



Interview with the winners of the national competition



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Interview of Vicente Students Welder

What motivated you, personally or professionally, to participate in the National Welding Competition?

As a student, I saw the National Welding Competition as a great opportunity to test everything I had learned at school in a real, professional environment. I wanted to challenge myself, meet other young welders, and show that vocational training can also lead to excellence and innovation.

Was there anyone who inspired you?

Yes, my welding instructor inspired me from the very beginning. He showed me that welding is more than a manual skill — it's a science, an art, and a profession that requires creativity, precision, and constant learning.

What role did mentors, instructors, or classmates play in your journey?

My instructors guided me through every step of the process, giving me confidence and technical advice. My classmates were always there for support and motivation — we learned together and pushed each other to do our best.

What would you do differently if you participated again?

If I had the chance to compete again, I would practice more under time pressure and focus more on planning each weld. I would also pay more attention to small details, because precision makes the difference in a competition.

Tell us about a moment that moved you or made you feel your work had a real impact.

The most emotional moment for me was when I finished my test piece and the judges congratulated me on the quality of the weld. At that moment, I realized that all the effort and long hours of training were worth it — and that I could really build something valuable with my own hands.

How did the preparation for the competition help you develop technical or social skills (communication, leadership, etc.)?

The preparation improved my technical level a lot, but also helped me develop teamwork, discipline, and confidence. Working with my mentors and other students taught me to communicate better, share ideas, and take responsibility for every detail.

How do you think competitions like this can change the public perception of the welding profession?



I think this kind of competition shows that welding is a **modern and innovative career**, not just a traditional trade. It involves technology, robotics, sustainability, and creativity. It helps people see that welders play an essential role in the industries of the future.

If you could share one message with young people starting in welding, what would it be?

Don't be afraid to start. Welding is a career full of opportunities — you can work anywhere in the world and be part of the green and digital transition. Be curious, stay motivated, and always believe in your potential.

Interview of Rafael Professional Welder

What motivated you, personally or professionally, to participate in the National Welding Competition?

As a professional welder, I've spent years working in different industries and processes, but I've always believed that we never stop learning. When I heard about the National Welding Competition organized by CESOL within the COVE-WENDT project, I felt it was a great opportunity to challenge myself again.

It wasn't just about competing — it was about pushing my limits, representing the quality of Spanish welders, and showing younger generations that craftsmanship and precision still matter in this new digital and green era. The competition reminded me why I fell in love with welding in the first place: it's a profession where skill, science, and pride come together.

Was there anyone who inspired you?

Yes, definitely. Early in my career, I had a mentor who shaped my understanding of welding as both a technical and human skill. He used to say, *"A perfect weld is not only about technique — it's about patience, respect for the material, and pride in your work."*

Those words stayed with me, and they guided me throughout the preparation for this competition. I was also inspired by my colleagues and the new generation of welders I see coming from VET schools — their motivation, curiosity, and passion are contagious. Competing alongside them was a privilege.

What role did mentors, instructors, or colleagues play in your journey?

Even as an experienced professional, you realize how important collaboration and mentorship are. My instructors and colleagues provided advice on fine-tuning parameters, improving posture, and managing stress during high-pressure tasks.

We often think of welding as an individual job, but the truth is that the best welders are part of strong teams that share knowledge and help each other grow. During the competition, I learned as much from the younger participants as they may have learned from me — and that mutual exchange of experience and enthusiasm was one of the best parts of the event.

What would you do differently if you participated again?

If I had the chance to compete again, I would prepare not only technically but also mentally. In a competition, precision and calmness go hand in hand. I would dedicate more time to simulation and to practicing under time constraints to reproduce the stress of the real event.

I'd also spend more time studying the evaluation criteria and improving my understanding of visual inspection and NDT techniques — because a true welder must not only make a good weld but also



understand how it's inspected and validated. That's something this competition really made me appreciate.

Tell us about a moment that moved you or made you feel your work had a real impact.

One moment that really touched me was when a group of students approached me after one of the tests to ask questions about my technique. They told me they were impressed by how calm and focused I stayed, even when things didn't go perfectly. That conversation made me realize that our example can have a real impact — not just the welds we make, but the message we send through our attitude, discipline, and professionalism. It reminded me that competitions like this are not only about winning medals, but about inspiring others and showing what skilled work truly means.

How did the preparation for the competition help you develop technical or social skills (communication, leadership, etc.)?

Preparing for this competition was an incredible process of self-improvement. On the technical side, I had to review standards, improve my consistency, and master details that I sometimes overlooked in daily work. But beyond that, it also strengthened my social skills — communication, teamwork, and leadership. Working with instructors, young welders, and the organizing team taught me how to share knowledge clearly, motivate others, and stay humble. It reminded me that being a good welder also means being a good colleague and a positive influence in the workshop.

How do you think competitions like this can change the public perception of the welding profession?

This kind of competition helps show society that welding is not a “secondary trade,” but a **high-tech profession** that combines science, creativity, and precision. It's at the heart of the green transition — from renewable energy and hydrogen pipelines to sustainable construction and advanced manufacturing. People often don't realize how much of our modern world depends on welders. By showing our work in public events like this, we help the next generation — and the general public — understand that welding is essential, modern, and full of opportunities.

If you could share one message with young people starting in welding, what would it be?

I would tell them that welding is a career where your effort and curiosity truly pay off. You can build ships, bridges, wind turbines, or aerospace components — all with your own hands and your mind working together. Never stop learning, never settle for “good enough,” and always take pride in your work. Welding is



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part of the solution to today's global challenges — from sustainability to innovation. So believe in your craft, because what you weld today will literally help build the future.