

NEWSROOM



Victorious: The team from Currys in Exeter makes it two on the trot for the Dixons-owned store chain

Currys makes it two in a row

FOR the first time in the contest's six-year history, one chain has won the Satellite Retailer of the Year title two years running – Currys.

Darren Hannaford and Chris Pearce from Currys in Exeter took the accolade, the trophy and the prize of a £3,000 holiday voucher each.

As store manager of the winning store, Susan Davey won holiday vouchers worth £1,500 for a week's holiday.

To establish a winner from 20 teams took a monumental effort from both the contestants and the organisers, but after more than 10 hours, the winners were lifting the trophy aloft.

This year's final lived up to and exceeded expectations – from the morning activities, right the way through to the evening dinner and presentations at London's Science Museum.

It all began last Friday at the luxurious Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, overlooking Kensington Palace, the home of the late Diana, Princess of Wales.

The quarter finals, in which all 20 teams competed, had the theme of *The Italian Job*, the 2003 remake of the famous Michael Caine movie

by **Simon King**

from the 1960s, now showing on Sky Box Office.

Each team, consisting of two people, were paired up with a driver and a SROTY-branded Mini Cooper to navigate their way around west London, using clues to find their target destinations, which included the Royal Albert Hall, Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park, the Lancaster Gate Hotel, the Kyoto Gardens and Portobello Road.

Without doubt, the contestants enjoyed their time in the Mini Coopers, and onlookers were amazed to see 20 cars leaving the Royal Garden Hotel on Kensington High Street.

After lunch, the group of 20 teams was cut to 10 and the semi-final task set.

Contestants were set a film challenge, where they were asked to imagine that they were a creative agency working for Sky.

They were charged with devising, recording and producing a two-minute advertisement for Sky+ with the intention of:

- Attracting non-subscribers to find out more about Sky+;
- Providing a clear understanding of what the product actually does;

- Highlighting the key selling features of the product;
- Driving people into electrical retailers to buy Sky+.

The judging panel, consisting of representatives from SROTY sponsors Sky, Astra and *ERT Weekly*, found the quality of adverts encouraging and whittling down the 10 entries to the final five proved challenging.

Up to this point, the destination for the grand final had been kept a secret and all competitors, including those who had been eliminated earlier in the day, were transported to the world famous Science Museum, which is now home to the original Stevenson's Rocket locomotive.

The grand final consisted of five quiz rounds, two of which tested their knowledge of Sky, while three tested their knowledge of sport, film and news.

With more than 1,200 stores entering this year's SROTY competition, every store represented at the final was a winner, but now that Currys has won two titles in a row, the heat is on for other independents and store groups to beat the Dixons-owned chain. Or is Currys on course to do the hat-trick?

SATELLITE RETAILER OF THE YEAR 2004



Going bats: The team from Dixons in Northfield



Starring roles: Woolacotts staff tasked with recording an advert for Sky+



Pretty car: Italian Job theme for a treasure hunt in Mini Cooper cars

The Finalists

Comet: Workington, Rhuddan, Rotherham, Southampton.
Currys: Rhyl, Llanelli, North Shields, Exeter.
Dixons: Northfield, Alfreton, Bullring Centre, Birmingham, Hammersmith, London.
Miller Brothers: Peterborough.
Hughes: Kings Lynn, Dereham.
Bennetts: Diss.
ETS: Bodmin.
House of Fraser: Reading.
Woolacotts: Liskeard, Wadebridge.