



# FIA 5th Round EUROPEAN FINALS RACEREPORT



The Final round of the FIA European Dragracing Championship always take place in the United Kingdom at the famous Santa Pod Raceway.

On 5-8 September 2024 it was this case again and in certain Pro classes it was not decided yet! That made it an exciting weekend and stressful for the teams involved.

The stakes were high as they worked so hard all season to make it theirs and of course all want to hold the big trophy above their heads for themselves and their sponsors that make it all happen.

And that came with ups and downs for different raceteams that entered this Final Dragrace event at Santa Pod. Traditionally it is a special event and the teams will bring extra performance as they have nothing to lose considering the long winter ahead and preparing for the 2025 season. Some teams are doing in a few weeks the National Finals for their local Dragracing Championship.



From Finland it was Jere Rantaniemi who pulled it off! He became the new 2024 FIA Pro Modified European Champion with his Turbocharged Chevrolet Camaro!

And also won the Finals at Santa Pod Raceway! He also won at TIERP this season and it was for some beyond belief that he managed to pull it off at the Finals.

They raced for it! At the NitrolympX in Hockenheim during the 4th round he collected zero points! That says a lot. Dragracing is a peculiar Sport! To predict the outcome made many minds spin and it is never sure what the outcome will be.

Dutch Pro Modified racer must have tasted it...but it was him who all thought would do it that became runner-up again and now in 2024. Again it was an Orange Car...a Dutch colour!



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Photo by Mike Kraal (C)  
**FIA TOP FUEL EUROPEAN CHAMPION 2024 INDIA ERBACHER - SWISS**

In TOP FUEL DRAGSTER it was even more strange how the outcome of the FIA 2024 European Championship title would end up. You can not make this up I heard several journalists saying during the Sunday evening Final round to claim their victory on the Santa Pod 1000ft Dragstrip for this impressive class! Started from 3th place in points on Sunday and still claim the title at the end! Like I stated before the Dragracing Sport is one with a unpredictable outcome. It was good for the Swiss team of father Urs Erbacher a former Multiple European Champion to see his daughter India now taking the highest Dragracing title in Europe! Will she also make the step to live the dream in the USA, like Ida does? Never quit Lex Joon would say and chase your dreams, Only the future will tell. But if the fundings and sponsors are there I think they also are chasing this dream. In the USA it all started and it is a Professional job and the NHRA is a great venue for the Dragracing Sport in the World. The level of performance is even higher there and also the fanbase and spectators are huge. From Malta Duncan Micallef became runner-up in 2024 and ended up just 4 points!!! behind the Swiss Champion! Incredible so close. In third place it was Susanne Callin from Sweden with her Slick Tricks Racing Top Fuel Dragster that was with 256 points just behind Duncan. The team worked really hard to pull it off but to no avail she tried driving through severe tyre shake against India in a deciding run it with a big heart to go all the way... Dragracing can be really hard on parts but also on minds and that makes it special!



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PHOTO BY MIKE KRAAL (C)

SlickTricks Racing with Swedish Racer Susanne Callin chasing the European 2024 FIA TFD Title!



Photo by Mike Kraal (C)

Dutch Native Pro Modified Racer David Vegter with his Supercharged Camaro chasing the FIA2024 PM Title!



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Top Methanol only had 3 entry's with 2 Swedish A Fuel dragsters and one Supercharged Methanol Funnycar from the Bellio Family out of Belgium. After a fast to forget NitrolympX they asked the fans if the even should come over to the European Finals for the 5th round and Final round for the FIA European Championship title 2024. Which they have won before but loosing to much points at the 4th round made it kind of impossible to become the 2024 FIA Top Methanol Champion. They could still win the event and so they tried everything to make this happen. And so it succeeded and they managed to win the Finals Event! A great feeling for them and deserved after their engine damage in Germany... Now they had no damage and their new build engine and tune up really worked out fine! That makes them happy to go in the winter months and concentrate on the 2025 season. Sponsors are allways wanted ofcourse because this class consumes finances over a whole Dragracing season for sure. It was Jonny Lagg who managed trough a weird final to collect enough points for the 2024 FIA Top Methanol Title after engine damage from both the A Fuel dragsters. Another class that is allways hard to predict during racing. Nitro is hard on parts, and these are not even Supercharged put still produce a tremendous amount of torque and kw's!



TOP METHANOL SANDRO BELLIO AT THE EUROPEAN FINALS SANTA POD RACEWAY 2024  
*Photo by Mike Kraal (C)*



A huge tyreshake for Jonny Lagg during the Euro Finals with his NGK A Fuel Dragster competing in Top Methanol with his Nitro Injected V8

Sandro Bellio won the FIA Top Methanol Finals at Santa Pod Raceway in the 5th round! In FIA Pro Stockit was allready decided that Multiple Master Champion Jimmy Alund from Sweden became again FIA European Champion. It was an all Swedish class raced at the 5th round of the FIA PSC at Santa Pod Raceway in the United Kingdom. The points were for the 2nd spot were strong suited by Robin Noren. Long time Pro Stock Car racer Michael Malmgren became 3rd in the 2024 season. This class is very competitive with their normally aspirated V8 engines and reaction times are critical in most of the cases. The high reving engine's with the lightweight of the these streamlined body's play also a big role. Jimmy Alund is the only on with a Chevrolet type body as in Camaro type. Robin Noren uses a Pontiac type body from a GXP same as Michael Malmgren. You can debate which is better but the domination of Jimmy would suggest Chevy. The speed and ET is under his belt and he reigns this class for a long time. The upset came when he lost in the first round of eliminations against Lars Britsmar! a 6.73 vs a 6.91! The reaction time was way better for Jimmy but along the way something happend as his ET was shown. I was at the TOP END During that specific run and all others from the Class started yelling when they came to the scruteneering building for fuel check and weight scale. He is my Hero they shouted! Finally Jimmy was beaten! It was kind of special to see the joy of the others as Jimmy Alund allways wins...and now he did not. Even all the fans where dissapointed in this matter, It was so unusual to see him loose...



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Photo by Mike Kraal (C)

Jimmy Alund was defeated in the 1st round of eliminations during the 5th round of the FIA European Championship at Santa Pod Raceway 8 sep 2024. This is a rare sight for all to see, after all he is mortal...



Photo by Mike Kraal (C)

Simon Ekengren from Sweden with his immaculate Dodge Dart Pro Stock Car at the FIA Euro Finals 2024

NITRO Funny Car raced at the European Finals in a FUNNY CAR Cup so to speak. Not like a 5 rounds FIA class like the others did during the 2024 FIA season. With 4 teams racing at the Euro Finals this is allways great to see as these extremely powerfull TOP FUEL Funnycars have the sme engine set up as the TOP FUEL Dragsters! Only is this they are using a short wheelbase and they sit behind the 11000 HP the engines produce estimated on Fuel use. They race the 1000 ft and not the 1/4 Mile as the extrem high speeds they can reach makes the Dragstrip to short now these days! It is just incredible to see this class and the TOP FUEL Dragsters as there is nothing like it! The extreme power and violence they produce is just RAW!!! You got to love them as a true Dragracer and these are the Kings of Class.



PHOTO BY MIKE KRAAL (C)

From Sweden it was Patrik Pers with the Speedghost Funnycar that showed his performance during the weekend and was going strong! A new European ET and and Speedrecord on Saturday in Q3 with an amazing 4.1746@299.69MPH!!! That is how these powerhouses should perform and the crowd went estatic! That is just incredible. And me saw him comming to myself in my telelens with this extrem speed you can hardly understand as in it self, believe me! The heat and thunder when they pass by only a hand reach away...man that is just out of this World. I know what you want to say, but you these amazing images like the one above here. They come not easy and not without risk. Respect for the Santa Pod Crew who make this all happen for the spectators and racers to go the track.



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I hereby like to thank all involved to ake this Euro Finals happen!

The people behind the scenes as they say, The volunteers, The Photographers, The Media The Santa Pod Racers Crew, The Track cleanup crew, The Scrutineers, The people who all day hand out the timing slips, The timing crew, The FIA Representative's and FIM-E Officials The announcers, and all others I forgot to mention here.

Without these hard working people the race can not be raced!

But not forget the family's involved and the spectators that buy these entry tickets to see it all and offcourse enjoy it! Some of them come at Santa Pod over 50 years!

The Family tradition that amkes Santa Pod so special as grandfathers raced here, then fathers and now sons. But Also Grandmothers and Matohers and now daughters.

If you are into dragracing then you know what it all takes to compete and to do a full FIA or FIM-E European Dragracing Championship is true dedication for the racer and his crew. Stay safe and have a great Off season to prepare for the 2025 FIA and FIM-E season.

SEE YOU AT THE TRACK!

**This report is made by Mike Kraaij (C)  
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