



## **ROUNDS 17 & 18 RACE REPORT**

*Weather:* sunny and hot, with a dry track.  
*Crowd:* 59,000 over the two days

### **AUGUSTO FARFUS JUMPS TO THE TOP OF THE POINTS**

After two breathtaking races the FIA WTCC now looks at its final meeting with nine drivers still involved in the fight for the World title and covered by only 12 points.

Augusto Farfus of N.technology-Alfa Romeo emerged victorious in the first race at Valencia. This result, as well as a 5<sup>th</sup> place in Race 2, meant that he jumped to the top of the classification, one point ahead of Andy Priaulx and Jörg Müller, and three points in front of Gabriele Tarquini.

Victory in the second race was therefore a big boost for Jörg Müller's hopes to become world champion, while Priaulx, Tarquini and Rydell – who is still 5<sup>th</sup>, 6 points off the lead – were all involved in collisions that cost them valuable points. The Manufacturers championship underwent another major change, with BMW recovering a 9-point gap and taking a 10-point lead ahead of SEAT.

The Independents' Trophy saw Proteam Motorsport's Luca Rangoni putting in two fantastic performances, which resulted in as many podium finishes. An historical result for a privateer. However, GR Asia's Tom Coronel managed to clinch the title even before the last meeting that will award double points.

Both, BMW Team Italy-Spain and Chevrolet had reasons to rejoice as Duncan Huisman and Nicola Larini claimed one podium apiece. On the contrary, SEAT faced their blackest weekend of the season, with a total of only 7 points scored by their seven works drivers. A greatly disappointing result for their home race. The 2006 FIA WTCC will come to an end in Macau, on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **PENALTIES FOR THOMPSON AND ZANARDI**

James Thompson and Alessandro Zanardi were penalised by the Stewards after the warm up. Thompson was demoted ten positions on the grid for Race 1 due to an engine change. This resulted in the Briton dropping from seventh to 17<sup>th</sup>. Zanardi, who improved his lap time while the yellow flags were deployed, was also given a ten-position penalty; however this sanction remains suspended until the end of the season and it will only be applied only if the Italian driver commits the same infringement again.

### **RACE 1 – FARFUS SURVIVES AND WINS**

In a spectacular race Augusto Farfus managed to keep out of trouble and secured his third win of the season. Luca Rangoni, a Proteam Motorsport



independent driver, crossed the line second after jumping from 9<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> in the first lap. The final podium position was claimed by Nicola Larini of Chevrolet. It was the second consecutive podium for him.

At the start Farfus tried to keep Gené at bay but the Spaniard went through at turn one. Disappointment was to follow on lap 4 however, because the SEAT man was imposed a drive through penalty for a jump start.

The first lap also saw the end for Andy Priaulx and Rob Huff. Priaulx tried to enter turn one but Tarquini had the line and the BMW was sent spinning. Unfortunately for Huff, he was collected as Priaulx bounced off the barriers and strayed back onto the track. As a consequence of the accident the safety car was deployed for two laps.

On lap 5 Rangoni overtook Menu for 3<sup>rd</sup> while Terting overtook Huisman for 8<sup>th</sup> and Dirk Müller overtook Yvan Muller for 11<sup>th</sup>. Over the subsequent laps Menu dropped to 8<sup>th</sup> and therefore began Race 2 from pole. Lap 8 saw Terting overtake Coronel to promote himself to 7<sup>th</sup> but his charge didn't end there as on the next lap he passed Menu, and then Jörg Müller on the last lap to finish 5<sup>th</sup>.

SEAT team-mates Rickard Rydell and Yvan Muller were shuffling for position on lap 9 and contact was made between them. A further SEAT Sport man, James Thompson and Dirk Müller were also involved in the tight-pack battle. Thompson came out the best as he finished 9<sup>th</sup> followed by Yvan and Dirk directly behind. Rydell did not finish because on the penultimate lap he retired. His team-mate Gabriele Tarquini was also unable to finish. On lap 12 he and Tom Coronel clashed with Tarquini sent flying into the pit wall.

## **RACE 2 – BMW DRIVERS MAKE 1-2-3**

BMW claimed a dominant 1-2-3 in Race 2. Jörg Müller was the victor for BMW Team Germany followed by Duncan Huisman from BMW Team Italy–Spain and Luca Rangoni. Rangoni is the first independent competitor in WTCC history to finish in the top 3 in both races of an event.

Despite starting from pole, Alain Menu was passed by Huisman and Jörg before the first corner. The man from Chevrolet eventually finished 9<sup>th</sup> after some tough battles. His team-mate Nicola Larini fared better and passed the chequered flag 4<sup>th</sup>. Due to an incident with Larini, Peter Terting, who began from 4<sup>th</sup>, was issued a drive through penalty which he adhered to on lap 3. The best of the SEAT Sport drivers was Yvan Muller who finished 6<sup>th</sup> overall after mounting an attack on Menu on the last lap. After Yvan passed Menu, Dirk Müller and Andy Priaulx also squeezed through. Priaulx, who was involved in an incident in Race 1, began Race 2 from the back of the grid but spectacularly fought his way through for a valuable single championship point. While Gabriele Tarquini did not make the grid after he crashed in Race 1.

On lap 8 Zanardi, Gené and Thompson were side by side entering a corner. Gené appeared to be successful in getting through but soon after had to retire. Zanardi did not profit either and dropped to 17<sup>th</sup>. Thompson also suffered badly from the action and crossed the line 12<sup>th</sup>. The only person to gain was Priaulx who climbed to 8<sup>th</sup> on the last lap.

Augusto Farfus crossed the line 5<sup>th</sup> which was the best result for the N.technology Alfa Romeo team and propelled him into the Championship lead.