



# Media Release

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## 2017's champion truck driver is found

New Zealand's champion truck driver for 2017 has been found following a highly competitive final of the NZ Truck Driving Championship held at Claudelands Events Centre in Hamilton last Friday.

Northland's Simon Reid of SJ Reid Transport proved his knowledge and skill across the many different aspects of the competition to take the victory and the title of NZ's Champion Truck Driver 2017.

The competition was incredibly tight with only a handful of points separating the top few competitors. For his efforts Simon took home a \$6,000 cheque courtesy of major event sponsors TR Group and Master Drive Services.

24 regional and company heat winners fought it out across a range of theory and practical tests to find four class winners as well as the New Zealand Young Driver of the Year and the overall champion.

"To even have a chance of winning in amongst such a competitive field requires a high level of competence across a range of disciplines," says competition coordinator Mark Ngatuere. "It's not just driving, it's a detailed technical knowledge of the machinery and the complex matrix of rules and regulations that govern our industry."

In the rigid sections Sam Linton from Emmerson's Transport took out the Class 2 competition and Andrew Crandon of Linfox Logistics won the Class 3 & 4 category.

Matthew Jackson of Ben Allen Transport came out on top of the Truck-Trailer Combination section, while John Baillie of Baillie Transport won the Tractor-Semi Combination category for the second year running.

In the ERoad NZ Young Truck Driver of the Year, David Rogers of Tranzliquid picked up the \$1,500 winners cheque courtesy of ERoad. This category is limited to drivers 25 years old and younger and grows in strength and numbers every year.

"The Young Driver of the Year category is an important event to recognise some of the excellent young people in our industry and is designed to help inspire those who may be thinking about getting into road transport," says RTF Chief Executive Ken Shirley.

"The competition steering committee would like to thank John Essex, Geoff Wright, Sandy Walker, Simon Carson, Grant Turner, Jeff Fleury, Hayley O'Connor, the Women in Road Transport network and Chief Adjudicator Don Wilson for their help in putting together such a well-run event. We also appreciate the work that our associations put into to running the regional qualifying heats and supporting the overall event."

"Andrew Carpenter and his team at TR Group and Master Drive Services, as the major Championship sponsors, deserve a great deal of thanks for their continued support of the event. Without our sponsors events such as this would struggle to get off the ground," says Shirley.

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