

Stoke-on-Trent, June 23, 2017

Northern Irish farmer wins European Drivers' Championship for the UK

Samuel Graham, a farmer from Killinchy in County Down, beat off tough competition from farmers representing 13 European countries to win the European Drivers' Championship 2017, organised jointly by John Deere and Michelin.

The event was held at the Michelin Technical Innovation Centre Test Circuit in Ladoux, France, and saw farmers and contractors testing their skills behind the wheel of John Deere's new 6250R series tractor – riding on Michelin's latest generation ROADBIB tyres, which were unveiled at the event ahead of their planned Q1 2018 launch.

Samuel earned his place at the final after registering to take part online, and winning hundreds of votes to secure himself the chance to compete at an international level. This saw him treated to an exclusive two-day visit to Ladoux, which is one of the world's largest vehicle test centres, featuring 20 test tracks with a combined length of 45km.

To compete in the challenge each participant had to master the challenges of speed, manoeuvrability, fuel efficiency and soil protection by developing their own winning driving strategy for tasks that are typical for the daily work of a farmer or contractor. The winner was the farmer who adopted the best overall strategy combining speed with lowest possible fuel consumption and lowest soil compaction in the field. Their skills were tested around a carefully constructed 18km long course where even the smallest mistake mattered.

Javier Fernandez, Product Marketing Manager for the new 6250R series tractor at John Deere, says: "Samuel decided to go for the AUTO transmission mode, which automatically adjusts the gear ratio and engine speed to get the maximum performance without compromising efficiency. This proved to be an excellent strategy, and helped him to deliver a winning performance."

Alexandre Gasc, Marketing Product Manager for Michelin's new ROADBIB range, adds: "Tyre pressures are critical, and Samuel ensured maximum fuel efficiency and minimal soil compaction across this demanding road and field circuit. It was an event designed to challenge even the best drivers, but he put in a fantastic effort and was a truly deserving winner."

The range of tasks facing Samuel and the other competitors in Ladoux was designed to represent the typical daily challenges that today's contractors constantly face. Time and money matter – that's why it's essential farmers use the latest technology to ensure they are operating efficiently, and keeping fuel consumption at the lowest possible level.

RESULTS

1. Samuel (UK): 775 points
2. David (France): 761 points
3. Stefan (Sweden): 745 points

The European Drivers' Championship took place on 14 June 2017 and was the first public test of Michelin's new ROADBIB tyres, which will be available on the original equipment and replacement markets during Q1 2018. Their launch is testament to the more than €700m Michelin invests in research and development every year, with the new product being co-designed with agricultural contractors to define a new segment of the market. At launch, they will become the first tyres for 200+hp



agricultural tractors designed specifically to provide high performance, longevity and traction on machines used intensively on roads.

Ends

Michelin, the leading tyre company, is dedicated to enhancing its clients' mobility, sustainably; designing and distributing the most suitable tyres, services and solutions for its clients' needs; providing digital services, maps and guides to help enrich trips and travels and make them unique experiences; and developing high-technology materials that serve the mobility industry. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has 111,700 employees and operates 68 production facilities in 17 countries which together produced 187 million tyres in 2016. (www.michelin.com)



<http://twitter.com/MichelinAgriUK>



<https://www.youtube.com/user/AgMichelin>

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