

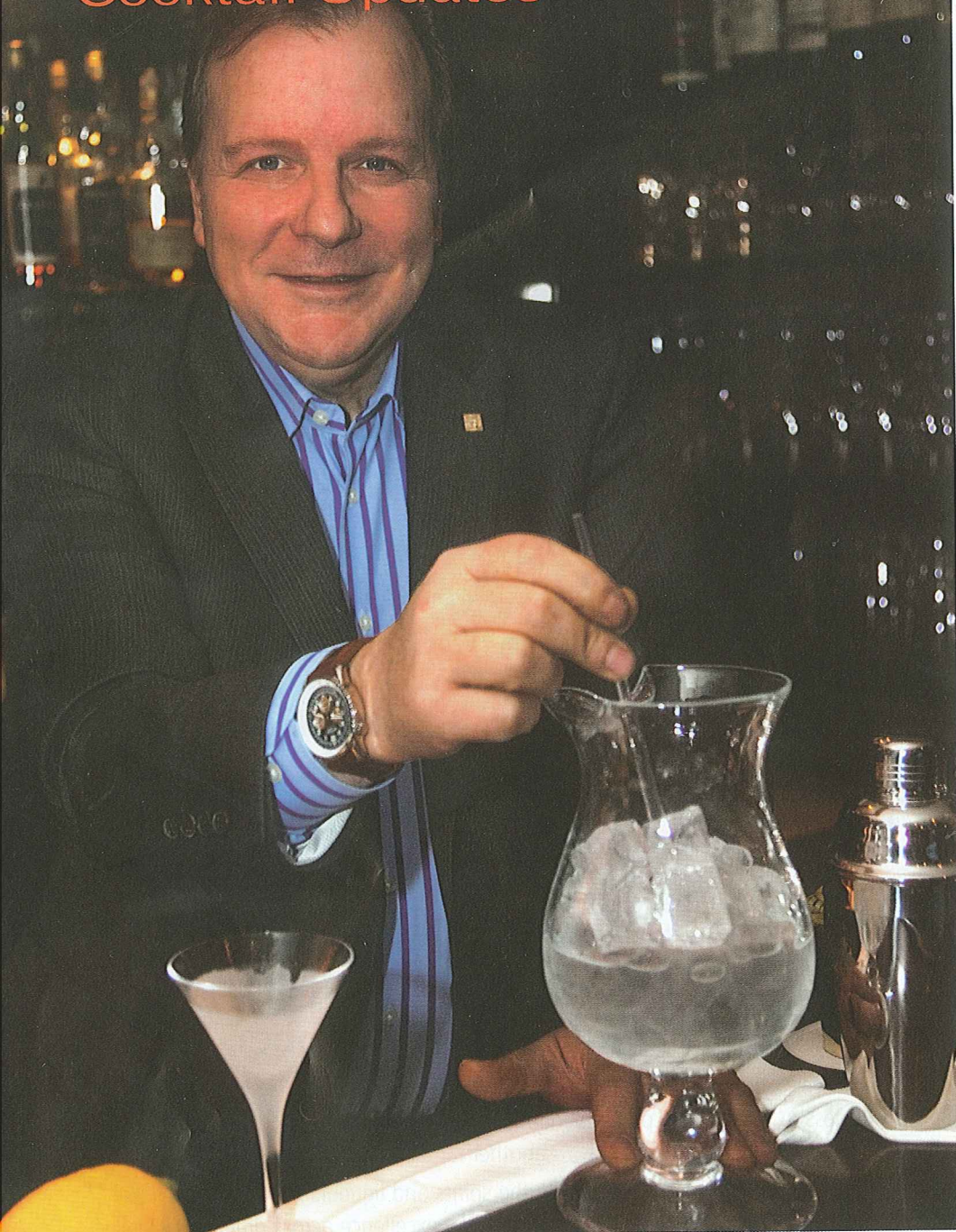
# THE SPIRITS BUSINESS

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# COCKTAILS

ALESSANDRO PALAZZI/GIN, WHISKY & LIQUEUR MASTERS/NEW YORK BARS/DANIEL CREBE



# MISTER PRESIDENT

Recruiting new members and improving training are at the core of Daniel Crebesse's presidency of the UKBG.

**Richard Woodard** reports

IT'S A good time for Daniel Crebesse to take stock of his tenure as president of the UK Bartenders Guild (UKBG). Two years in, he has at least another 12 months to go, but could spend a total of six years at the helm.

"Since the word go, my aim has been to drive further the membership and also to improve the education side of the UKBG," says Crebesse.

"I'm going to focus more on driving the membership up, also increasing the coverage of the UKBG, particularly in the Midlands, in the north and in Scotland. It's a lot of work."

His desire to expand the footprint of the UKBG is partly a recognition of the London-centric nature of the bar business – something which is both positive and negative.

"The UK has got a very high place in the international bar community," Crebesse says. "There are 67 member countries in the IBA, and all their eyes are turned on the UK because they believe we are number one in the world. It's so diversified – there are so many types of bartender, more so than anywhere else."

But London's lure can drain the talent from the provinces, he warns. "Everything happens in London – London gets the lion's share of attention. We've got some of the most talented bartenders who start in Leeds or Manchester. But they get to a level where they say: 'What

**The UK is so diversified – there are so many types of bartender, more so than anywhere else in the world**

are we doing here?' Then they bring all their enthusiasm and skill to London."

The second main strand to Crebesse's UKBG presidency, training, aims to refine that skill and enthusiasm. The UKBG's previous internal training set-up has been scrapped in favour of outsourcing to specialist company Shaker.

"It's not that it wasn't working," insists Crebesse. "But we are all full-time workers, we have our jobs to do in the day or the evening. It makes it difficult to train, to do the course, to recruit people. It's a massive job.

"We all felt that we needed some more professional help and we thought Shaker would be the ideal partner. They have a marketing department and a beautiful venue, where we had to borrow venues in the past. It needed a bit of a push numbers-wise. I'm delighted with the partnership with Shaker – it's working well."

He is equally happy with the UKBG's media partnership with *The Spirits Business*. "I'm quite pleased with that because we really need to have a media partner to expose all those lovely cocktails from bartenders all across the country," he says.

And Crebesse, who now works as bars manager for Taj after a career which has spanned the restaurant and bar industries, believes he still has work to do at the head of the UKBG: "It's three years mandatory, but can go as far as six. There's plenty of work still to do – probably a couple of years or so." **SB**