



# GT NEWS

NEWSLETTER nr 2 - 16th FEBRUARY 2007

## OFFICIAL TEST DAYS AND MEDIA LAUNCH PREPARING FOR AN EXCELLENT SEASON !

**SRO**  
Motorsports Group

is delighted to invite you  
to the Media Launch of the 2007 season  
which will take place at the Autodromo di Monza  
on February 22nd at 13:00  
in the context of the official test session

THE FOLLOWING SERIES WILL BE TESTING

- FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP
- FIA GT3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
- GT4 EUROPEAN CUP
- ADAC GT MASTERS

The 2007 season of the FIA GT and FIA GT3 European Championships will get underway on February 22nd at the Autodromo Nazionale di Monza, in Italy, with a two-day FIA-sanctioned official test session, including a media day and press conference on the first day.

Teams due to attend the test days include All-Inkl.com with the Lamborghini Murciélago cars, Race Alliance and Aston Martin Racing BMS Aston Martin DBR9 cars, Playteam and JMB Racing with their Maserati MC 12 cars - and the Rock Media Pagani Zonda.

In GT2, there should be Ferrari and Porsche cars on the track, with teams including AF Corse, Team Edil-Cris, Scuderia Ecosse and Tech9 Motorsport.

As far as the GT3 category is concerned, seventeen cars are currently expected, including the Ascari KZ1R, Aston Martin DBRS9, Corvette Z06, Ferrari 430 GT3, Jaguar XKR, Ford Mustang, Lamborghini Gallardo and Porsche 997. Furthermore, some cars from the ADAC GT Masters and GT4 European Cup will be testing.

## KRISTIAN GHEDINA AS GUEST OF HONOUR

Guest of Honour for the Press Conference to launch the 2007 season of the FIA GT Championship will be the Champion skier-turned-racing-driver Kristian Ghedina. The Italian will be at the track on Thursday to watch the cars testing, and talk to the journalists present.

## ACCREDITATION

Members of the press wishing to attend the Media Launch and Test Sessions should contact Jacquie Groom on [jacquie@sro.co.uk](mailto:jacquie@sro.co.uk), including a letter on the official headed paper of the publication concerning, by February 19th at the latest. We look forward to seeing you there !



## PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

Thursday, February 22nd

09.00 – 10.00 GT3 / GT4 / ADAC GT

10.05 – 11.20 FIA GT

11.25 – 12.25 GT3 / GT4 / ADAC GT

12.30 : Photo Session

13.00 : Press Conference in the media centre

13.30 : Media laps & lunch

14.00 – 15.00 FIA GT

15.05 – 16.20 GT3 / GT4 / ADAC GT

16.25 – 17.25 FIA GT

Friday, February 23rd

09.00 – 10.00 FIA GT

10.05 – 11.20 GT3 / GT4 / ADAC GT

11.25 – 12.25 FIA GT

12.30 – 13.30 : Photo Session

14.00 – 15.00 GT3/GT4/ADAC GT

15.05 – 16.20 FIA GT

16.25 – 17.25 GT3/GT4/ADAC GT

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PLUS MUCH MORE...



For more information on the teams,  
drivers and everything about the  
FIA GT Championship,  
please visit :  
[www.fiagt.com](http://www.fiagt.com)



## ALL-INKL.COM ENTERS TWO LAMBORGHINI MURCIELAGO CARS FOR 2007



For 2007, RS Line and Reiter Engineering will be coming together under the banner All Inkl.com Racing to run two Lamborghini Murciélago cars in the FIA GT Championship, under the lead of All-Inkl.com's René Munnich.

One car will be led by 2006 All Inkl.com driver, and triple FIA GT Champion, Christophe Bouchut. His team-mate is yet to be announced. "I am very happy to work with the All-Inkl team as I enjoy the friendly family atmosphere," he said. "The car has made good progress, and although we might not be able to fight for the title, we can aim for good results and podium finishes, which would be a great reward for the hard work of the whole team, and most importantly René Munnich and Reiner Steifel" Dutch driver Jos Menten announced that he and Peter Kox would be driving the other Murciélago. Menten, who took pole position at the Paul Ricard HTTT in a Corvette C6, explained: "Last year I learned a lot in the Le Mans Series. I can look back on a solid season with the Corvette C6.R but the results were not always equal to the performances in the cockpit. I am very happy to have agreed terms with Hans and his team. It feels good to be part of the Reiter Engineering family. Sharing the car with Peter offers good perspectives and the team has a lot of experience with the car. We want to battle for the major honours with the Lamborghini Murciélago R-GT." Hans Reiter commented: "I am pleased as I believe we have a strong driver line-up for 2007. I believe Jos is one of the most underestimated drivers around, while Peter and



Christophe's qualities are well known. The two teams fit well together, and GT racing is a team sport; results come from a combination of team work and speed." The Lamborghini Murciélago made steady progress through the 2006 season, culminating in the Adria round, where the car was fastest in one of the free practice sessions and stayed with

the front-runners for much of the race. "We have made some small evolutions over the winter," Hans continued. "We have worked on the traction control and we have a modified aerodynamic package; the process is continuous. Our aim is to close the gap to the front of the field; we are still a relatively small team compared to Vitaphone or BMS Scuderia Italia. But we have the right drivers and the right tyres, with Michelin, and if we make no mistakes, we should be there!"

### BOUCHUT CONTINUES ROLE AS FIA GT3 TEST DRIVER

As well as his race career with All-Inkl.com Racing and the Lamborghini Murciélago, Christophe Bouchut will continue his role as official test driver for the FIA GT3 European Championship. He will continue the important task of evaluating the performance of the cars. "Working with the FIA on balancing the performance of the cars taking part in the FIA GT3 European Championship is a real recognition of my work as a driver. It entails adaptation skills, and ultra-fine and quick sensitivity in order to give a correct and clear opinion to the FIA. I take this work extremely seriously and with all possible tact, considering any possible links I might have with teams or manufacturers: I am totally independent and the FIA knows this! It is a fantastic job to analyse the performance of each car; and being the sole driver to undertake this work means you cannot make any mistakes. I am the only driver who knows all the differences between the cars. It is a heavy responsibility which needs as much professionalism as possible. The FIA is a fantastic organisation and I am proud to take part in this work for them."

## DRIVERS



### CHRISTOPHE BOUCHUT

Age 40 France  
FIA GT Champion, 2001 & 2002  
FIA N-GT Champion, 2000  
12 victories  
11 pole positions  
26 podiums



### PETER KOX

Netherlands - age 42  
3 victories  
6 podiums



### JOS MENTEN

Netherlands - age 25  
1 pole position  
1 podium



## ANDREA AND ANDREA RACE TOGETHER...



### ANDREA BERTOLINI (ITA)

Age : 33 - FIA GT Champion, 2006

FIA GT Career : 9 victories

5 pole positions

22 podiums



### ANDREA PICCINI (ITA)

Age : 33 - runner-up in 2006

FIA GT Career : 5 victories

5 pole positions

12 podiums

## SCUDERIA PLAYTEAM SARAFREE JOINS THE FIA GT FOR 2007

After three intense days of testing in Adria on February 6th, 7th and 8th, Scuderia Playteam-Sarafree has announced the names of the drivers for their two Maserati MC 12 cars for the 2007 FIA GT Championship.

One car will be in the hands of 2006 Champion Andrea Bertolini and 2006 runner-up Andrea Piccini. The other car will be driven by Giambattista Giannoccaro and Alessandro Pier Guidi.

Scuderia Playteam-Sarafree already took part in the Mugello round of the 2006 season, where Toni Vilander qualified the car in third position, and led for most of the first hour in atrocious weather conditions. Giannoccaro and Pier Guidi shared the car with the Finnish driver.

"The Maserati MC12 looks good, although the weather was wet and cold which made testing difficult," Andrea Piccini said afterwards. "But it is very nice to drive; the traction is great, and it is more like a single-seater than other GT cars I have driven. The team is very well organised and it looks like being a good season."

After five years alongside Jean-Denis Deletraz, with whom he has claimed five wins and finished in second place last year, this will be a big change for Piccini. "It's nice to have an all-Italian car, with two Italian drivers, an Italian team, Italian-made car and tyres," he said. "I'll miss Jean-Denis, but he's happy for me, and we'll keep in touch ! This is really going to be a good challenge."

Reigning Champion Bertolini is also looking forward to 2007. "I won the Championship last year, but although that will remain a good memory for my whole life, I now have to look forward to the new challenge. The good news about 2007 is that I will race with Andrea Piccini in a totally Italian team."

## BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA & BARWELL TEST AT PAUL RICARD HTTT

The full range of Aston Martin racing cars have been testing at the Paul Ricard HTTT circuit. As well as the Aston Martin DBR9, which runs in the FIA GT Championship, the test included the DBRS9, a race-winner in the FIA GT3 European Championship last year, and the N24, which is one of the potential cars for the new GT4 European Championship. BMS Scuderia Italia took the opportunity to test drivers for their 2007 campaigns; other teams present included French team Hexis Racing and British team Barwell Motorsport, which was testing two DBRS9 cars, one of which was running on bio-ethanol fuel.

Dr Bez, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Aston Martin, attended for the first day and drove all three cars. Bez said, "It was great to be present at the first ever Aston Martin group test and to get together with some of the teams and drivers who represent our company so well on the track. The opportunity to try the DBR9 and the DBRS9 was a great experience and gave me a real insight into the capabilities of those cars. "It was also a pleasure to get back into the Vantage N24 and to see it on the track with the GT1 and GT3 cars. Since announcing the specification and price in January, the response to the Vantage N24 has been incredible and the first customer cars are in build now for delivery in April."

Italian team Aston Martin Racing BMS took the opportunity to test drivers in their DBR9 and DBRS9. Barwell Motorsport attended the test with two DBRS9s, one of which was running on bio-ethanol fuel. Barwell Managing Director Mark Lemmer commented: "The test has been fantastic. We would have preferred sunshine on both days but we got a huge amount of work done on the first day and it has been really useful. Now we know how good the facility is, it would be great if Aston Martin made this test an annual event."

In recognition of their successes in 2006, Aston Martin GT3 drivers Jonathan Cocker, Leo Machitski, Massimiliano Mugelli and Marcello Zani got the opportunity to test one of the Aston Martin Racing DBR9 GT1 cars and all acquitted themselves well in damp conditions.



## TECH9 MOTORSPORT MOVE UP TO GT2 - EDWARDS AND MACHITSKI SHARE PORSCHE



The 2006 British and FIA GT3 European Champions, Leo Machitski and Sean Edwards respectively, have come together for 2007 to take the next step in GT racing, when they will race the Tech9 Motorsport Porsche 911 GT3-RSR.

The team undertook a shakedown on February 7th at Brands Hatch. "The target was simply to put 200 km on the car and bed everything in," commented team owner Phil Hindley. "The car ran beautifully, as you would expect. Porsche got us into an early build slot so that we could shake down and then test the car before it goes to Zhuhai for the start of the FIA GT Championship."

Leo Machitski tried the car first: "I'm quite tall, but it's very comfortable," he said. "Everything is where you want it to be. It was very tempting to squeeze the throttle and despite the cold weather, it was very hard to go slowly. I can start to feel the excitement already."

Part of Sean Edwards's prize for winning the 2006 FIA GT3 European Championship was a factory tyre deal with Michelin, which means 40 sets of tyres for this year. "That's very significant for a team like this," Hindley continued. "Every penny counts and we run the team very frugally. It's crucial we have a good season, and it's fantastic to have two GT3 Champions racing together."



"It is great to move up from GT3 to GT2 after winning the championship last year," Sean Edwards said. "It would not have been possible without the great help from Stephane, which I am very grateful for! I think we have a strong chance this year to do well as the car is great, the team is great and the driver pairing is also very good. It will be interesting to see how the new RSR compares to the 430, but I think they will be very close. It looks like GT2 is going to be a very exciting and close championship this season and I am looking to carry the momentum from 2006 through to 2007 as well."

The Tech9 plan for 2007 also includes a new group of young drivers racing in the FIA GT3 European Championship, with the aim of moving some of them into GT2 in 2008. Phil Hindley is very keen to extend his team's run of four consecutive GT titles - in British GT and then the FIA European GT3 Championship.

The next step for the Tech 9 team will be the official FIA GT test at Monza on February 22nd and 23rd, where the new Porsche will be run in anger for the first time.



## THE TECH9 GT3 STARS



### SEAN EDWARDS

Great Britain - Age 20  
 2006 : FIA GT3 EUROPEAN CHAMPION (Tech9 Motorsport Porsche 997 GT3)  
 3 wins, 6 top-three finishes  
 1 pole position  
 2005 : British GT Championship  
 2004 : Formula Renault UK



### LEO MACHITSKI

Great Britain / Russia - Age 20  
 2006 : BRITISH GT3 CHAMPION (Barwell Motorsport Aston Martin DBRS9)  
 FIA GT3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP (Barwell Motorsport Aston Martin DBRS9)  
 2005 : Dutch Supercar Challenge  
 2004 : Britcar Production

### TECH9 MOTORSPORT

The British-based team, led by Paul Hindley, has won four consecutive titles :

2006 : FIA GT3 EUROPEAN CHAMPION  
 2005 : BRITISH GT3 CHAMPIONS  
 2004 : BRITISH GT CUP CHAMPIONS  
 2003 : BRITISH GT CUP CHAMPIONS

## JMB RACING ANNOUNCES PROGRAMME FOR 2007



Monaco-based team JMB Racing has announced its racing plans for 2007. This includes entering two Maserati MC12 cars in the GT1 category of the 207 FIA GT Championship.

The team will also enter three Ferrari 430 GT3 cars in the FIA GT3 European Championship, and will run two Maserati Trofeo cars in the GT4 European Cup.

JMB last ran Maserati MC 12 cars in the 2005 season, when the team finished second in the Teams classification behind Vitaphone, and was victorious at Magny-Cours with the line-up of Karl Wendlinger and Andrea Bertolini; the duo remained title contenders until the very last race in Bahrain.

Last season, JMB, in collaboration with

GruppeM, ran Ferrari 430 GT2 cars in the GT2 category, winning in Brno with Tim Sugden and Iradj Alexander, who also claimed a further three podium finishes

JMB Racing and Kessel Racing also undertook the first test of the 2007 model of the Ferrari 430 GT3 at the Italian circuit of Vairano. The main 2007 evolutions include 18 inch rims, a new braking system, aerodynamic improvements to the splitter and rear wing etc, as well as a weight reduction. These have brought marked improvements to the handling and performance of the car.

Another three-day test will be undertaken by the development team before the presentation of the car during the official FIA GT3 tests in Monza on February 22nd and 23rd.

## ASTON MARTIN BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA CONFIRMS DRIVERS FOR 2007

Aston Martin Racing BMS and Pirelli undertook two days of testing at the Paul Ricard HTTT circuit on February 9th and 10th. Fabio Babini and Jamie Davies, who have been confirmed as the drivers of the nr 23 car for 2007, completed extensive testing of the Pirelli tyres, and worked on further development. The cars were also driven by two young single-seater drivers, Alessandro Bonetti and Ferdinando Monfardini, who most recently drove in the World Series by Renault and GP2 respectively. These two drivers have now been confirmed as the drivers of the nr 22 Aston Martin DBR9 for the forthcoming season.

The team also tested its GT3 cars, the Aston Martin DBRS9, with confirmed drivers Diego Alessi, Giorgio Bartocci and Luca Formilli joined by young drivers Alex Frassinetti, Paolo Nocera and Mattia Pavoni.



## LONGIN SIGNS TWO-YEAR CONTRACT WITH JOHNSON CONTROLS



Bert Longin, driver with the GLPK Corvette for the last two years and three-times race winner, has signed a two-year contract with his sponsors, Johnson Controls.

"I am really pleased with this," Belgian driver Bert said. "I think this is recognition of what I achieved last season. For me, it is a sign that I am doing my job. I have never had a two-year contract before; now I can concentrate on the racing! The Corvette won in Zhuhai in 2005 and I can't wait to get there again."



### JAMIE DAVIES (GBR)

Age : 32

FIA GT CAREER  
12 podiums,  
3 wins

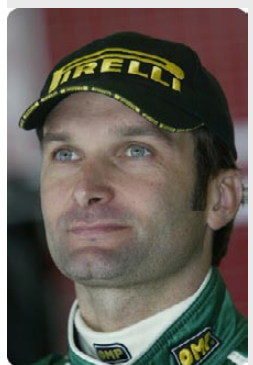


### ALESSANDRO BONETTI (ITA)

Age : 21

CAREER TO DATE  
2003 : Italian F3  
2004 : 2nd, Formula Renault 1.6  
2005 :Euro F3000

(Draco) - 4th  
2006 : World Series by Renault



### FABIO BABINI (ITA)

Age : 37  
FIA GT CAREER  
1 pole,  
21 podiums,  
4 wins



### FERNANDINO MONFARDINI (ITA)

Age : 22  
CAREER TO DATE  
2001 : Formula Renault Italy  
2002 : European Formula Renault

2003 : Formula Renault Italy  
2004 : Formula 3000  
2005 - 2006 : GP2



## JAGUAR XKR GT3 ON DISPLAY

The new Jaguar XKR Coupé was on display at the Autosport International Show at the NEC, Birmingham. Buckingham-based Apex Motorsport, under the direction of Richard Lloyd, has developed the XKR model for use in the FIA GT3 European Championship.

Lloyd and Apex have enjoyed huge racing success in the past, most recently with Bentley with whom they won the 2003 24 Hours of Le Mans. "It was obvious to us that the Jaguar name was missing from the list of GT3 contenders," said Lloyd. "We believe the new XKR has great potential for success, and Team Manager Dave Ward and the guys have been working flat out since receiving our first car at the end of September. We've still got a mountain to climb with roll out and first test scheduled to take place within the next five weeks and, of course, the first race of the season at Silverstone in May. The first car is sold and we have received very positive interest for another two so we're confident there will be plenty of Jaguars in the FIA paddock and in other emerging GT3 series around the world."

While Apex has Jaguar's blessing to compete with the XKR GT3, this is not a factory motorsport programme and the Apex race activities are independent of Jaguar. At the time of the programme's announcement in September, Stuart Dyble, Jaguar Board Director and Vice President, Communications and Public Affairs, Premier Automotive Group and Ford of Europe, said, "We welcome this initiative which will result in production Jaguar sportscars being seen once again on race circuits across Europe. We have just launched the all new Jaguar XKR road car, and GT3 is the natural race series in which to compete."

The Jaguar XKR GT3, featuring a 4.2 litre V8 supercharged engine, retains the aluminium body of its production cousin, but has had modifications made in line with the regulations. The definitive specification will be revealed following the official FIA track tests, the first of which takes place at Monza on February 22/23.



## FIRST RACING UNDERTAKES FIRST TESTS WITH THE LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO GT3

French team First Racing is planning to run a team of Lamborghini Gallardo cars in the FIA GT3 European Championship this season. The First Racing workshops, in Magny-Cours, will take delivery of the three cars in mid-February. Fabien Giroix and Hans Reiter once worked together in the context of the DTM, resulting in this latest collaboration.

The Lamborghini Gallardo raced in the 2006 season of the FIA GT3 European Championship, showing steady progress, with a third-place finish in the final race at Mugello.

A test session took place at Magny-Cours between Monday 15th and Wednesday 17th January, using a 2006 model of the car, fitted with all the 2007 evolutions except for the new rims, which are still to be prepared.

A full test programme was completed during the session, including checks on the fuel tank, programming tests on the gear box and a general check of the set-up and the installation of the data acquisition system, as well as the set-up of the chassis.

All the drivers currently in discussions for the 2007 season turned up for the test session, and were very happy with the car's handling and with how easy and pleasant it was to drive.

There were no technical problems whatsoever during the three days of testing, to the delight of the First Racing team and the Reiter Engineering staff. Although some of the seats have already been filled, there are still some places available.

The team will also be entering the cars in the FFSA GT Championship in France.

Technical characteristics : V10 engine, > 530 hp, sequential gear-box with steering wheel controls. Aluminium/carbon bodywork, 1200 kg



## **GIGAWAVE PUTS FIA GT VIEWERS IN THE DRIVING SEAT**



It has never been easy to transmit images from a racing car or racing motorcycle. But new developments in broadcasting technology, pioneered by Gigawave Limited, are set to transform the live coverage of the FIA GT and GT3 Championships



Up until recently, the only way to get on-board camera images from a racing car or motorcycle was to transmit the images to the TV Compound via a helicopter hovering above the race circuit. However, following the introduction of digital microwave links around five years ago, Gigawave engineers set out to exploit the benefits offered by digital technology and eliminate the need for a helicopter mid-point relay.

Having developed their new system, Gigawave engineers needed to test the system under actual race conditions. As part of a sponsorship deal with the Damax Team, it was planned to use three Ascari KZ-1R cars during the inaugural season of the FIA GT3 European Championship. However, the quality of the images provided by the new Gigawave digital on-board system soon resulted in Gigawave cameras being installed in GT1 and GT2 cars as part of the live coverage of FIA GT Championship races.

For the 2007 season, it is planned to install Gigawave digital on-board cameras in a total of ten cars for each FIA GT Championship race, starting with Zhuhai. Each car will have a camera in the passenger seat well mounted on a remotely controlled pan and tilt head. In addition, cars will be fitted with externally mounted and other speciality cameras, which can be remotely switched to give the Director the best shot.

Gigawave uses the same digital microwave technology to provide the host broadcaster with the wireless camera systems that are used for interviews and other live coverage of Pit Lane and Paddock action. The system can also be used to eliminate the need to lay thousands of metres of cable between track cameras and the outside broadcast truck.

In addition to providing the host broadcaster with live on-board camera material for each race, Gigawave has successfully carried out a 'Proof of Concept' test in which Gigawave engineers 'streamed' live coverage of the final round of last year's FIA GT3 Championship over the Internet. Using a standard 'QuickTime' player, people around the world were able to watch the race and on-board camera material with a delay of around 12 seconds!

Looking towards the future, Gigawave engineers will be using this year's FIA GT and GT3 Championships to test a new high definition version of their digital on-board camera system. Although it will be some time before FIA GT Championship races are broadcast in HD, the images are said to be stunning!

## WELCOME TO PAOLO CALLEA !

Teams and drivers contacting the SRO London offices might have noticed that there's a new face in the Team Relations department. Meet Paolo Callea, who has joined SRO to work on the FIA GT team relations.

Paolo has been actively involved in Motorsport since an early age. He had previous experience directly in karting, before moving to cars with Volvo and BMW. After he graduated at the University Ca' Foscari of Venice in "Marketing and Business Administration" he moved to England in 2005 to join the Motorsport Magazine Race Tech as Marketing Executive. In his previous position he boosted the brand awareness of the magazine by implementing branding strategies. Most importantly, he worked directly at the race track to be in touch with the industry's key players and maximize the exposure of the magazine. Our new staff member has accumulated a lot of experience in the Motorsport environment thanks to his studies, researches and the final thesis he is writing for his Masters in "Marketing and Communication" entitled "The Business of Motorsport".

Paolo is passionate and motivated; he will help Benjamin in the Team Relations for the FIA GT Championship. "I believe I have the energy, personality and experience to contribute to the SRO group and service its demanding Teams".

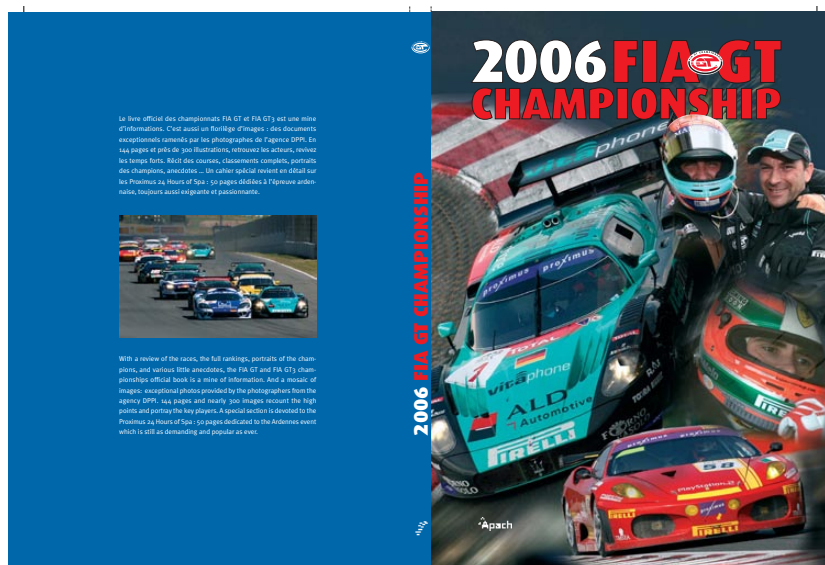


## 2006 FIA GT ANNUAL ON SALE !

The 2006 edition of the FIA GT Championship book - which also includes photos and reports on the inaugural season of the FIA GT3 European Championship - is now available from Belgian publishers Apach.

The book, which is 144 pages long, has over 200 colour photos, and costs 42 euros.

For more information, or to place an order, please contact Apach directly on APACH@APACH.BE



## TICKET SALES START FOR ROUND 1 OF THE 2007 SEASON : ZHUHAI

International ticket sales will get underway this weekend for the first round of the 2007 season, Zhuhai, China, on March 24th and 25th.

Tickets can be purchased on line from Hong-Kong based company Hong Kong Ticketing. Their web site is [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

Prices for the weekend are as follows :

VIP: HK\$1230

Trackside VIP: HK\$660

Paddock Pass: HK\$310

Grandstand (2 day): HK\$82

Grandstand (Sun): HK\$72 - Grandstand (Sat): HK\$52





## CONTACT INFORMATION

### SRO MOTORSPORTS GROUP



CHAIRMAN                      Stephane Ratel    email : sratel@sro.co.uk  
tel : +44 207 259 2598

PA to CHAIRMAN              Ssandrine Jarret email : sandrine@sro.co.uk  
tel : +44 207 259 2598

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### FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP



SERIES MANAGER              Patricia Kiefer                      email : patricia@sro.co.uk  
tel : +33 1 56 64 04 41

LOGISTICS MANAGER          Jürgen Barth                      email : jurgen@sro.co.uk  
tel : +49 7147 131 33

TEAM RELATIONS              Benjamin Franassovici              email : benjamin@sro.co.uk  
Paolo Callea                      email : paolo@sro.co.uk  
tel : +44 207 259 2598

PROMOTIONS MANAGER          Anne Bernard                      email : anne@sro.co.uk  
tel : +33 1 56 64 04 42

MEDIA DELEGATE                  Jacquie Groom                      email : jacquie@sro.co.uk  
tel : +41 21 784 2623

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### FIA GT3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP



TEAM RELATIONS                  Sandrine Jarret                      email : sandrine@sro.co.uk  
tel : +44 207 259 2598

PRESS OFFICER                      Frédéric Espinos                      email : frederic@sro.fr  
tel : +33 1 56 64 04 43

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110 Old Brompton Road  
London SW7 3RA  
Great Britain

tel : +44 207 259 2598  
fax : +44 207 370 4950

3 rue Foucault  
75016 PARIS  
France

tel : see above  
fax : +33 1 56 64 04 50

Praz-Buchilly 75  
1066 Epalinges  
Switzerland

tel : +41 21 784 2623  
fax : +41 21 784 2561