

SEAT'S BEST TRIUMPH EVER

The FIA's WTCC Mexican event resulted in a complete triumph for SEAT, which Jaime Puig, SEAT Sport director, described as "*the best day ever for SEAT.*" A triumph that, according to the figures released by the event promoter, was attended by 81,700 spectators on the three days.

After claiming pole position Jordi Gené, the Spanish manufacturer monopolised the top positions in both races. Gené dominated the first one, followed by Rickard Rydell. In the second race Tiago Monteiro claimed his first WTCC victory, and the León cars (including Tom Coronel's petrol-powered TFSI) filled the top six places,

SEAT Sport drivers and their turbo-diesel machines have won all four races held so far and it is no surprise to find them on top of the Drivers' Championship. Rydell (the only one who still has to win a race) leads with 26 points, followed by Gabriele Tarquini (24) and Yvan Muller (22). Gené lies fourth (15) and Monteiro sixth (12), with BMW's world champion Andy Priaulx in between (14).

Chevrolet tried to hold the yellow tide back and partially succeeded in qualifying, when Nicola Larini nearly stole pole position, and in the first race, with Larini third, the first podium result of the season for the team. But in the second race Alain Menu could not withstand the charge of the "SEAT Brigade".

Puebla is a circuit that suits front-wheel-drive cars better. This was proven once again by the troubles met by the BMW drivers as they chased the SEAT and Chevrolet cars. Priaulx finished eighth in Race 2, scoring BMW's only point.

CORONEL'S GREAT WEEKEND

Tom Coronel turned 36 last Saturday and gave himself a great birthday present, managing to reliably finish the whole Mexican event in his SEAT León TFSI run by SUNRED Engineering Development.

After he set the third fastest qualifying time the Dutchman scored in both races. He was close to the podium in Race 1 (fourth ahead of SEAT Sport's drivers Tarquini, Muller and Monteiro), and was classified sixth in Race 2.

On Saturday evening, Tom celebrated his birthday in the paddock during a Mexican-style party that culminated in him smashing the traditional piñata full of sweets.

A THREE-MEN LEAD IN INDIE TROPHY

After four races, three men share the leadership in the WTCC's Independents' Trophy on 28 points: Pierre-Yves Corthals, Olivier Tielemans and Stefano D'Aste.

Corthals completed a hat trick in Puebla, setting pole position and winning both rounds 3 and 4. Tielemans - a double winner in Curitiba - collected only two fifth places in Mexico, but these were enough for him to maintain the lead.

As for D'Aste, he has yet to win a race but thanks to his consistency has collected more points than everybody else: 30.

However, the 2-point penalty he received (equal to the gap with which he won the 2007 title) placed him on equal points as his two rivals.

And it won't just be a three men fight for the crown as there are two other serious pretenders: D'Aste's teammate, Sergio Hernández, and Franz Engstler. They currently lie fourth and fifth with gaps of 5 and 7 points respectively.

SEVEN TEAMS TO TEST IN VALENCIA

Seven teams have confirmed their participation in the WTCC official test that will be held next week at Valencia's Ricardo Tormo circuit, on Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th.

The three BMW national teams will all attend: BMW Team UK with Andy Priaulx, BMW Team Germany with two cars for Jörg Müller and Augusto Farfus, BMW Team Italy-Spain with two cars for Alessandro Zanardi and Félix Porteiro.

SEAT Sport's five drivers - Gené, Rydell, Tarquini, Muller and Monteiro - will take turns on three León TDI cars, while Chevrolet will bring only one Lacetti. The SUNRED Engineering will go to Valencia with Coronel's SEAT León TFSI.

They will be joined by James Thompson's N.technology Honda Accord Euro R. For the Briton and the Italy-based team this will be the first serious confrontation with their competitors in view of their debut in the championship in one month time on the very same track. The team will shake the car down this afternoon at Franciacorta test track.

MEDIA ACCREDITATION FOR VALENCIA

Rounds 5 and 6 of the 2008 FIA World Touring Car Championship will take place at Valencia, Spain, 17th

and 18th May.

The deadline to apply for media credentials is Tuesday, 6th May.

The Accreditation form may be downloaded at the websites www.fia.com and www.fiawtcc.com.

- ?? **International Press** must send applications to:
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