



FIA WTCC NEWSLETTER

39 - 3 November 2006

ALESSANDRO ZANARDI TO DRIVE BMW SAUBER F1

Alessandro Zanardi will make his return to the cockpit of a Formula One car. On the occasion of the DELL Formula BMW World Final, at Valencia from 24th to 26th November, the 40-year-old Italian will hit the track at the wheel of a modified BMW Sauber F1.06.

By driving for the BMW Sauber F1 Team, Zanardi will become the first person with amputated legs to test an F1 machine.

"First of all I would like to say thank you to BMW for this opportunity. It is just amazing for me. I know that I won't get a contract with the F1 team, however, having the chance to drive an F1 car again is just incredible. I'm really excited to see what has changed since my last Grand Prix in 1999. I can hardly wait for the moment, when the V8 engine is started," Zanardi commented.

BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen said: *"Zanardi is a truly impressive character. With an unprecedented show of will and dedication, he fought his way back into motor racing and proved in the WTCC that he is able to win races at the highest level. It was rather a joke when he asked me at the beginning of the year, if he could do an F1 test with us. We will give him this chance now as the engineers made it possible."*

Zanardi will drive a BMW Sauber F1.06 that differs in many ways from the car that is used by the BMW Sauber F1 Team drivers. It features a special brake pedal, which has been moved to the right side of the cockpit. A conventional throttle is missing and to accelerate Zanardi will use the shifting paddle on the left rear side of the steering wheel, which has been modified for this purpose. The paddle travel was increased considerably, in order to allow the right throttle percentage and smooth acceleration.

FIRST TEST FOR COUTO IN THE SEAT LEÓN

Macau's local hero André Couto had his first test in the SEAT León car that he will drive at his home race track during the FIA World Touring Car Championship final meeting on November 19. Couto joined the SEAT Sport team as they visited the Albacete track for a two-day test.

Couto spent an entire day in Albacete getting used to the car and adapting it to his racing style. He said: *"The SEAT León is a great car. It's very effective, but what impresses me the most is its tremendous balance"*.

Gabriele Tarquini, who is currently fourth in the drivers' championship, only four points off the lead, joined Couto on the track during the first day.

On the second day, Richard Rydell and Jordi Gené took over. The Swede is another title contender as he currently lies fifth in the classification, two further points behind Tarquini.

MENU WINS BUENOS AIRES 200KM FOR CHEVROLET

Swiss Chevrolet WTCC driver, Alain Menu won the Buenos Aires 200 Kilometres last Sunday, the main race of the Argentine TC2000 Championship. Menu, who shared a Chevrolet Astra run by Elaión Racing with local driver Matías Rossi, took the wheel halfway through the race with a 14-second advantage and gradually extended his lead claiming a comfortable victory from the Ford Focus cars of Martín Basso-Hoover Orsi and Fabián Flaqué-Ernesto Bessone.

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With this win, Rossi retook championship lead with two races left. Chevrolet's other first-class hired hands, Robert Huff and Nicola Larini, were less fortunate as both their team mates (Marcelo Bugliotti and Christian Ledesma respectively) retired on the first laps in two different incidents. Same bad luck hit the fourth WTCC driver in the race, Fabrizio Giovanardi, whose teammate Fabián Yannantuoni was also caught in an early crash that forced his Honda Civic to retire.

RANGONI AND PROTEAM TEST HEAVY CAR

Usually Independent drivers don't have to cope with heavy handicap weights. This is not the case for Luca Rangoni in Macau, as the Proteam Motorsport's driver will be carrying 45 extra kilos after his two podium results in Valencia.

In order to set up their BMW 320si car with the ballast onboard, Rangoni and the team tested one day at the Italian racetrack of Magione, completing 75 laps.

RACE - OFFICIAL WTCC GAME'S DEMO RELEASED

Eidos Interactive and Simbin Development Team released the demo of RACE – The Official WTCC Game.

The demo features two of the current FIA WTCC cars, the SEAT León and the BMW 320si, racing at Brands Hatch. On top of this it is also possible to experience the in-game support classes which will be included in the full version: 'WTCC 87' and the Mini Cooper Challenge.

RACE – The Official WTCC Game will be released on November 24th, 2006 across Europe.

The PC demo and additional info on the support classes are available from the official RACE-website: www.race-game.org.

MEDIA ACCREDITATION FOR THE 2007 FIA WTCC

Media accreditation for the 2007 FIA World Touring Car Championship season is now open.

IMPORTANT: The deadline to apply for permanent media credentials is Friday, 3 November.

Accreditation Procedure and Accreditation Form may be downloaded from the websites www.fia.com and www.fiawtcc.com.

Applications must be sent by registered mail to:

FIA - PRESS ACCREDITATION
8, Place de la Concorde
75008 Paris
France

COUNTDOWN: - 16 DAYS



to the 2006 FIA WTCC Guia Race of Macau – 17th/19th November, in Macau
presented by Sociedade de Jogos de Macau