

**ROUNDS 5 & 6 – MARRAKECH, MOROCCO**  
**QUALIFYING REPORT**

*Weather:* sunny and hot, the track was dry.

**HUFF CLAIMS CHEVROLET CRUZE'S FIRST POLE**

Chevrolet's Robert Huff rained on SEAT's parade in qualifying by claiming pole position, the first for the new Cruze car. Gabriele Tarquini will start second and Yvan Muller third. Despite setting the second fastest lap, Alain Menu was demoted to 10<sup>th</sup> because the Stewards disallowed his Q2 qualifying times after his car did not restart following a mandatory visit to the weighing bay.

Q1 – SEAT had company at the top of the qualifying timesheet in the form of Chevrolet. While Tiago Monteiro initially made claim to pole with a 1:51.086, Menu (1:50.271), Nicola Larini (1:50.723) and Huff (1:50.817) stole the top spots. The end of the session saw Andy Priaulx miss his braking point at turn 1 and clash with Hernández who had come off his line to let Zanardi through. Due to the fact he received external aid to restart, the Briton was not permitted to take part in Q2 and therefore qualified ninth following Menu's penalty.

All of the LADA drivers remained out of Q2. Despite not making Q2, Moroccan driver Mehdi Bennani put in a strong performance to qualify 14<sup>th</sup> overall and second of the Independents.

Q2 – The session ended prematurely for Jörg Müller who suffered a rear left puncture after six minutes. He did not post a competitive qualifying time and will line up eighth for Race 1 tomorrow.

The pack was tight and at one point during the session just four tenths of a second split the top six.

On the last lap Huff charged to the front with a 1:49.789. Tarquini clocked a 1:50.086 on his last lap to secure a front-row place and Muller's best time was 1:50.156. Muller will line up third followed by Jordi Gené, Larini and Monteiro. Franz Engstler qualified a magnificent seventh which not only equates to the lead Independent driver, but the front running BMW.

Menu's gloomy qualifying session ended when he hit the wall at turn 2 on his last lap.

**FLASH NEWS**

**PRACTICE 1 – RYDELL LEADS SEAT TRAIN**

SEAT Sport men filled the first four spots, with Rydell posting the best lap ahead of Muller, Tarquini and Monteiro.

The SEAT cars had risen to the top of the timesheet by mid-way. The battle for the top spot hot-up when Muller posted a 1:50.100 which was soon ousted by Rydell's blistering 1:49.641 – the eventual fastest lap and a second faster than yesterday's best offering. Menu set a 1:50.286 which was fifth quickest overall.

Tom Coronel was the leading Independent with the seventh fastest time (1:50.668) but local man Mehdi Bennani achieved a 1:51.402 which placed him 11<sup>th</sup>.

**PRACTICE 2 – SEAT CONTINUE TO SHINE**



SEAT Sport continued to shine as Yvan Muller, Tarquini and Gené took the top three spots. In fact, the six fastest times were achieved in a SEAT León as Monteiro, Rydell and Independent driver Coronel completed the top six. The best of the rest were Alain Menu and Robert Huff from Chevrolet - seventh and eighth overall.

The session was disrupted by the red flag on two occasions. The first was because the tyre barrier was knocked onto the track by Viktor Shapovalov. The second red flag was issued after Vito Postiglione hit the tyres at turn 8 and Augusto Farfus stopped on the track with transmission problems; the two incidents were not linked.

#### MARATHON MEN JOIN WTCC CLUB

Following Gabriele Tarquini and Alessandro Zanardi, the club of WTCC marathon men has welcomed two new members: Andy Priaulx and FIA Media Delegate Fabio Ravaoli. They both successfully completed their first 42.2 km race just before flying to Morocco running the London Marathon and the Turin Marathon respectively.

Priaulx's effort was especially praiseworthy as he ran to raise both money and awareness for the Priaulx Premature Baby Foundation, a charity he set up with wife, Jo. The amount collected so far exceeds 70,000 pounds.

#### PHILIPPE STREIFF MEETS ZANARDI

Former F1 driver Philippe Streiff paid a visit to the WTCC paddock in Marrakech. Streiff, who remained paralysed after a crash during a test at Rio de Janeiro's Jacarepaguá racetrack in 1989, spent most of the time talking to Alessandro Zanardi about the inclusion of disabled people.

He also had a touching meeting with Gabriele Tarquini, the driver who replaced him at the wheel of the AGS F1 following his accident.

#### THEY SAID, THEY SAID...

Robert HUFF

"The team have worked on the Cruze a lot since Mexico and there is a big improvement in the balance. We were surprised to take pole as SEAT were so competitive in free practice. I'm really happy to be on pole and it is great we are maintaining our good record on street circuits. I hope it continues tomorrow."

Alain MENU

"The car felt good today and I was happy with my times. On the last lap of Q2 I came sideways out of turn 1 and couldn't compensate the understeer so hit the wall at turn 2"

Gabriele TARQUINI

"I am not 100% well today but well enough to put in some fast laps when it counted. I hope to recover overnight. Watching free practice you would have expected SEAT on pole but with new tyres you never know what the outcome will be. I feel optimistic for tomorrow as this layout of track is kind on our tyres and suits our car."

Franz ENGSTLER

"I am very happy with this result and my thanks go to my team. I didn't think it would be a good weekend for me but I got a slipstream in Q1 and was really pleased with the time. The priority for tomorrow is to finish the race as winner of the Independents' Trophy."

**2009 FIA World Touring Car Championship  
QUALIFYING RESULT**

POS	NO	CLS	DRIVER	NAT	CAR	Q1	Q2
1	11		Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Cruze	1:50.817	1:49.789
2	2		Gabriele TARQUINI	ITA	SEAT Leon TDI	1:51.033	1:50.086
3	1		Yvan MULLER	FRA	SEAT Leon TDI	1:50.924	1:50.156
4	4		Jordi GENE	ESP	SEAT Leon TDI	1:51.294	1:50.266
5	14		Nicola LARINI	ITA	Chevrolet Cruze	1:50.723	1:50.372
6	5		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	1:51.086	1:50.770
7	25	I	Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	1:51.750	1:51.643
8	7		Jorg MULLER	GER	BMW 320si	1:51.593	2:35.400
9	6		Andy PRIAULX	GBR	BMW 320si	1:51.508	N/S
10	12		Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Cruze	1:50.271	
11	9		Alessandro ZANARDI	ITA	BMW 320si	1:51.753	
12	3		Rickard RYDELL	SWE	SEAT Leon TDI	1:51.806	
13	8		Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	1:51.945	
14	30	I	Mehdi BENNANI	MAR	SEAT Leon	1:52.008	
15	23	I	Felix PORTEIRO	ESP	BMW 320si	1:52.148	
16	21	I	Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon	1:52.271	
17	26	I	Kristian POULSEN	DEN	BMW 320si	1:52.401	
18	28	I	Marin COLAK	CRO	SEAT Leon	1:52.504	
19	10		Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si	1:52.622	
20	27	I	Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	1:52.733	
21	18		Jaap van LAGEN	NED	LADA 110	1:53.001	
22	19		Kirill LADYGIN	RUS	LADA 110	1:53.510	
23	24	I	George TANEV	BUL	BMW 320si	1:53.636	
24	31	I	Vito POSTIGLIONE	ITA	BMW 320si	1:53.711	
25	20		Viktor SHAPOVALOV	RUS	LADA 110	1:54.046	

Marrakech

Circuit Length = 4.5400 km.

Start: 15:00 End:

Car 12, Q2 times cancelled, Stewards decision 3 refers.

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