



## **ROUNDS 3 & 4 RACE REPORT**

*Weather:* partially cloudy, with a dry track.

*Attendance:* 68,000 over the two days, 50,000 on Sunday

### **ANDY PRIAULX OUSTS YVAN MULLER FROM THE LEAD**

BMW reaffirmed their supremacy at Magny-Cours. The German cars finished 1-2 in both races today extending their winning streak to eight consecutive victories in the FIA Touring Cars on the French racetrack.

The first race was decided by a dramatic fight between BMW Team Germany fellow drivers Jörg and Dirk Müller. While team manager Charly Lamm appeared very tense while watching action from the pit wall, Dirk followed Jörg closely and studied him, until he managed to make a winning move with three laps to go.

The second race was dominated by Andy Priaulx of BMW team UK, who sprinted from pole position and led until the chequered flag. Jörg Müller overtook two SEATs to secure another important second place.

As a result, Andy Priaulx took the championship lead, ousting Yvan Muller by 3 points, while BMW jumped ahead of SEAT in the Manufacturers Championship.

However it was not a negative weekend for the Spanish car maker, as Rickard Rydell and Jordi Gené claimed one third place apiece.

Chevrolet drivers were fighting for the podium again, although only Nicola Larini managed to score one in the second race.

Alfa Romeo had a black weekend. None of the N.technology drivers were on the pace from the free practice to the end of the second race, further evidence that Magny-Cours is not the best track for the red cars.

### **RACE 1: DIRK AND JÖRG MAKE A 1-2**

Thanks to the BMW cars superb starting capabilities, Jörg Müller stormed through the front row SEATs to enter the first corner in the lead. Fellow Team BMW Germany driver, Dirk Müller also shot off the line promoting himself from 6<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> within seconds. The race was then on between them with Dirk the victor. Tarquini's speed off the line was less successful and dropped down to fourth with SEAT Sport team-mate Rydell in front of him. At the first corner, Tavano in his N.technology Alfa Romeo and BMW Team Italy-Spain's Costa, went off.

As the race ensued, Dirk began to close the gap between himself and Jörg. It was edged down until on lap 9 Dirk made a smooth manoeuvre at Lycée bend and managed to hold the car and defend his position to cross the line 0.436



ahead of his team-mate and fellow countryman. Rydell was always close to the action in León but couldn't quite challenge for a top 2 position.

Meanwhile, there was a contest between Britons, James Thompson and Andy Priaulx for 7<sup>th</sup>. Priaulx managed to close the gap to just 0.369 of a second but did not overtake, finishing 8<sup>th</sup> and therefore secured pole for Race 2.

Robert Huff passed the chequered place in 9<sup>th</sup> position, the best of the Chevrolet team. For most of the race Yvan Muller was sandwiched in between the Chevrolet cars of Larini and Huff but eventually finished 13<sup>th</sup>.

Independent drivers Luca Rangoni (Proteam Motorsport BMW 320si) and Tom Coronel (GR Asia SEAT Toledo) were involved in a battle from the start as the former worked his way from 14<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> within the first lap. Coronel overtook the Italian on lap two and stayed ahead to finish top independent and 10<sup>th</sup> overall.

## **RACE 2 – PRIAULX FROM LIGHTS TO FLAG**

Andy Priaulx dominated for the whole of Race 2 driving his BMW 320si from pole to the chequered flag ahead of the rest. Jörg Müller achieved 2<sup>nd</sup> place for the second time of the day moving his way up from 7<sup>th</sup> on the grid. SEAT once again finished in the top three but this time it was the Jordi Gené who lifted the trophy. The first corner was a catalyst of action with a few drivers retiring as a result. Dirk Müller and Rickard Rydell were the first to suffer after another SEAT hit Rydell who then collided with Dirk. Pierre-Yves Corthals also suffered impact and almost rolled his JAS Motorsport Honda Accord. In a separate series of events, Luca Rangoni hit Marcel Costa at the Adelaide hairpin; as a result the Spaniard hit his team-mate Alessandro Zanardi and both crashed into the barriers.

SEAT's James Thompson began the race from the front row but his team-mate, Gené, demoted him to 3<sup>rd</sup> on lap 4. Thompson then had to defend hard to keep Jörg at bay but BMW Germany man snuck through at the Grande Courbe on lap 5. Tension was still to come for SEAT because Terting overtook the Chevrolet of Huff on lap 7 and then chased team-mate Yvan Muller before passing him at Lycée two laps later to finish 6<sup>th</sup>.

Meanwhile, the Chevrolet drivers were in the thick of the action. Huff was challenging the SEATs and led his team-mates until the penultimate lap in which Larini moved to 8<sup>th</sup> place leaving Huff to finish in the spot behind.

Despite moving from 21<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> in the first lap, Augusto Farfus was overtaken by Yvan Muller and Huff on the second lap. As the race ensued, the Alfa Romeo man dropped back to 12<sup>th</sup>.

Stefano D'Aste had a successful race and was among the works drivers in 5<sup>th</sup> position overall after the first lap. He eventually finished 10<sup>th</sup> overall and won the independents race with Roberto Colciago behind him in 11<sup>th</sup>.