contest, however, were the laborers and managers who toil within the industry. The program highlighted what joint labor-management programs can accomplish and spotlighted the willingness of young people in the industry to work hard for quality and quantity of production in response to the education they receive through proper apprenticeship and training programs.