

ROUNDS 3 & 4 - PUEBLA-AMAZOC, MEXICO

RACE 1 REPORT

ANOTHER 1-2 FOR SEAT WITH GENÉ AND RYDELL

Jordi Gené led from pole to secure the win of the first race in Puebla. He started alongside Chevrolet's Nicola Larini, and was only challenged during the rolling start when Larini came up beside him off the line. Gené's SEAT Sport team mate Rickard Rydell came up from sixth during the first corner scuffle to second place, and remained there for the rest of the race. From this position he was able to protect his team mate from the Chevrolet charge coming from behind.

As the field went into the first corner there were several clashes in the middle of the pack: BMW drivers Alessandro Zanardi, Jörg Müller, Andy Priaulx and Félix Porteiro were all involved. Chevrolet's Alain Menu, who overtook Tom Coronel on the first lap for fourth position slipped back during the race as the car seemed to struggle for pace; he was sixth for much of the race.

Larini followed SEAT's 1-2 into third position, with Coronel behind in a brilliant fourth. Gabriele Tarquini performed a pushy overtaking manoeuvre on Alain Menu to secure fifth position, and Yvan Muller followed him into sixth place. Another SEAT Sport driver Tiago Monteiro took seventh spot to round off a successful race for SEAT.

Muller and Monteiro overtook Menu in the final moments when he went extremely wide at a corner, and therefore the Chevrolet driver finished eighth and will begin the second race from pole position.

Robert Huff finished ninth in the Chevrolet, following an eventful race. He tangled with Yvan Muller in the first laps, which damaged his wheel and caused him to lose places. However, he fought back and overtook Augusto Farfus to finish just behind his team mate.

As the previous sessions of the weekend have shown, the BMW cars struggled again in the race. Several were involved in scuffles and others, including Farfus, seemed to lack the pace of SEAT and Chevrolet. Priaulx ended up finishing in the highest position in tenth place behind Huff.

Pierre-Yves Corthals won the Independents' class; he had begun the race from pole position, but had problems at the start with cars bumping into him. He struggled for grip on the track, leaving the racetrack in the final laps, but managed to stay ahead of closest rival Stefano D'Aste to finish twelfth overall.

Before the start of the race a minute's silence was observed to remember Eurosport's commentator David Leslie and the other victims of the plane crash.

RACE 2 REPORT

MONTEIRO'S CLAIMS FIRST WIN

SEAT cars filled the top-six position at the end of the second race in Puebla and this results, in addition to the 1-2 obtained for the Spanish Manufacturers in today's first race, secured the total domination of the yellow León cars (never mind if they are turbo diesel or petrol-powered) in Puebla.

Four SEAT men - in the order Rydell, Tarquini, Muller and Gené - are on top of the Drivers' Championship, while SEAT have already built a solid advantage in the Manufacturers' Championship.

Even though it was Chevrolet's Alain Menu who began from pole position for the second race, it was SEAT Sport annihilation. Tiago Monteiro took the chequered flag with a spotless drive throughout the race after he took the lead into the first corner.

Rickard Rydell and Gabriele Tarquini battled for second position with the Swede coming out on top after Tarquini ran wide on lap 14. Rydell had another great start coming up from seventh to fourth on the first lap.

Tarquini had jumped up to third at the start ahead of eventual fourth placed team mate Yvan Muller. First race winner Jordi Gené, finished in fifth after the problems for Chevrolet's Alain Menu and Nicola Larini, the latter failed to finish the race after a rear suspension collapsed following a collision with another car. Gené was battling with Muller for fifth position, but he came off worse and Muller proceeded to overtake Menu.

Menu ran wide and fell down to tenth position, allowing the SEAT's to dominate. He battled back up to seventh, behind Tom Coronel who rounded off SEAT's top six positions.

BMW UK's Andy Priaulx finished in the top BMW car in eighth place as he fought with Menu and Huff for most of the race, as the BMWs struggled once again. Priaulx was the only German manufacturer's driver to score during the weekend. Robert Huff had another eventful race: after a poor start he made his way back up to eighth, only for him to drop places down to tenth. For the rest of the race he battled with Priaulx and Menu and eventually finished just outside the points in ninth.

Pierre-Yves Corthals won the Independents' class to add to his triumph in race one. He is now on joint points with Stefano D'Aste, who finished behind him in fourteenth, and Olivier Tielemans who had won both races in Brazil.

The start was clean but, once again, Jörg Müller and Alessandro Zanardi had clashes during the first lap, and Müller later left the track but rejoined to finish the race behind Zanardi in twelfth.

The championship will resume for rounds 5 and 6 in Valencia, Spain, on May 17th and 18th.

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