

## Finnish operator wins the 2014 Case Rodeo International Final in Paris

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Hat's off to Janne Leppänen from Finland who has taken the title of best construction equipment operator at the 2014 Case Rodeo International Final, held at the Case Customer Centre in Monthyon near Paris, from October 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>.

After a spectacular, action-packed tournament, Leppänen was declared overall winner among 42 highly skilled operators representing 15 nations from Europe and Africa. The 'Best Team' award was scooped by Denmark, thanks to the first-class performance and quality of its drivers. For the first time in its history, the International Final welcomed a team from Africa, with a delegation of three operators from Angola.

The weekend offered much more than a highly technical competition. Operators, dealers and media representatives, together with the Case team involved in the event, had a unique chance to share ideas, strengthen their relationships in a festive environment and to enjoy a memorable time in the impressively beautiful Chantilly Estate.

### A Tough Competition Among the Best

The finalists were the three best operators of the national Rodeos in each country. They arrived at the Case Customer Centre on October 24<sup>th</sup> for a whole afternoon of machine tests before the Final. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, they competed against each other demonstrating their exceptional skills at the controls of Case equipment in four technically challenging contests of ultimate machine control, speed and precision operating.

The first challenge was "Little Wolf Wheel", with drivers using a 321F ZB compact wheel loader to transport a pallet through a slalom path, before placing it in a perfect vertical position on another pallet in order to display a Case logo. This round went to Bendt Martin Risom from Denmark who correctly completed the task in just 2' 06".

The "Speeding Spider Skid" required the operators to drive a TV380 compact track loader with a ball, in balance on a cone, placed inside the bucket. Once they reached a target area, drivers had to throw the ball to drop a set of nine skittles and then return to the starting point. This challenge was won by Richard Christian from the UK who knocked down the most skittles in just 1' 19".



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In the third challenge, called "*Big Foot Excavator*", operators were asked to insert a pin, hooked on the bucket of a CX180C crawler excavator, into four small tubes in a specific order. Top points went to Toni Herger from Switzerland with an impressive time of 1' 35".

"*Black Hawk Loader*" was the last test. Using a 695ST backhoe loader, competitors had to fish small plastic ducks from a pool using a hook fixed on the rear bucket of the machine and then place them into a basket without touching its edge. Janne Leppänen won the challenge with the most ducks fished within the maximum allowed time of 2' 30".

With the highest points total, Leppänen was the overall winner and he will hold the cup and title until next year's competition. He also won a trip to Japan to visit the Case plant for crawler excavators and as well as enjoying a beautiful sight-seeing tour in Tokyo.

#### **The Perfect Location for a Memorable Rodeo**

After a hard fought day, all participants, dealers and media representatives were invited to attend the Award Ceremony and the Gala Dinner which took place in the wonderful *Domaine de Chantilly* (Chantilly Estate).

Chantilly is famous for its impressive castle, its premier horse racing track and the delicious Chantilly whipped cream. This elegant French town, which is one hour away from Paris, has also a long standing tradition in the equestrian arts and a reputation as the national 'Capital of the horse' which made it the perfect location to host the final acts of the 2014 Rodeo Championship.

The *Château de Chantilly*, which was visited in the morning by the journalists and media representatives attending the Rodeo Final, is truly a gem and an important heritage centre for the entire country. The castle comprises two attached buildings, surrounded by beautiful parkland and gardens: the *Petit Château* built around 1560 and the *Grand Château*, which was destroyed during the French Revolution and rebuilt in the 1870s. The castle's art gallery, the *Musée Condé*, houses one of the finest collections of paintings in France.

The Award Ceremony was played out against the outstanding backdrop of the *Grandes Ecuries* (Great Stable). This architectural masterpiece was built in the early eighteenth-century at the request of Louis-Henri de Bourbon, Prince of Condé and Prime Minister under the Kingdom of Louis XV, and today it is home of the Living Museum of the Horse.

The Rodeo participants gathered in the Great Stable arena to enjoy a spectacular horse demonstration devoted to the art of *Haute-Ecole* training, which is the highest and most considered form of equestrian training in France.

Thereafter, the Awards were presented by Enrica Oderda, Marketing Director CNH Industrial Construction Equipment Europe Middle East and Africa, who named the three best operators for each Rodeo challenge and handed over the prizes to the winners before announcing the overall champion to the anxious audience. Janne Leppänen then stepped out to receive the enthusiastic applause of the gathering. He was also honored and surprised to receive an invitation letter signed by Akira Kato, General Manager of International Sales at Sumitomo Construction Machinery, CNH Industrial's partner in Japan, welcoming him to visit Tokyo. A Gala Dinner and a live music event concluded the evening in a festive atmosphere.

### **A Broadening Success**

The Case Rodeo is becoming increasingly popular and a must-see event for operators, customers and dealers across Europe. Its global appeal has been broadening this year to new European countries as well as to Africa.

The 2014 Rodeo Championship kicked off on April in Bucharest, with dealer Titan Machinery Romania welcoming the country's best operators at the first-ever Romanian Rodeo. The competition then moved across Europe and Africa through 24 national rounds held in UK, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and Hungary. With seven preliminary rounds, France had the largest number of Rodeo events, followed closely by Italy with four events. For the first time, Case brought the Rodeo to Africa on the occasion of the presentation of TANGOLA, its newly appointed dealer for the Angolan market. The last heats before the grand Final were held by dealer Romana Diesel during the October Truck Fest in Rome.

"The 2014 Rodeo Final confirmed itself as a truly representative celebration of the technical skills of our operators and the outstanding performance and precision of Case equipment," said Enrica Oderda. "We are proud of the extremely positive response received by the Rodeo Challenge throughout the year as it turned out to be a complete success at all regional events. To top it off, it was a great privilege to host so many talented construction equipment operators at our Centre and to welcome a team from Africa for the first time ever. "Once again, the Rodeo Final turned out to be a fantastic event and it is even more encouraging to see that its success increases from year to year. We now look forward to 2015, which I am sure will be another memorable competition."

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