The International Drywall Contest drew many interested spectators at the famed Ala Moano Shopping Center in Honolulu last year.

Drywall Apprentices at Their Best

Interest is Growing in Promoting Quality, as Drywall Contest Preparations Begin for Tulsa

For a decade now, they’ve worked to improve the level of skills and motivation of skilled workers in the drywall trades. They’ve succeeded, too. The “they” is the International Drywall-Acoustical-Interior Systems Contest Committee which has been the driving force behind the annual contest pitting the finest drywall apprentices against each other.

For the most part, the contest and its reservoir of contestants have come from the western sections of North America. But that’s not what the contest committee wants. Given their way, committee members would see contestants entered from apprentice programs throughout the world . . . and in greater numbers. Such a lofty ambition may not be too unreasonable because the contest has grown each year.

“The whole idea behind the International Drywall Contest,” explains Paul R. Richardson, executive secretary of the contest committee, “is to promote the idea of excellence among apprentices.

“We have some incredibly gifted people—men and women—coming out of our apprentice programs and a contest of this character and type
helps to reflect the emphasis that the industry places in a continuing influx of skilled people.”

**Hawaiian Contest**

The 1982 contest is a good example of the value that apprentices place in entering the contest. Because their expenses are paid by their sponsoring organization, the contestants realize that excellence and high marks in their apprenticeship training may pay off with a memorable trip.

That’s what happened in 1982. The contest was in Honolulu, Hawaii, at the fabled Ala Moana Shopping Center.

Thousands of shoppers watched the contestants vie for top honors as Installers and as Finishers. Indeed, contest chairman Jack Craig, former AWCI president and president of Craig & Company, Honolulu, said onlookers actually applauded the construction performers.

“I’ve been to previous contests,” Jack explained, “but this was the first time that spectators caught the message we were trying to convey—that these young people were putting their best efforts into doing the job—and applauded.”

The winners of last year’s contest, following the normal three grueling days of construction work, included:

Installers—1st Place, Allan Taketa, Hawaii; 2nd Place, Scott Wood, California; 3rd Place, Bruce Jacob, British Columbia.

Finishers—1st Place, Don Harvey, British Columbia; 2nd Place, George Lopez, California; 3rd Place, Dean Agcaoili, Hawaii.

“What we’d really like,” said Richardson, “is for other apprentice groups to see the contest for its value and potential—and enter their own top apprentices.

“It’s not that expensive if each organization would get behind it—
and it does bring home to new men and women coming into the trades the idea that the industry places a premium on quality work. Besides—it’s a nice bonus for a young person who has truly put everything into becoming a first class journeyman.”

1983 in Tulsa

Plans for the 1983 contest are going ahead. It will be held in Tulsa, Oklahoma, from September 28 to October 1.

The first day will be given to registration. On September 29 each entrant will be required to complete the written portion, followed by a review of the plans and specifications that will form the basis of the work to be done.

Actual taping and first coat finishes occur in the afternoon of the first work day. The following morning, all entrants will continue with their projects in the manipulative phase, consisting of second and third coats and patching.

The work continues that afternoon, and then promptly at 7 pm that evening the contest ends. The final day, October 1, will feature the finishers demonstration in the tent and an awards dinner-dance banquet to conclude the contestants’ free day.

The headquarters hotel for the contest will be the Camelot Hotel. The Tulsa Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Committee will function as contest hosts.

According to Gerald E. Beam, president of the International Drywall Contest, entry fees for a contestant are $300.

“There are no restrictions or limitations for any valid apprentice organizations throughout the world,” Beam said. “We’d like to see every joint labor-management apprenticeship organization take part.

“The more entries and apprenticeship groups that we can enlist in this international contest the more successful it will be. And the more we can do to drive home the idea that our industry is interested in talented young people—and that we seek to make them even more talented for the good of all purchasers and users of construction.”