



## **ROUNDS 15 & 16 RACE REPORT**

*Weather:* overcast with a dry track until the end of Race 1; then a thunderstorm flooded the track and delayed the start for the second race by nearly two hours.

### **TARQUINI AND RYDELL CLOSE IN ON PRIAULX**

BMW and SEAT shared honours and victories at Istanbul in the WTCC Race of Turkey.

Alessandro Zanardi of BMW Team Italy-Spain dominated the first race, claiming his maiden win of the season from SEAT Sport men Rickard Rydell and Gabriele Tarquini.

The second race was delayed nearly two hours after a thunderstorm flooded the track and the marshals worked hard to dry up Turn 9. Gabriele Tarquini emerged as the fastest on the wet track and came from behind to score his first victory of the year, also the first since he joined SEAT Sport. His team mate Peter Terting and Chevrolet's Nicola Larini filled the other podium positions.

Tom Coronel and Stefano D'Aste claimed one victory apiece in the Independents Trophy.

The results of the Turkish meeting propelled Tarquini and Rydell to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Drivers' Championship, only 1 and 4 points respectively behind the leader Andy Priaulx, who suffered his blackest weekend of the season, and remained scoreless. Dirk Müller also closed in on the Briton and lies 4<sup>th</sup> with a 7-point gap. In the Manufacturers Championship, SEAT re-took the lead from BMW by 9 points.

However, results remain provisional, pending technical engine checks on Huff's Chevrolet, Gené's SEAT and Zanardi's BMW.

The FIA WTCC will resume in Valencia, Spain, on October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **RACE 1 – ZANARDI CLAIMS DOMINANT WIN**

Alessandro Zanardi came home ahead of the rest in Race 1. After a solid start in his BMW 320si he propelled himself into the lead entering the first corner. Pole man Rickard Rydell finished 2<sup>nd</sup> joined by SEAT Sport team-mate Gabriele Tarquini on the podium.

At the first corner of lap 2 Andy Priaulx and independent driver Luca Rangoni made contact which sent the reigning champion spinning across the track and obtaining damage to the rear of his car. James Thompson was also caught up in the affair and both Britons dropped back with Priaulx finishing 14<sup>th</sup> and Thompson 17<sup>th</sup>.

Yvan Muller began from 4<sup>th</sup> on the grid but had a difficult race. At the beginning he was being challenged by Duncan Huisman but held his position for three laps



until the battle allowed BMW Team Germany duo Dirk and Jörg Müller through. The standings didn't remain this way for long because late braking left Jörg and Yvan to run wide with the former unable to finish and the latter to cross the line 13<sup>th</sup>. Dirk Müller eventually passed the chequered flag 4<sup>th</sup>, overtaking Duncan Huisman on the last lap.

In the middle of the field there was a five man fight between three SEATs and the Alfas of Augusto Farfus and Salvatore Tavano. Farfus and Peter Terting had a brief spell of close proximity until the German went through to finish 6<sup>th</sup> and in the points. Farfus crossed the line 9<sup>th</sup>. Tavano and Jordi Gené both ended their races prematurely after colliding on lap 5. Nicola Larini continued to be the best performer from the Chevrolet team and stayed out of trouble to secure 7<sup>th</sup> place, 2 points and a front row start for Race 2.

The action continued over the next laps as a contest to be the best independent went underway. Luca Rangoni of Proteam Motorsport managed to overtake Farfus on the inside but Tom Coronel of GR Asia followed him through. Rangoni then made a mistake, nearly losing his car which allowed Coronel to capitalise and secure 8<sup>th</sup> position. He didn't let it go and therefore won the Independent race and started Race 2 from pole. Pierre-Yves Corthals and Stefano D'Aste finished second and third of the independents.

## **RACE 2 – TARQUINI SCORES FIRST VICTORY**

SEAT Sport achieved a tactical 1-2 in difficult wet conditions just before dusk at Istanbul. Gabriele Tarquini came from 6<sup>th</sup> on the grid and claimed victory ahead of Peter Terting his SEAT Sport team-mate. Terting led the race from lap 2 until the final lap when Tarquini passed him. Nicola Larini achieved a podium for Chevrolet after a fantastic drive and some fierce defending against Dirk Müller and Rickard Rydell on the final laps.

The race was delayed by two hours due to heavy rainfall leaving turns 9 and 10 flooded and needing to be pumped clear of water and mud.

At the start Larini took the lead ahead of Terting and Tom Coronel. The latter went wide at the next corner leaving Duncan Huisman and Dirk Müller to slot into 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. At the end of lap one Tarquini looked an unlikely winner as he was down in 9<sup>th</sup> after a slight error but fought his way towards the front over the duration of the race.

Andy Priaulx's race finished on lap two when one of his tyres failed. Meanwhile, Terting overtook Larini on the start/finish straight; a mere 0.075 of a second separated the two.

The SEAT squad were mounting attacks throughout the field and Huisman was a casualty as Tarquini, Rydell and Gené all overtook him on lap five. His demotion was not to end there as Huff passed the Dutchman on the next lap for 7<sup>th</sup>. On the last lap Huff overtook Dirk Müller to finish 6<sup>th</sup>; a dedicated effort from the youngest of the Chevrolet drivers after starting 16<sup>th</sup> on the grid.

Last in the points was Jörg Müller who put in a strong recovery from the pit-lane (where he changed tyres just before the start) to 8<sup>th</sup> position.

It was Stefano D'Aste of Proteam Motorsport who claimed the independent victory after overtaking Tom Coronel on the last lap. The Turkish driver Ibrahim Okyay finished a praise-worthy 14<sup>th</sup> overall and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the independent category.