

RIISING STARS AND RETURNING CHAMPIONS TO LAUNCH 2026 FIA EUROPEAN TITLE CHARGES IN ITALY

7 Apr 2026



The iconic World Circuit La Conca in the south of Italy will host the first round of the 2026 Mondokart.com FIA Karting European Championship this weekend with OK and Junior drivers launching their pursuits to claim the European Champion title.

The young drivers will be hoping to follow in the footsteps of a long list of former FIA Karting European Champions including Sebastian Vettel, George Russell, Max Verstappen, reigning FIA Formula One World Champion Lando Norris and current Championship leader Kimi Antonelli, who seized back-to-back European titles in 2020 and 2021. In total 93 Junior category drivers and 95 OK category drivers from 50 different nationalities make up a packed grid of hopefuls this year.

The La Conca circuit, just outside the Italian town of Muro-Leccese, last hosted an FIA Karting event in 2015 when Karol Basz and Logan Sargeant were crowned World Champions in the KF and KF-Junior categories respectively. The fast-flowing, technical circuit is beloved by drivers and fans alike and a fitting track to start the 2026 FIA Karting season which has expanded this year with new Arrive and Drive championships joining the calendar.

Maxxis will continue as the tyre supplier for OK and Junior this year whilst ETS Racing Fuels will power the karts on sustainable fuel throughout the season.

All rounds of the Mondokart.com FIA Karting European Championship will be **LIVE and FREE** to watch on the FIA Karting YouTube channel.

Mohammed Ben Sulayem, FIA President, said:

"This weekend marks the start of a new season and the next phase of our FIA Global Karting Plan. It is a season marked by an expanded calendar, new championships, and new events around the world.

"With a rising number of drivers across our championships, this season truly reflects the growth of FIA Karting and the progress we are making to increase motorsport participation worldwide. I wish all competitors, teams, volunteers and officials the very best for the season."

OK

Leading the pack and hoping to convert his 2025 FIA European Junior title into an OK title is Dutch driver Dean Hoogendoorn who will be looking to take a smooth step up into the senior category this year as he joins the Parolin team on the grid. His former teammate and current Junior World Champion Noah Baglin will however be looking to capitalise on his strong end to the 2025 season and race to an early advantage in the championship.

2025 FIA Karting Rookie of the Year, James Anagnostiadis, has already begun his 2026 season strongly and cemented his position as a driver to watch for potential silverware this year. Meanwhile, 2024 European Champion Joe Turney, who has now narrowly missed out on a World Championship title on three occasions, will be looking to add another European title to his name as one of the most experienced drivers on the grid. Fellow Brit Evan Purcell joins him on the KR Motorsport team this season.

Zac Drummond and Lev Krutoholov have also impressed in early 2026, sharing a pole position and race win at La Conca already, whilst Jarlath Sayer and Matvey Dergunov have also shown early signs of promise.

Others to watch include 2025 FIA Karting Shootout Junior winner Valerio Viapiana who joins Tony Kart and fellow shootout competitor Tomasz Cichoracki who finished third in the inaugural FIA Karting Arrive and Drive World Cup (Junior) last year and joins Ward Racing on the grid.

In total 95 drivers from 41 countries will be battling it out on track across the four rounds of this year's Mondokart.com FIA Karting European Championship (OK).

[View the OK entry list](#)

JUNIOR

Heading into the opening round, Antonio Pizzonia is high on the list of drivers to watch after a dominant start to the year which has included a win on the La Conca circuit back in January. As the son of former Formula 1 driver Antonio Pizzonia the young driver has high expectations he'll be attempting to live up to over the season.

Looking to secure back-to-back wins after his dominant performance over the Easter weekend is Italian driver Julian Frasnelli who led the Champions of the Future Junior final from P1 to the chequered flag on home soil.

Fellow Italian Niccolò Perico joins the FIA Karting championships after an impressive early career that has included multiple race wins, being crowned Italian ACI Karting Champion in Mini U10 and has already been picked up by the Mercedes Junior Programme. Will Green, the young British driver who joined the Williams Racing Driver Academy, is also tipped to do well after his solid early season performances.

Transitioning into the European Championship this year is reigning FIA Karting Academy Trophy (Junior) winner Oiva Vettenranta who joins the Tony Kart team for the 2026 season and Gioele Giardello who won the 2025 FIA Karting OK-NJ World Cup. Both drivers competed in last year's FIA Karting Shootout which supports and rewards the next generation of motor sport champions.

Czech driver Babicek Zdenek travels to La Conca with 3 race wins under his belt already this year and another name to watch this season whilst Daniel Miron Lorente from Spain has had a similarly strong run of recent results and will be looking to convert his current solid form into a successful race result this weekend.

In total, 93 drivers from 36 countries make up the Junior grid for the opening round of the 2026 Mondokart.com FIA Karting European Championship.