

For Immediate Release

10 December 2024

The Olive Tree Group's Jason Dennis Dcruz Crowned Heineken® Global Draught Champion

Supported by his training at the Star Academy programme, Jason's victory makes history as the second Malaysian to win the Championship title at the Home of Heineken® in Amsterdam.

PETALING JAYA, 10 December 2024 – Kuala Lumpur's very own bartender Jason Dennis Dcruz of The Olive Tree Group has achieved an incredible milestone by winning the 2024 Heineken® Global Draught Championship in Amsterdam, Netherlands. This prestigious competition, part of Heineken®'s renowned Star Quality programme, made a grand return after four years, bringing together the world's finest bartenders to showcase their mastery in the art of the perfect pour.

Jason first started his journey as a waiter in 2017. Over the years, he climbed the ranks to become Assistant Group Bar Manager at The Olive Tree Group. Driven by his appreciation for the craft, Jason joined HEINEKEN Malaysia's Star Academy Programme earlier this year. In September, Jason earned the National Champion title, outshining over 1,300 bartenders from across Malaysia.

The victory secured his spot at the Heineken® Global Draught Championship in Amsterdam, where he competed against 13 elite bartenders from around the world. With a flawless performance that combined precision and passion, Jason claimed the coveted title, proudly bringing the championship crown back to Malaysia.

Martijn van Keulen, Managing Director of HEINEKEN Malaysia, shared, "At HEINEKEN Malaysia, we see the incredible potential in the local hospitality industry and are committed to nurturing and developing talent through our Star Academy programme. We are also grateful to our trade partners for their crucial support in making this programme a success. Indeed, Jason's remarkable achievement demonstrates the high standards and exceptional skills present in the country's hospitality industry. His dedication to the craft is an inspiration to us all!"

While each country tailored the Star Quality programme to its own needs, Malaysia's approach is known for its depth and dynamism. The annual Star Academy programme covers HEINEKEN Malaysia's full portfolio of brands, teaching the art of the perfect pour while emphasising technical precision, responsible serving module and customer engagement. Over the years,

the programme has trained more than 10,000 bartenders nationwide. Through rigorous training and mentorship for about three months, bartenders are prepared to excel under pressure.

"The journey was not easy, but every challenge taught me something invaluable. From the regional training sessions all the way to the national finals, I was able to learn so much from my peers and mentors along the way. Each step pushed me to grow, both as a bartender and as an individual," Jason shared.

"I am incredibly grateful for this opportunity and proud to have represented the region on the global stage. This win is not just mine — it is a reflection of everyone who supported me through the Star Academy programme," Jason added.

Leslie Gomez, Managing Director, The Olive Tree Group, shared that "Teamwork makes the dream work! We're all so proud of Jason's achievement here at The Olive Tree Group. His dedication and passion really show how much talent is growing in Malaysia's bartending scene. A big thank you to HEINEKEN Malaysia for providing platforms like the Star Academy programme to keep raising the bar for the industry."

With Jason's success, HEINEKEN Malaysia's annual Star Academy programme continues to offer bartenders an incredible platform to refine their skills, expand their product knowledge, and advance in the industry. HEINEKEN Malaysia invites bar partners to sign up for the upcoming cycle of the programme where registrations will be opened after May 2025.

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About Heineken Malaysia Berhad

HEINEKEN Malaysia is one of the leading brewers in the country with its portfolio of iconic international brands. The Company brews, markets and distributes:

- The World's No. 1 international premium beer **Heineken®**
- The great taste of Heineken® with dealcoholised **Heineken® 0.0**
- The World-acclaimed iconic Asian beer **Tiger Beer**
- The crystal-cold filtered beer **Tiger Crystal**
- The bold twist on Tiger's iconic lager **Tiger Soju Flavoured Lager**
- The World's No. 1 stout **Guinness**
- The smooth and creamy **Guinness Draught in a Can**
- The premium wheat beer born in the Alps **Edelweiss**
- Edelweiss, infused with juicy peach flavour – **Edelweiss Peach**
- The New Zealand inspired cider **Apple Fox Cider**
- The all-time local favourite **Anchor Smooth**
- The premium Irish ale **Kilkenny**
- The real shandy **Anglia**
- The wholesome, premium quality non-alcoholic **Malta**.

HEINEKEN Malaysia is committed to advocating responsible consumption through its Enjoy Responsibly and When Your Drive, Never Drink campaigns. HEINEKEN Malaysia's corporate social responsibility initiatives are carried out by its corporate responsibility arm, **SPARK Foundation**, focusing on environment and community partnerships.

HEINEKEN Malaysia through its e-commerce platform, Drinkies now delivers chilled beers and ciders on demand. Drinkies also offers freshly tapped beers to cater for home parties and other events including weddings and corporate dinners. For enquiries, call 012-281 8888 or visit www.drinkies.my. Listed on the Bursa Malaysia Main Market, the principal shareholder of HEINEKEN Malaysia is GAPL Pte Ltd headquartered in Singapore. GAPL Pte Ltd is 100% owned by Heineken N.V. For more information, please visit: www.heinekenmalaysia.com.

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