

Gunter Dewit rises to victory as Caterpillar crowns champion from Belgium in Global Operator Challenge

Held on Caterpillar grounds at the Malaga Demonstration and Learning Centre, the Global Operator Challenge (GOC) saw the 20 best operators from Europe, Africa and Middle East compete in the semifinal competitions.

- Gunter Dewit from Belgium was crowned the EAME Region semifinal champion
- Nicolai Have Thomsen from Denmark and Sebastian Behr from Germany were crowned the first and second runners-up in the semifinal competition
- All three will advance to the final round of the Global Operator Challenge during CONEXPO-CON/AGG in March 2026

IRVING, Texas, October 9, 2025—The best machine operators from across Europe, Africa and Middle East gathered in Malaga, Spain to forge their legacy and prove their mastery of both equipment and technology. The 20 competitors first had to win local Cat® dealer competitions to qualify for regionals. Only three emerged victorious and earned the right to advance to the final round in the Caterpillar Global Operator Challenge (GOC) to be held in Las Vegas in March 2026. The GOC finals will take place during CONEXPO-CON/AGG inside Caterpillar's 70,000 ft² outdoor exhibit, F29029, in the Festival Lot.

The overall champion of the Malaga based competition was Gunter Dewit from Belgium representing dealer Bergerat Monnoyeur Belgium. Dewit finished the four GOC events with the lowest points total of 983, which is a combination of time and penalties.

At the same time, both Nicolai Thomsen from Denmark, representing dealer Zeppelin Denmark, completed the challenges with 1048 points, emerging as the first runner up and Sebastian Behr from Germany, representing dealer Zeppelin GmbH with 1101 points emerged as the second runner up. Both of these operators will also progress to the finals.

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Event highlights

All competitors competed in the same four Challenges using Cat® equipment and technology. “Our team worked tirelessly to make sure operators could show off their skills in every area” said Serena Janssen, industry solutions lead for Caterpillar. “We created challenges where every operator had the same shot at winning, competition was fierce and everyone gave it their best shot to be crowned the winner of this prestigious event”

The **Touchdown Challenge** saw competitors using a Cat 320 hydraulic excavator fitted with 3D GPS to pick up two rugby balls consecutively and drop them in a nearby basket. Contestants then needed to touch two targets using the machine's 3D GPS technology.

In celebration of a century of earthmoving excellence, the **Centennial Push Challenge** had operators put a Cat D4 dozer through a pre-determined course within a specified time-frame. Operators were able to use optional aids via Steer Assist and Slope Assist, which are built into the machine to help with precision maneuvers.

Featuring a Cat 938 small wheel loader, the **Loader Labyrinth Challenge** highlighted the agility and adaptability of the operators as they navigated a dual-phase course. Starting with a bucket, participants loaded and hauled material along a marked path before dumping it into a Cat off-highway truck. The challenge then shifted to precision handling, where operators had to swap their bucket for forks and transport a pipe across a designated route and place it accurately on the ground. After reversing the process and reconnecting the bucket safely, operators reversed through the course to the original starting position. It was a test of speed, control, and seamless equipment transitions.

The **Articulator Challenge** featured the recently announced next generation 730 articulated truck where competitors maneuvered the machine through a designated course. Operators had to avoid obstacles along the way before safely and precisely reversing to a pre-determined dumping area where they had to safely lower the truck body completely before returning to the travel position and coming to park correctly under a wheeled loader at the end position.

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Challenge Winners

Touchdown Challenge winner – Dino Toic representing Teknoxgroup Croatia

Centennial Push Challenge winner – Silvian-Alexandru Milea representing Bergerat Monnoyeur Romania

The Loader Labryrinth winner – Gunter Dewit representing Bergerat Monnoyeur Belgium

The Articulator Challenge winner – Gunter Dewit representing Bergerat Monnoyeur Belgium

Regional competitions across the globe determine the nine operators who will compete in the global finals. The winner receives either a \$10,000 cash prize or an equal value trip for two where Caterpillar has a location worldwide.

For more information about the Global Operator Challenge visit www.cat.com/operatorchallenge.

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Global Operator Challenge

NOTE TO EDITORS

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