



UICR
PROFESSIONAL DRIVER
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
2026

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PRESS RELEASE

33rd UICR Professional Driver World Championship 2026 Successfully Concludes in Eppelheim, Germany

Eppelheim, Germany | 9–12 September 2026

The 33rd UICR Professional Driver World Championship (PDWC 2026) has successfully concluded in Eppelheim, near Heidelberg, Germany, bringing together professional drivers, national teams, officials, volunteers, transport industry representatives and guests for an international celebration of professional driving skill, road safety, technical competence and friendship.

Held from 9–12 September 2026, the Championship was organised under the responsibility of the UICR – Union Internationale des Chauffeurs Routiers, with MSC Eppelheim e.V. im ADAC as the host organisation.

Over several days of competition, professional drivers representing their countries demonstrated their knowledge, precision, vehicle control, safety awareness and professional competence across a demanding programme of theoretical and practical assessments.

Statement from the UICR President

Walter Pisarnik, President of the UICR, said:

“PDWC 2026 has once again demonstrated the extraordinary skill, knowledge and professionalism of professional drivers. I am proud to see drivers from different countries competing at the highest level while sharing friendship, respect and a common commitment to road safety.

On behalf of the UICR, I sincerely thank MSC Eppelheim, all volunteers and officials, our supporting employers and partners, and especially every driver who represented their country in Eppelheim. Together, you made the 33rd Professional Driver World Championship a truly international celebration of our profession.”

A World Championship for Professional Drivers

The UICR Professional Driver World Championship is about considerably more than simply manoeuvring a commercial vehicle through a competition course.

PDWC 2026 tested the professional knowledge and practical abilities required of today's commercial drivers through a combination of competition disciplines, including:

- theoretical knowledge;
- pre-trip vehicle inspection and identification of defects;
- precision driving and vehicle-handling tasks;
- practical competition parkour; and

- ECO Driving, focusing on safe, efficient and environmentally responsible professional driving.

Accuracy, judgement, safety, efficiency, vehicle control and professional conduct were central to the Championship.

Competitors took part across different vehicle categories, representing the broad range of skills required in professional road passenger and goods transport.

International Friendship and Professional Respect

One of the highlights of the Championship was the traditional **Walk of Nations**, bringing participating countries together and reflecting one of the fundamental principles of the UICR: international friendship and mutual respect between professional drivers, regardless of nationality, language or background.

Throughout the Championship, the competitors demonstrated that professional driving requires much more than the ability to operate a vehicle.

It requires knowledge, concentration, responsibility, discipline, technical understanding, anticipation and respect for passengers, goods, vehicles and all other road users.

The atmosphere in Eppelheim reflected the spirit that has been at the heart of the UICR Professional Driver World Championship throughout its history:

Competition on the course – friendship beyond it.

PDWC 2026 World Championship Results

Following the completion of the competition disciplines, the successful drivers and national teams were recognised during the official Awards Ceremony.

The UICR congratulates the following PDWC 2026 individual World Champions, podium finishers and National Team winners.

Category A – Solo Truck

Individual Classification

-  **1st – Harry Winqvist – Finland**
-  **2nd – Petri Haikara – Finland**
-  **3rd – Bogdan Kalinka – Poland**

National Team Classification

-  **1st – Finland**
-  **2nd – Germany**
-  **3rd – Croatia**

Category B – Bus

Individual Classification

-  **1st – Jaakko Punkero – Finland**
-  **2nd – Ralf Rüscher – Germany**
-  **3rd – Andreas Schiffer – Germany**

National Team Classification

 1st – Germany

 2nd – Finland

 3rd – Croatia

Category C – Articulated Lorry

Individual Classification

 1st – Mikko Jokinen – Finland

 2nd – Tero Sikkara – Finland

 3rd – Mario Kühne – Germany

National Team Classification

 1st – Finland

 2nd – Hungary

 3rd – Poland

Category D – Truck with Trailer

Individual Classification

 1st – Jukka Haanpää – Finland

 2nd – Thomas Scheidt – Germany

 3rd – Marko Tiihonen – Finland

National Team Classification

 1st – Finland

 2nd – Germany

 3rd – Switzerland

Category E – Young Drivers – Under 21 Years of Age

Individual Classification

 1st – Simon Hoffleit – Germany

 2nd – Jami Nordström – Finland

Category E featured two competitors at PDWC 2026 and therefore two individual positions were awarded.

Category F – Delivery Van

Individual Classification

-  **1st – Appie Bruggink – Netherlands**
-  **2nd – Harrie Wielens – Netherlands**
-  **3rd – Matthias Hamacher – Germany**

National Team Classification

-  **1st – Finland**
 -  **2nd – Netherlands**
 -  **3rd – Poland**
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ECO Driving

The ECO Driving competition placed particular emphasis on the principles of safe, economical and environmentally responsible professional driving.

The PDWC 2026 ECO Driving podium was:

-  **1st – Peter O'Neill – Ireland**
-  **2nd – Piotr Mierzejewski – Poland**
-  **3rd – Reinhard Klumpp – Germany**

The ECO Driving discipline reflects an increasingly important aspect of the professional driver's role: combining road safety and operational efficiency with responsible fuel and energy use.

Jaakko Punkero Wins the UICR Trophy

In addition to winning the individual World Championship title in Category B – Bus, Finland's Jaakko Punkero was awarded the UICR Trophy for achieving the highest individual score of all drivers competing at PDWC 2026.

Punkero achieved an outstanding result of **1,889 points in a time of 11:31**, the highest score recorded by any driver across all vehicle categories at the Championship.

UICR Trophy Winner – Jaakko Punkero – Finland – 1,889 points

The UICR Trophy recognises the outstanding overall individual performance across the PDWC competition and represents a significant achievement at the Professional Driver World Championship.

Finland Wins the PDWC 2026 Nation Cup – Three Consecutive Titles

One of the Championship's principal national honours was the PDWC 2026 Nation Cup. To qualify for the Nation Cup, a nation was required to field a full team of three drivers in each of Categories A, B, C and D – a total of 12 drivers representing the nation across the four principal vehicle categories.

The Nation Cup ranking was then determined from the combined national results across Categories A, B, C and D, recognising not only individual excellence but the strength and consistency of the national team across the Championship's principal vehicle categories.

The final Nation Cup podium was:

-  **1st – Finland – 16,642 points**
-  **2nd – Germany – 14,956 points**
-  **3rd – Poland – 12,197 points**



PDWC 2026 Nation Cup Podium – Finland celebrates its third consecutive Nation Cup victory, with Germany taking second place and Poland third at the 33rd UICR Professional Driver World Championship in Eppelheim, Germany.

Finland therefore concluded PDWC 2026 as the Nation Cup winner, following a particularly strong performance across the four principal Championship categories.

The victory in Eppelheim also represents an exceptional achievement for the Finnish national team: Finland has now won the UICR Nation Cup at three consecutive Professional Driver World Championships – Belgium 2018, Croatia 2022 and Germany 2026.

No Professional Driver World Championship was held in 2020 or 2024, making Finland's achievement an uninterrupted run of three consecutive Nation Cup victories at the Championships held since 2018.

Congratulations to Every Competitor

While the podium positions recognise exceptional performances, the UICR congratulates every professional driver who participated in PDWC 2026.

Representing one's country at an international Professional Driver World Championship is an achievement in itself.

Every competitor who came to Eppelheim contributed to the success of the Championship and helped demonstrate publicly the knowledge, skill, discipline and responsibility demanded of professional drivers every day.

The Championship is competitive by its nature, but its wider purpose is to bring professional drivers together, allow them to learn from one another and raise recognition of professional driving internationally.

A Championship Made Possible by Many People

An international event of this scale cannot be delivered by one organisation or a small group of individuals.

The UICR therefore extends its sincere appreciation to MSC Eppelheim e.V. im ADAC, its organising team and everyone involved in the preparation and delivery of the 33rd UICR Professional Driver World Championship.

Special recognition goes to the approximately 50–60 volunteers and helpers who gave their time, energy and expertise to support PDWC 2026.

From course preparation and competition operations to administration, catering, transport, safety, technical support and the many activities taking place behind the scenes, their contribution was fundamental to the successful delivery of the Championship.

The UICR also extends its appreciation to the competition officials, judges, marshals, technical personnel, medical and safety services, vehicle providers, supporting employers, industry partners, media representatives and everyone else who contributed to making PDWC 2026 possible.

Thank You to the National Teams

The UICR particularly thanks the participating national organisations, Team Leaders and Team Captains.

Preparing drivers for a World Championship requires considerable work long before the competitors arrive at the venue.

National organisations and team officials play an essential role in selecting, preparing and supporting their drivers and in maintaining the international network that makes the Professional Driver World Championship possible.

Their commitment helps ensure that the Championship remains not only an international competition, but also a meeting place for the worldwide professional driving community.

More Than a Competition

The UICR believes that the Professional Driver World Championship has an important purpose beyond determining competition results.

The Championship provides an international platform for promoting the core principles of the UICR:

Road Safety and Driver Wellbeing

Promoting professional standards that protect drivers, passengers and all road users.

Driver Certification and Lifelong Learning

Recognising that professional competence must continually develop alongside vehicles, technology, legislation and modern transport operations.

Respect and Responsibility on the Road

Promoting disciplined, lawful and responsible professional behaviour.

Environmental Sustainability and ECO Driving

Demonstrating how professional driving techniques can contribute to safer, more efficient and environmentally responsible road transport.

Recognition of the Professional Driver

Strengthening public understanding of the skill, knowledge and responsibility required of professional drivers and raising recognition of the profession internationally.

The Professional Driver World Championship brings these principles together in a practical international competition where professional drivers can demonstrate what excellence within their profession means.

Looking Towards PDWC 2028

With the successful conclusion of the 33rd UICR Professional Driver World Championship in Eppelheim, another chapter has been added to the international history of the PDWC.

The experience gained in Germany will contribute to the continued development of the Championship and to preparations for the 34th UICR Professional Driver World Championship – PDWC 2028.

The UICR will continue working with its Member Organisations, national teams, professional drivers, transport organisations, authorities and industry partners to strengthen the international standing of professional driving and to broaden participation in future Championships.

A Final Thank You from the UICR

On behalf of the UICR Executive Committee, we extend our sincere thanks to everyone who made PDWC 2026 in Eppelheim possible.

To MSC Eppelheim e.V. im ADAC, its organising team and the many volunteers – thank you for your tremendous commitment, hard work and hospitality.

To our officials, judges, marshals, technical teams, safety and medical personnel, supporting employers, partners and vehicle providers – thank you for your contribution.

To the national organisations, Team Leaders and Team Captains – thank you for preparing and supporting your teams.

And above all, to every participating professional driver:

Thank you for representing your country, your profession and the values of the UICR with pride, skill and professionalism.

Congratulations to all podium finishers and National Team winners, to Jaakko Punkero of Finland as the UICR Trophy winner, and to Finland on securing its third consecutive PDWC Nation Cup.

We look forward to welcoming the international professional driving community together again for the **34th UICR Professional Driver World Championship – PDWC 2028.**

UICR – Upholding the Honour of Professional Driving Worldwide

Setting the global benchmark for safety, skill, and responsibility.

Media & Information

UICR – Union Internationale des Chauffeurs Routiers
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Official PDWC website : pdwc.uicr.org

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/UICRProfessionalDriverWorldChampionship>