

Sousa rises to victory as Caterpillar crowns Latin American champion in Global Operator Challenge

- Luanderson Sousa was crowned the Latin American region semifinal champion and will advance to the final round of the Global Operator Challenge in March 2026

IRVING, Texas, October 30, 2025—The best machine operators across Latin America gathered in Piracicaba, Brasil to forge their legacy and prove their mastery of both equipment and technology. The 12 competitors first had to win local Cat® dealer competitions to qualify for regionals. Only one 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 Brasil-based competition was Luanderson Sousa with Construtora Moreira & Sousa from Piauí, representing dealer Sotreq. "I signed up for this challenge after seeing a post on social media, and I never imagined I'd make it this far," commented Sousa. "I'm incredibly happy, and it still hasn't sunk in. Going to Las Vegas to represent my country is a dream come true. I hope this award serves as an inspiration for future generations to believe in themselves and follow their dreams."

Event highlights

All competitors completed the same four Challenge events using Cat® equipment and technology. "Our team pulled out all the stops to make sure this was a true test of skill," said Jason Hurdis, global industry solutions manager for Caterpillar. "We created a level playing field where every operator had the same shot at victory, proving that it all came down to talent, grit and performance."

The **Century Trail Challenge** featured a course shaped like the number 100 to commemorate Caterpillar's 100th anniversary. Operators navigated a series of obstacles in a backhoe loader, including jumping a trench, lifting and placing a beam with a multi-purpose bucket, avoiding cones and barrels, climbing a step, and finishing with a basketball shot—using the bucket to toss the ball into a hoop.

The **Dozers to Heaven Challenge** required operators to complete a series of precision tasks. First, competitors used the blade to push a tire without touching any barrels. While climbing a hill, they pushed four "rabbits" — targets—along steel cables using a bar mounted on the blade. On the descent, operators had to ring a bell with the blade. In the "Daytona" zone, the goal was to knock down yellow blocks with the blade's articulation while

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avoiding the black support blocks. The challenge concluded with a parallel parking maneuver and, while reversing, lowering the ripper precisely into the center of a tire.

The **Load Rush Challenge** used a small wheel loader to test both precision and versatility. First, the operator had to use a material handling arm to lift concrete blocks and place them accurately in a designated spot. Then, they had to switch the attachment to a bucket using the quick coupler system. With the bucket installed, the operator loaded material into a truck, using the payload system to reach a pre-set target weight.

The **More Than Digging Challenge** focused on advanced technology and precision while operating an excavator. First, the operator had to correctly configure the E-Fence system between two obstacles and demonstrate its effectiveness by avoiding contact with two basketballs. Next, they had to dig a trench with varying depths using the grade control system. The final task involved excavating a specific amount of material, measured with the payload system. If the operator used the Lift Assist feature to complete the task, they earned a bonus.

The regional GOC semifinals are a culmination of months of competitions held worldwide by Cat dealers. "This year we saw a record-breaking number of dealer competitions," said Hurdis. "It's a true testament to the passion and pride of the operators in this industry."

Other winners

The regional competitions conclude in Asia Pacific this week to determine the final operators who will compete in the global finals.

In addition to the overall winner advancing to the finals, the following participants were recognized by Caterpillar with awards.

- Second place – André Nowak, Nowomak Locações & Serviços, representing Pesa
- Third place – Alex Toillier, SAIKER Escavaciones, representing H. Petersen
- The Century Trail winner – Luanderson Sousa, Construtora Moreira & Sousa, representing Sotreq
- The Dozers to Heaven winner – Luanderson Sousa, Construtora Moreira & Sousa, representing Sotreq
- The Load Rush winner – André Nowak, Nowomak Locações & Serviços, representing Pesa
- The More Than Digging winner - Érick Rodriguez, Ingeniera y Construcciones Gabe S.A. de C.V., representing Madisa

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

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NOTE TO EDITORS

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