



36 XPO Drivers to Compete at 2026 National Truck Driving Championships in Pittsburgh

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GREENWICH, Conn., July 16, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [XPO](#) (NYSE: XPO), a leading provider of freight transportation in North America, today announced its team of 36 drivers who will compete in this year's National Truck Driving Championships (NTDC), taking place August 11-14 in Pittsburgh.

The annual NTDC, hosted by the American Trucking Associations (ATA), is the trucking industry's premier safety and skills competition. Known as the "Super Bowl of Safety," NTDC dates to 1937 and brings together hundreds of the nation's most accomplished professional drivers to compete for the coveted title of National Grand Champion.

Mario Harik, chairman and chief executive officer of XPO, said, "The National Truck Driving Championships recognize the best professional drivers in our industry, and we're proud to have 36 XPO drivers competing this year. Their commitment to safety, discipline and excellence reflects the high standards they uphold every day for our customers. We look forward to cheering them on in Pittsburgh."

XPO's finalists come from 23 states and have collectively appeared at NTDC over 200 times. Each qualified for nationals by winning their vehicle class at their state championships and maintaining an accident-free driving record for more than one year.

Five of XPO's finalists were named Grand Champions of their state competitions, earning the highest overall score across nine equipment categories. Each of these five drivers has achieved at least one million consecutive accident-free miles during their time at XPO.

XPO's five state Grand Champions are:

- **Chris Poynor (Washington):** Chris will appear at his 10th nationals, representing Washington as Grand Champion for the second year in a row. He has driven over two million accident-free miles over his 25 years at XPO.
- **Curt McMellon (Louisiana):** Curt won Rookie of the Year at his first Louisiana Truck Driving Championships and is returning to nationals for the seventh year. Since joining XPO in 2010, he has driven over one million accident-free miles.
- **Ernie Budlowski (Connecticut):** Ernie is returning to nationals for the 15th year, following a second-place finish at the 2025 NTDC. He has driven over two million accident-free miles over his 31-year career at XPO.
- **Joe Hicks (Rhode Island):** Joe is an eight-time Rhode Island Grand Champion and is competing at nationals for the 12th time. He has driven over one million accident-free miles since he joined XPO in 2007.
- **Steve Iburg (Iowa):** Steve is making his sixth trip to nationals, having achieved two million accident-free miles earlier this year after 23 years on the road with XPO.

XPO's 2026 NTDC Finalists

State	Name	Class
Arizona	Andres Orozco	4-Axle
California	Jimmie Roy	Straight Truck
Connecticut	Ernie Budlowski	Sleeper
Connecticut	Tom Griffin	Straight Truck
Connecticut	John Brown	Twins
Idaho	Ben Scholes	4-Axle
Idaho	Josh Jetton	Straight Truck
Idaho	Jeff Halford	3-Axle
Iowa	David Wollbrink	3-Axle
Iowa	Steve Iburg	Twins
Louisiana	Curt McMellon	Tank Truck
Massachusetts	Rich Sweeney	Flatbed
Michigan	Ron Looks	Straight Truck
Minnesota	Nick Farness	Twins
Montana	Bruce Winter	4-Axle
Montana	Dustin Lofts	3-Axle
Montana	Scott Courtney	Tank Truck
Nevada	Brandon Hardy	5-Axle
New Jersey	Lorenzo Ramos	Straight Truck
New Jersey	Miguel Valle	Twins
New Mexico	James Martinez	Flatbed
New York	Dave May	Straight Truck
North Dakota	Brad Morrow	5-Axle
North Dakota	Jon Simonson	Flatbed
Ohio	Matthew Keeney	4-Axle
Pennsylvania	Tommy Pearce	3-Axle

Rhode Island	Joe Daccache	Twins
Rhode Island	Joe Hicks	3-Axle
Vermont	Lenny Trifaro	Tank Truck
Virginia	Robbie Cottrell	3-Axle
Washington	Chris Poynor	3-Axle
Washington	Ray Sitton	Tank Truck
Washington	Robert Dean	Flatbed
Washington	Andrey Grishchuk	4-Axle
West Virginia	Larry Gorby	Tank Truck
Wisconsin	Jeremy Steger	4-Axle

To learn more about each competitor, visit the [NTDC webpage](#) on [XPO.com](#).

About XPO

XPO, Inc. (NYSE: XPO) is a leader in asset-based less-than-truckload (LTL) freight transportation in North America. The company's customer-focused organization efficiently moves 16 billion pounds of freight per year, enabled by its proprietary technology. XPO serves 55,000 customers with 594 locations and 37,000 employees in North America and Europe, and is headquartered in Greenwich, Conn., USA. Visit [xpo.com](#) for more information, and connect with XPO on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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