



**thewinesociety**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**CENTRAL OTAGO WINEMAKER WINS PRESTIGIOUS TITLE**

Malcolm Rees- Francis from Rockburn Wines, Central Otago, has been named the Sommeliers' Choice at the 2008 Wine Society Young Winemaker of the Year Awards.

Announced at the Westin Hotel, Sydney, last night (Saturday 1 November), Malcolm scooped the prestigious award for his winning two wines - 2007 Pinot Gris and 2007 Pinot Noir.

Malcolm is the first New Zealander to win a Young Winemaker award as this was only the second year that the competition was opened to them.

The Sommeliers' Choice was judged by 10 of Australia's top sommeliers from across the country in a blind tasting.

Malcolm was nominated for this year's awards by his Senior Winemaker and was the first time he had entered the competition.

Ron Corby, Acting CEO of the Wine Society, said: "The level of entries this year was extremely high with the points for each finalist pretty much neck-a-neck right up until the end of judging. Malcolm has done a great job to take the title of Sommeliers' Choice against all the competition."

Winner of the overall Wine Society Young Winemaker of the Year award was Ben Haines from Mitchelton Wines, Nagambie, Victoria for his winning two wines – 2008 Blackwood Park Riesling and 2006 Print Shiraz.

Winner of the Member's Choice was Helen McCarthy from Taylors wines, Clare Valley who put forward the 2005 Jaraman Cabernet Sauvignon and 2005 Jaraman Shiraz. Helen was a finalist at last year's awards and was a strong leader in the member voting from the outset.

**Ends**

Notes to editor

The Wine Society, Australia's largest and oldest independent wine club, launched the award six years ago and now attracts impressive entries from the region's best wine companies, both large and small. It is open to all Australian, and now New Zealand, winemakers under 30, who are primarily responsible for the creation of the wine.

The aim of the award is to recognise the importance and best efforts of young people in the wine industry and distinguish themselves as the winemakers of the future.

For more information, visit [www.winesociety.com.au](http://www.winesociety.com.au)

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