



# Middle Walk Times

A memento of UK Bus Driver of the Year 2018

bus driver of the year 

championing excellence since 1967



● "...and the winner is Ian Field, pictured with Blackpool's Mayor Gary Coleman and Mayoress Cllr Debbie Coleman.

## Ian sure had a 'field' day!

**At the start of the 2018 BDoY national final in Blackpool 91 drivers from all around the country were focussed on the big prize – the ultimate UK bus driving accolade and a not inconsiderable sum of money from the excellent prize funds. With 24 trophies and a total of £20,000 to be won competition was bound to be fierce, with all the usual tests of knowledge and skill plus one or two surprises to come!**

Sunday began with registration, breathalyser and then into the theory test. No matter how hard you revise nerves and memory can play tricks and this is the first trophy to be won... Out on the course the first surprise for regular competitors was a different starting place, then there was a new tail

swing test that caught out a lot of people, ouch! Precision parking... obstacle avoidance... judgement of length and width... smooth driving... 40 minutes for the nervous to fade and the stars to shine. It was an exciting and memorable day for everyone, with all the marshals and stewards doing their usual amazing job. In so many ways they are also stars!

At the end of it all there were 15 trophy and prize winners but just one overall champion. This year an astounded Ian Field from Stagecoach Scotland East was crowned the very worthy 2018 UK Bus Driver of the year!

We now look forward to 2019's final with great anticipation...

### Winner Ian gets his 'top 20' result!

**1st Place overall - Ian Field, Stagecoach East Scotland**

"My experience this year was quite surreal. After a lengthy break I really looked forward to getting back to the competition. Seeing all the faces of known organisers and other competitors was like a family gathering, very relaxing yet still that buzz of "Who will win?"

"All I wanted was to come in the top 20 so I was truly shocked to win. It's what all of us want - to win - but to me it means a bit more. It is not only pride and dedication to my passengers and company but also to my family, in which we have a long line of bus drivers.

"It is amazing to see all those who walked away with prizes this year but it was a great achievement for everybody just being there in the final. Thanks to the organisers of the event, what a great set up it is and how well it is delivered for everyone.

"I would urge any driver who thinks they have it in them to put their skills to the test and to enter in 2019 - it is a great experience and opportunity. I Look forward to seeing you all next year!"



● Happy to be back in Blackpool!

## 2nd overall – Anthony Quinn, Stagecoach West First success for Anthony and Stagecoach West...

"This is the first time a Stagecoach West driver has won at Bus Driver of the Year so they are extremely pleased with the result. The feeling

of hearing my name called out and walking down to collect my award, with everyone applauding, was totally amazing. I'd like to experience that again...BDoY is fantastic and I am looking forward to 2019!"



## 3rd overall – Raj Viswanathan, Go Ahead London Raj makes the podium...

"....In 2017, I finished

5th and this year improved to 3rd overall - and was again top placed London bus driver and for Go-Ahead Group. I'm very proud of my progress

to date and am determined to continue until I reach top place overall! Each year the course is updated and brings new challenges so I'd like to participate in this prestigious event every year if I can."



## 4th overall – Nicholas Graham, First Hampshire, Dorset & Berkshire Nicholas dines out on his success!

"I was delighted to take part in this year's Bus Driver of the Year final at Blackpool and to be placed 4th overall and 1st for FirstBus. When I returned to work the company was so pleased it arranged for me to appear in the local newspaper and on the local radio, which was really good. I have also been to several award dinners within company. I am hoping to qualify again next year and maybe do even better..."



# High standards - almost everywhere!

**This year we were very pleased to welcome The Worshipful, the Mayor of Blackpool, Councillor Gary Coleman and Mayoress Councillor Debbie Coleman who were with us for the second year, Gary having been Deputy Mayor in 2017.**

The Mayor was most entertaining when delivering his welcome at the gala dinner on Saturday evening, regaling us of his time in the bus industry in Blackpool where he started as a seasonal tram conductor in 1987, progressing up to Depot Inspector in 1997. It is good to have a guest who knows the industry so well.

To present the trophies and awards we were delighted to welcome Joan Aitken who also knows the industry very well. Having been Traffic Commissioner for Scotland since 2003, Joan will be retiring from that post in 2019. Her passion for the industry was evident from her speech and is summed up in her comment below. Congratulations to Joan on being awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours. Joan Aitken OBE has a fine ring to it!

A very big thank you to all the competitors, their supporters, volunteers and Council members who made the competition another success despite the poor service given at the hotel, which had been sold by the Hilton Group to Britannia Hotels only a few weeks before our visit.

I visited the Grand Hotel in November to discuss the issues with the General Manager. She had only been appointed on the week of our competition and I was assured by her that standards have since improved. The hotel will now be promoted and managed to their 'Elite Venues Selection' brand standard. An extract from her letter to me:

*"Moving forward for your event in 2019 I can confirm the main hotel bar will be open*



● Joe Mackie with guests (l-r) Mayoress Councillor Debbie Coleman, The Worshipful, the Mayor of Blackpool Councillor Gary Coleman and Traffic Commissioner for Scotland Joan Aitken.

*all day/night, every day throughout your event. People will be seated for breakfast. Reception is now staffed according to arrivals and our computer systems and credit card machines have been up-dated, so there is no need for the main group organiser to check in first as was the case this year. All rooms will be serviced during your stay, this being the norm for anyone staying in the hotel at any time. I wanted to thank you personally for giving the hotel the chance to redeem its self in 2019, I know we clearly failed you on many levels during 2018 event. "*

A big thank you also to Paul MacKay, who has taken over the role of Competition Secretary, for the efficient manner in which he made the arrangements before the event and ensured their delivery on the day.

It is now time to look forward to the 2019 competition with entries from all around the country leading to high standards and close competition once again!

**Joe Mackie,  
Chairman  
UK Bus Driver of the Year Association.**

# The skill of being a good driver

"The best driver is the one who loves his or her job because he or she cares about the people who travel with them and is confident that they are doing a good job of looking after them. A driver who is a bad timekeeper is not much use to either the depot, wondering if he or she will saunter in, or to the passengers standing at the stop wondering if the bus will turn up. So as well as having the skills to control the vehicle and manoeuvre round tight corners and bicycles, I admire those drivers who, day in day out, turn up for their work and want to get people safely on their way.

"I am also struck by how calm good drivers are, how they drive without being riled by the idiocy of other road users, how good they are with passengers and how they handle tense and difficult situations. For passengers a journey may be a happy

or routine occasion, but for some passengers they may be unwell or frightened or lost and need more than anything to be reassured and helped. Unfortunately, not all passengers are pleasant and it takes true skill to stay in command and retain the security of the bus.

"How good it is, therefore, that the BDoY competition can celebrate the professional bus drivers of Great Britain who make such a difference to the quality of people's lives every day and who do so with such skill and confidence? I have been delighted to be part of the 2018 event and congratulate all the finalists on getting there."



● Joan Aitken.

# And the 2018 winners were...



● A very happy Ian Field!

## Bus Driver of the Year 2018: Ian Field - Stagecoach East Scotland

- **The Coventry Trophy** Donated by Coventry Road Accident Prevention Council.
- **The Road Operators' Safety Council Award** £1,500 cheque.
- **The Unite Trophy** and £1,500 cheque
- **Highest-placed Stagecoach competitor: The Stagecoach Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.
- **Highest-placed competitor from a company in membership of the Road Operators' Safety Council:** The ROSCO Trophy and £500 cheque.
- **Best competitor from a depot in Scotland: The Joe Mackie Shield** and £100 cheque.
- **The John Boxall Medallion** Donated by the UK BDoY Council.

● *The winner also receives a mini-holiday in London, courtesy of TfL, which will include visits to the capital's Surface Transport Control Centre and other places of interest, plus a "New Routemaster" bus driving experience.*

### Runner-up: Anthony Quinn - Stagecoach West

- **BDoY Trophy** and cheque for £1,500
- **Best competitor from a depot in England: The Giles Fearnley Shield** and £100 cheque.
- **Second-highest-placed competitor from a Stagecoach company: The Stagecoach Shield** and £500 cheque. The winner also receives a two-night break at the Grand Hotel in Blackpool, courtesy of the Britannia Hotel Group.

### Third Place: Raj Viswanathan - Go-Ahead London

- **BDoY Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.
- **Highest-placed Go-Ahead Group competitor: The Go-Ahead Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.
- **Highest-placed London Buses competitor: The London Buses Cup** and £1,000 cheque.

### Fourth Place: Nicholas Graham - First Hampshire, Dorset & Berkshire

- **BDoY Trophy** and £750 cheque.
- **Highest-placed competitor from a FirstGroup company: The FirstGroup Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.

### Fifth Place: Graham Hall - Stagecoach South East

- **BDoY Trophy** and £500 cheque.

### Second-highest-placed RATP Dev competitor:

- Terence Miles - RATP Dev London**
- **The RATP Dev Shield** and £500 cheque.

### Highest-placed National Express competitor:

- John Black - National Express Xplore Dundee**
- **The National Express Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.

### Second-highest-placed National Express competitor:

- Stephen Bate - National Express Bus**
- **The National Express Trophy** and £500 cheque.

### Second-highest-placed London Buses competitor:

- Delfino Gouveia de Freitas - RATP Dev London**
- **The London Buses Shield** and £500 cheque.
  - **Highest-placed RATP Dev competitor: The RATP Dev Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.

### Second-highest-placed Go-Ahead Group competitor:

- Stephen Appiah - Go-Ahead London**
- **The Go-Ahead Shield** and £500 cheque.

### Second-highest-placed competitor from a FirstGroup company:

- Toni Bradley - First Glasgow**
- **The FirstGroup Shield** and £500 cheque.

### Highest-placed competitor from an independent company:

- Andrew Cawley - Peoplesbus**
- **BDoY Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.

### Highest-placed competitor from an ALBUM company:

- Steven McLeod - Lothian Buses**
- **The ALBUM Trophy** and £1,000 cheque.

### Best Theory Test Result:

- Adam Ksiazek - First Aberdeen**
- **BDoY Trophy** and £300 cheque.

### Best competitor from a depot in Wales:

- Glenn Foster - First Cymru**
- **The Donald Macdonald Memorial Shield** and £100 cheque.

### The Vice-President's Award:

Best-presented buses in use at the National Final

(a) Newly-delivered or up to one-year old: **LTZ 1000 - RATP Dev London**

(b) One to five years old: **BV17 CTX - Stagecoach Cumbria**

(c) Over five years old: **LTZ 5399 - Lothian Buses**

- All will receive commemorative plaques.



● Graham Hall



● Terence Miles



● John Black



● Stephen Bate



● Delfino Gouveia de Freitas



● Stephen Appiah



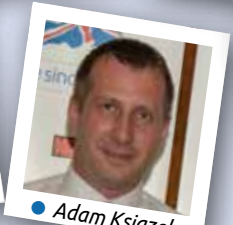
● Toni Bradley



● Andrew Cawley



● Steven McLeod



● Adam Ksiazek



● Glenn Foster

# Blackpool 2018



• ...Ready...steady...GO!



• ...and WE love Blackpool!



• Here, shut that door!



• Enjoying the challenge.



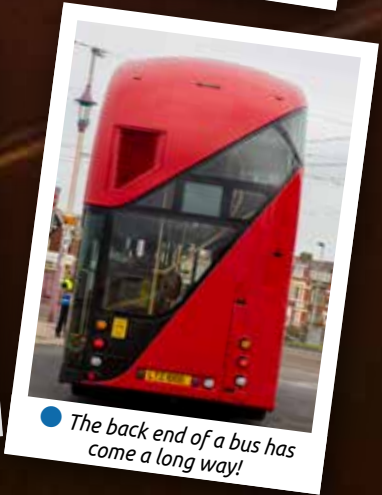
• Our wonderful marshals measure up...



• ...and then 6 came along at once!



• In theory we'll all pass this...



• The back end of a bus has come a long way!