

Tietto rises to the challenge

If you can't have fun while being serious, why bother?

That was the approach Tietto Minerals Ltd executive director Mark Strizek took into the third annual Investment Battlefield for junior mining companies – and it paid off in spades.

In a hotly contested final round decided by a panel of expert judges, West African gold explorer Tietto emerged victorious from the investment “boxing ring” which has become of one of the conference's signature events.

“It was a lot of fun and has actually been quite useful in getting some recognition and just generally increasing the profile of the company,” Strizek told **Paydirt**.

“There have been a number of follow-up emails and so on that have resulted out of it, so we're really quite chuffed.”

The final-round judging panel – Investec Asset Management's George Cheveley, Public Investment Corp's Heidi Sternberg, Traxys Projects managing director Erez Ichilov and Eurasian Resource Group's Jonathan Cordero – declared Tietto the winner over first runner-up Arc Minerals Ltd (copper

in Zambia) and other finalists EcoGraf Ltd (graphite in Tanzania) and RosCan Gold Corp (gold in Mali).

Despite only listing on the ASX less than two years ago, Tietto is rapidly advancing the 2.15 moz Abujar gold project in Cote d'Ivoire towards a PFS due for completion before the end of the year.

Drilling was ongoing at the time of print ahead of an anticipated resource upgrade in Q3 2020.

“It's just a great simple story,” Strizek said. “I guess the key takeaway for us [from Mining Indaba] was that people just really appreciate good high-grade gold stories in West Africa.”

Tietto currently has four company-owned diamond drill rigs turning at Abujar, with a fifth recently ordered and due to arrive on site imminently.

Multiple samples have also been sent to Perth for metallurgical testing and optimisation work. Results will be incorporated into upcoming studies on the project, about 30km from the regional city of Daloa.

“We've started working on some of the environmental and long-lead items which aren't always as high profile or as interesting to investors, but they're pretty important for us,” Strizek said.

“We want to build a mine, so we're putting all of these things in place so when the



Tietto executive director Mark Strizek celebrates his company's win in the Investment Battlefield final after receiving the trophy from Eurasian Resource Group's Jonathan Cordero

time comes to look at project finance – that's probably the biggest piece we need to put in place in terms of long-lead items – we're ready to go.

“It's still early days, but at this stage it's all very, very encouraging and there doesn't appear to be any red flags en route to development.”

– **Michael Washbourne**

Paydirt visited the Abujar gold project in Cote d'Ivoire with Tietto Minerals following Mining Indaba. For full coverage, see the April-June edition of our sister publication Gold Mining Journal