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## **BALLINA CLUB CHEF DUO PROVE MORE THAN HANDY IN THE KITCHEN**

Proving last year's win was no fluke, two chefs from Ballina RSL have again defeated more than 5,000 of their colleagues to walk away with the title of the ClubsNSW 2006 Chefs Kitchen Award.

Judges were unable to find fault with chef pair Gerhard Spatz and Nathan Sherwood's three course meal which was done remarkably, using foods costing no more than \$20.

North Shore and Northern Beaches residents will hardly be surprised to discover the popular Manly Golf Club finished a close second in the competition with the Nelson Bay Bowling and Recreation Club at Port Stephens taking third position.

Head judge for the Chefs Table Award James Ballingall of JCB Culinary Consulting said while Ballina RSL's three course meal had a high degree of difficulty, it had been prepared to perfection.

"Gerhard and Nathan are fabulous chefs who work extremely well together.

"Communication is just so important. I've seen the most extraordinary chefs fail miserably because of an inability to communicate with their team.

"All three winning teams were very creative in their menus and presented gorgeous looking food that highlighted the brilliance of local produce. But it was Gerhard and Nathan's attention to detail which ran all the way from the kitchen to the dining room table that won it for them," he said.

Chairman of ClubsNSW Peter Newell said the competition has proved invaluable in demonstrating to the public the impressive quality of food on offer when a club directs its substantial resources to the restaurant.

"Ballina, Manly and Nelson Bay are examples of clubs that have seized an opportunity to make food a key area of business.

"A testimony to the quality despite the affordability of the food is seen in the booking numbers at each of the clubs on a nightly basis.

"Each of the winning clubs have been quite visionary in their focus on food. They offer a point of difference from not only other clubs and restaurants in the area but in their menus and commitment to local produce," Peter Newell added.

Please see second page for menus of the three winning clubs.

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### **Ballina RSL - Gerhard Spatz and Nathan Sherwood**

First Course:

*Pithivier of Local Spanner Crab with baby spinach, crisp herb leaf salad, red pepper reduction & crab bisque*

Second Course:

*Ravioli of Seared Woodpigeon Breast, pigeon ballantines, asparagus, truffle infused gremolata, muscatel jus*

Third Course:

*Bittersweet Chocolate & Armagnac Souffle, butterscotch & white chocolate ice-cream, macadamia nut praline, wild berries and candied fig*

### **Manly Golf Club - Greg Slack and Trent Hamilton**

First Course:

*Smoked Goulbourne River King Trout with pea puree and citrus beurre blanc.*

Second Course:

*Roast Beef Fillet with mushroom gratin, desiree potato mash and red wine jus.*

Third Course:

*Manly dessert plate; Mandarin & lime meringue tart. French chocolate fudge cake, Japanese pumpkin & strawberry torte, king island cream.*

### **Nelson Bay Bowling & Recreation Club - Ian Manson and Greg Hughes**

First Course:

*Saute Scallops & Fennel Risotto. Pan seared in a chilli and lime sauce.*

Second Course:

*Hunter Valley Beef. Prime tenderloin with pommes chateau, white asparagus, baby beans topped with crispy prosciutto and red wine jus.*

Third Course:

*Praline Semi Freddo, presented with raspberries and vanilla tuiles.*

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