

## **ROUNDS 9 & 10 RACE REPORT**

*Weather:* cloudy and windy, with a threat of rain and a dry track

*Crowd:* 71,000 over three days.

### **TERTING OVER THE MOON AS GIOVANARDI CLOSES THE GAP**

In front of fully packed grandstands, the FIA WTCC's first overseas meeting provided a great show for the enthusiastic Mexican fans.

Two breathtaking races resulted in two different podiums; only Tom Coronel was able to encore, scoring two victories in the Independent's Trophy.

The first race was dominated by the Alfa Romeo men. Fabrizio Giovanardi claimed his second win of the season, leading his team mate Gabriele Tarquini under the chequered flag. Only in the final stages did Rickard Rydell manage to spoil an Alfa Romeo 1-2-3 by overtaking James Thompson.

The second race saw Peter Terting leading from lights to flag and obtain his first success as a professional racing driver, and the second for SEAT this season. Antonio García tried in vain to put pressure on him, and finally settled for second. Again the third position was awarded after a tough fight in which Roberto Colciago overtook Giovanardi on the last lap, completing a stunning recovery from 20<sup>th</sup> position on the grid. However he was later penalised by 30 seconds for this manoeuvre.

BMW had a black day – only partially saved by García's podium – as Andy Priaulx and both the Müllers scored just one point between them. Despite this Dirk Müller is still leading the Drivers Championship, but only with a 2-point margin ahead of Giovanardi who managed to move up to second. Priaulx slipped down to third, closely chased by García and Tarquini. The top-five drivers are covered by only 9 points.

Chevrolet drivers scored their first Championship points today. Robert Huff broke the duck with a 6<sup>th</sup> position in Race 1. He could have done even better in the second, but he made a mistake and went off. However his team mate Nicola Larini managed to finish 8<sup>th</sup>.

The FIA WTCC will now return to Europe, for Rounds 11 and 12 on 30<sup>th</sup> of July in Spa, Belgium.

### **RACE 1 – GIOVANARDI AND TARQUINI MAKE 1-2**

Due to the implementation of penalties, Colciago (qualified 1<sup>st</sup>), Terting (qualified 2<sup>nd</sup>) Farfus (qualified 4<sup>th</sup>) and Plato (qualified 10<sup>th</sup>) were all demoted by ten positions on the grid for the start of Race 1.

At the start Giovanardi took the lead from pole position, followed by team mate Thompson. During the first lap Tarquini overtook Gené for third, García overtook Huff, and Coronel climbed one position to 8<sup>th</sup>. In lap 2, Gené touched the wall at the entrance of turn 15 and was unable to continue. Colciago overtook Menu, Coronel, Huff and García in the next 2 laps to jump to 5<sup>th</sup>.

Terting overtook Coronel for 8<sup>th</sup> position in lap 4. Over the next two laps, Colciago had Rydell in his sights and eventually overtook the SEAT driver in the first turn of lap 7. In the same lap, the BMW cars of Priaulx and Zanardi made contact at turn 4. The former went to the pits and rejoined for the last few laps whereas the latter continued and finished 13<sup>th</sup> overall.



Tarquini claimed 2<sup>nd</sup> position from team-mate Thompson in lap 8 while Dirk Müller was chasing Huff. The Chevrolet was just 0.192 of a second ahead of Müller at the start of lap 8 but soon pulled away with a gap of over two seconds. Colciago's storming progress ended as a gearbox failure meant he retired to the pits.

While Giovanardi and Tarquini pulled away with a gap of 10 seconds, Rydell was chasing Thompson for the third podium position and eventually overtook him on lap 14. In the meantime, Rydell's team-mate, Terting was battling with Huff, for 6<sup>th</sup> place, the latter made a move on lap 16 and crossed the finishing line ahead of the young German, scoring Chevrolet's first points in the Drivers' Championship. Dirk Müller was close behind the pair until he also hit the wall on the banking and retired. García finished in 5<sup>th</sup> position, the best of the BMW cars. Coronel won the Independent category with a brilliant 8<sup>th</sup> place overall.

## **RACE 2 – FIRST VICTORY FOR PETER TERTING**

At the start, Terting overtook Coronel to lead the race. García got off the line quickly to jump from 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In the opening lap Tarquini and Zanardi made contact, both came off the track and sustained too much damage to continue the race. On lap 2, Thompson overtook Coronel for 3<sup>rd</sup> and Giovanardi passed Huff for 5<sup>th</sup> as they crossed the line. Giovanardi proceeded to gain another place over the next three laps by passing Coronel, who at this point had a long line of drivers behind him.

In lap 6, García and Thompson made contact. Both went off the track but rejoined. Huff, spun his car at turn six which put an end to his race in lap 7 while he was fighting for 5<sup>th</sup> position with Colciago and Coronel. At the same time the 9<sup>th</sup> Rydell and 14<sup>th</sup> D'Aste were in a long line, almost bumper to bumper.

Lap 13 saw Gené, who started the race from the pits, crash his car into the tyres at turn 11. He did return to the race after visit to the pits but only completed 12 laps.

Halfway through the race, García provided some nail biting moments as he trailed Terting's SEAT closely for the entire race and edged closer towards the end, but the young German resisted and went to claim his first victory.

Colciago had an amazing race. He came from 20<sup>th</sup> and by lap seven he was in eighth position. He continued to pass his competitors one by one, until he was fighting for the third podium spot. In the last three laps, the JAS Motorsport man closed the gap between he and Giovanardi from 2.7 seconds to just 0.7 coming into the final lap. It was at these very final stages Colciago made a move on Giovanardi, they clashed, Colciago went through and crossed the line 0.117 of a second ahead. After the race the Stewards decided to impose a 30-second penalty on him, which meant he was dropped to 18<sup>th</sup>.

Coronel won the independent category for the second time of the day, and again scored points for the Drivers' Championship with an excellent 5<sup>th</sup> position overall.

## **ROUNDS 9 & 10 RACE QUOTES**

### **Fabrizio GIOVANARDI, Alfa Romeo Racing Team – 1<sup>st</sup> in Race 1 and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Race 2**

“It was difficult at the beginning of the championship but now things are really improving. I have a good feeling for the car. The first race was fantastic and I’m incredibly pleased to have collected ten points. In the second race it was tough at the end as the tyre performance was decreasing. I tried to defend as Colciago made a move but couldn’t and he gained the place.”

### **Peter TERTING, SEAT Sport – 7<sup>th</sup> in Race 1 and 1<sup>st</sup> in Race 2**

“It’s an unbelievable feeling to be the winner of a race. We have been fast all weekend and the second race was perfect for me. It was a disadvantage that I was dropped 10 positions for the first race but the reverse grid put me in a good position for the second. I had a good start but García did not let me get away. In the final stages I lost grip on the front tyres which made it hard and if the race had been a few laps longer I don’t know if I could have held on. I like Mexico!”

### **Gabriele TARQUINI, Alfa Romeo Racing Team – 2<sup>nd</sup> in Race 1 and DNF in Race 2**

“It was a good first race for me. I was lucky to overtake Gené, then my team-mate James (Thompson) made a mistake and Roberto (Colciago) retired so I finished second which was a good 1-2 result for Alfa Romeo. I had a bad start in the second race and then after the contact with Zanardi, my rear suspension was broken and I finished in the wall.”

### **Antonio GARCÍA, BMW Team Italy-Spain – 5<sup>th</sup> in Race 1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Race 2**

“I didn’t know if it was going to be possible for me to overtake Peter (Terting) in the second race but I did not give up. I had a good start which was vital for me but Peter was simply quicker. I would catch him at the corners but then on the straight he would pull away again. The team has worked hard and I tried my best so I am happy with 2<sup>nd</sup> place.”

### **Rickard RYDELL, SEAT Sport – 3<sup>rd</sup> in Race 1 and 6<sup>th</sup> in Race 2**

“First let me say congratulations to SEAT Sport and Peter (Terting) for an incredibly successful weekend. We deserved a podium because we were consistently quick so a race win is superb. As for me, I am very happy to have finished third in Race 1, we have done a lot of testing and it has brought us some impressive results and means we have gained valuable points this weekend.”

### **Roberto COLCIAGO, JAS Motorsport – DNF in Race 1 and 18<sup>th</sup> in Race 2**

“The first race was obviously a disappointment because I was pushing hard and making progress and then I had a gearbox failure and had to stop. In the second race everything was back working well and so it was my aim to make it on the podium. I have done so which is great.”



**Tom CORONEL, GR Asia - 8<sup>th</sup> in Race 1 and 5<sup>th</sup> in Race 2**

“The SEAT was very good here and I am happy with the performance today. It has good grip and took the corners well. I finished eighth in Race 1 because people made mistakes and I gained places. Race 2 was tough but 6<sup>th</sup> place is a great achievement for me. I like Mexico because it has the biggest trophies I have ever received.”

**Carlos MASTRETTA, GR Asia - 15<sup>th</sup> in Race 1 and 17<sup>th</sup> in Race 2**

“I was happy to finish as the fourth best independent driver in Race 1 because I kept a good pace and gained some places. However, in the second race I was tired after about five laps because I also took part in a local Formula Renault race today. I go home with a lot of positive points and an awareness of how to improve for the future. I have had the time of my life with the World Touring Car Championship. It is more professional and bigger than anything else I have been involved in so I hope I can do more races because it is such a great environment. This experience is going to have a massive impact on my future. I have developed as a driver and person and this is what I need if I am going to be a successful young driver.”

**Robert HUFF, Chevrolet - 6<sup>th</sup> in Race 1 and DNF in Race 2**

“To finish 6<sup>th</sup> was brilliant. The race was very hard work. I was pushed all the way and had a great battle with Dirk Müller and Terting. There was always overtaking going on and it was satisfying to come away with the team’s first driver points. I’m fairly disappointed about the second race. When I was chasing Coronel the water temperature was very high and we think a radiator hose burst. I slipped off on my own water. These things happen and it is unfortunate but we will take a lot away from this weekend.”