



ROUNDS 5 & 6 RACE REPORT

Weather: sunny and warm, with a dry track

Crowd: 27,000.

ALFA ROMEO AND SEAT WIN ONE A PIECE

Alfa Romeo drivers dominated the first race, while SEAT claimed a brilliant 1-2 finish in the second, on the FIA WTCC third race meeting in Silverstone.

On a sunny day a good crowd gathered on the grandstands to watch two breathtaking races. Gabriele Tarquini scored a lights to flag win in Race 1, leading home an Alfa Romeo quartet. Behind him a tough fight for second position involved Andy Priaulx, James Thompson and Fabrizio Giovanardi, with a number of overtaking and paint swapping.

After a super start, Priaulx led most of the second race, until a puncture stopped him. This opened the door for SEAT's first success in the FIA WTCC, which was also the first one for a Spanish car Manufacturer in a World Championship. Rickard Rydell and newcomer Jason Plato were classified first and second, with Tarquini third.

Dirk Müller managed to claim 3 points in the second race, which enabled him to maintain the championship lead with a 2-point margin ahead of Tarquini, while Jörg Müller and Priaulx are 5 points behind. However, Dirk will be under special surveillance for the rest of the season. Because he rejoined Saturday's qualifying session despite having received external aid, and considering he had already received a suspended penalty due to a racing accident in Monza, the Stewards decided to impose a 5-point deduction from his championship points. This penalty will only be applied if he incurs any other sanctions before the end of the season.

Tarquini also has a pending penalty because of his collision with Terting in Race 2. As well as definitely losing ten positions on the grid of the next race, if he is involved in a similar incident during one of the two following events, he will also be excluded from that race. Alfa Romeo Racing Team appealed against this decision.

The FIA WTCC will now head to Imola for Rounds 7 and 8 on 29th of May.

RACE 1 – TARQUINI LEADS ALFA ROMEO QUARTET

Alfa Romeo had a perfect result in round 5 of the FIA WTCC at Silverstone. All four of the team's drivers finished ahead of the rest of the field resulting in an all-red podium. Gabriele Tarquini, got a good start from the pole and despite efforts from James Thompson, did not give away his lead. Thompson and Fabrizio Giovanardi battled for second position. After a poor start, Thompson, who had the heaviest of the Alfa cars, lost a place to Giovanardi but on lap 4 he made reclaimed it. Augusto Farfus completed the Alfa Romeo quartet finishing fourth.

Andy Priaulx had a fantastic start, pushing his BMW 320i through to second place but was subsequently overtaken by the Alfa cars. He crossed the finishing line in fifth place, 4.386 seconds behind the leader of the Alfa pack.

SEAT drivers claimed the remaining positions in the points: Peter Terting finished 6th; his team-mates Rickard Rydell and Jason Plato had a very physical battle,



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finishing 7th and 8th respectively, with the Briton claiming pole on the reverse grid for Race 2.

On the penultimate lap, Alex Zanardi and Rob Huff made contact. Zanardi suffered the worst as he spun into the gravel and didn't re-join, whereas Huff managed to continue and was classified in 13th spot. The race for the other two Chevrolet drivers had an ended early as Alain Menu and Nicola Larini clashed whilst trying to avoid a wayward car during the first lap.

Ford scored their first Manufacturers' Championship point as Thomas Jäger crossed the line 18th. The second Ford, driven by Thomas Klenke was 19th; an encouraging result for the team.

The best of the independent competitors was Tom Coronel, finishing 14th overall in his SEAT Toledo Cupra, just ahead of his GR Asia team-mate Valle Mäkelä.

RACE 2 – RYDELL AND PLATO CLAIM 1-2 FOR SEAT

SEAT Sport had their first win of the FIA WTCC at Silverstone today. Rickard Rydell was the victor of a thrilling race with team-mate Jason Plato right behind him in 2nd. The SEAT cars did not have a great start as Andy Priaulx jumped them on the starting grid.

The reigning FIA European champion looked set to secure his first win of the season until he was forced out of the race following a puncture to his front right tyre with 3 laps to go, leaving Rydell to drive for the win. Of the remaining BMW cars, Dirk Müller was the best and classified 6th.

Alfa Romeo man Gabriele Tarquini had his second visit to the podium with a 3rd place. He, Terting and Thompson were involved in an incident on lap 4 which saw the latter forced into the gravel, where he remained. The Stewards put the blame on Tarquini, who will be dropped by ten places on the starting grid for the next round. Later Terting was involved in another collision, when Jörg Müller sent him into a spin to grab 7th position.

Larini and Zanardi did not take the start, due to the consequences of their Race 1 incidents. The Chevrolet team repaired Alain Menu's car just in time for him to begin the second race from the pit lane. It was an impressive performance as he worked his way through the field, and crossed the line in 13th place, setting lap times which were only one second off the top men's pace. Team-mate Huff collided with García after the Spaniard spun during the first lap and neither driver could continue.

The Fords improved one position apiece from the early race, completing their most successful event so far. Jäger finished 17th – scoring a second point in the Manufacturers' Championship – and Klenke 16th.

Marc Hennerici extended his lead in the Independents' Trophy even further. He and Coronel were fighting hard to gain maximum points from Race 2 but it was the Wiechers-Sport BMW that finished ahead – in an excellent 9th place overall – when Coronel's SEAT dramatically burst into flames at the end of the race due to engine an engine failure.



ROUNDS 5 & 6 RACE QUOTES

Gabriele TARQUINI, Alfa Romeo Racing Team – 1st in Race 1 and 3rd in Race 2

“We have done a really good job this weekend, especially with the result of the first race. Our performance in qualifying was great, meaning we had no problem in making it an all Alfa Romeo podium. For the second it was completely different. I had two BMWs behind me on the grid and in the first few laps, as usual, there was a lot of contact. The points may indicate that the championship is reopened but considering that the BMWs were still competitive despite the 70 kg difference, I have a lot of doubts about what will happen for the rest of the season. SEAT are also close to us so it will be a real challenge.”

Rickard RYDELL, SEAT Sport – 7th in Race 1, 1st in Race 2

“I am very pleased for SEAT today. We were looking to get a win earlier in the season as we thought we would be more competitive. I made a little mistake in qualifying and decided to save my tyres so I didn't go out for the warm up session but I knew that the car would be fast in the race. In the first race I didn't want to make any moves on Terting because he is my team-mate so I settled for 7th and then focused on the second race. I was behind Andy for a long time until he had a puncture but I believe I could have won the race anyway.”

Jason PLATO, SEAT Sport – 8th in Race 1 and 2nd in Race 2

“Second place in my first FIA WTCC meeting is great. A win would have been nice but it really wasn't my main aim. It was of primary importance for me to help with the development of the car and the team. I'm over the moon with today; it's a great result for all of the SEAT team. In the second race I didn't get the best of starts and the BMWs are clearly fantastic off the grid; which meant that I had to defend the best I could and couldn't turn my pole into a win.”

James THOMPSON, Alfa Romeo Racing Team – 2nd in Race 1 and DNF in Race 2

“I had two tough races today. My start on the first one was very poor and I left myself with too much to do. Second race was going reasonably well until my team-mate was involved in a battle with Terting and indirectly knocked me out onto the gravel track. I was hoping to build up my points tally after a disappointing Magny-Cours when the car wasn't working well. Here the car was great and I wanted to capitalise on that but it didn't happen.”

Fabrizio GIOVANARDI, Alfa Romeo Racing Team – 3rd in Race 1 and 8th in Race 2

“In the first race all of the Alfa Romeo drivers wanted to finish 1st. It was a clean fight and I was quite pleased with 3rd. In the second race I got a great start but unfortunately I made a mistake while trying to overtake Plato and spun off.”



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Andy PRIAULX, BMW Team UK – 5th in Race 1 and 20th in Race 2

“I’m obviously desperately disappointed because there were ten points in the bag for me and I feel I’ve lost out on that. In the first race, the Alfas were quicker than me. I flat spotted my tyres. In the second I knew it was important to get a good start which I did. The car felt good, I was pulling away very slowly and I was confident it would continue that way until the end. A few laps before the puncture I felt I was loosing grip, told the team but they didn’t know what it could be. All I can conclude is that I picked up some debris. Obviously I’m disappointed because I thought the race was mine and I didn’t put a foot wrong all weekend.”

Alain MENU, Chevrolet - DNF in Race 1 and 13th in Race 2

“In Race 1 came out of Becketts behind three cars pushing each other for position. The inevitable happened when one of them spun. I tried to move as far to the right as I could to avoid the spinning car, but I had to move onto the grass where I spun and hit the barriers, taking off the right rear wheel. After the Magny-Cours incident and now this one I really hope for some better luck in Imola.”

Marc HENNERICI, Wiechers-Sport – 17th in Race 1 and 9th in Race 2

“After four wins out of six races I am hoping to win the Independent’s Trophy. Tom Coronel was on great form this weekend however, he was really difficult to beat. Up until the second race it was a terrible weekend for us. In the warm-up session one of my brakes exploded, so it is especially pleasing that the problem was sorted and I managed a race win.”

Tom CORONEL, GR Asia – 14th in Race 1 and 14th n Race 2

“I had a really good first race. In the second one I was behind Colciago who was slow and that cost me a lot of time. Some of the other independents managed to catch up with me and I ended up in a great fight with Hennerici. We changed positions a couple of times but we never made contact. In the final laps I saw the red lights flashing on my dashboard but kept my foot down. There was oil spilling out everywhere and then I saw flames but I managed to finish 5th out the independents.”

Mauro SIPSZ, Alfa Romeo Racing Team principal

“Looking back at all the decisions the Stewards have taken since the beginning of the season, we cannot help thinking that they apply a different way of taking decisions depending on the colour of the cars. And this is the reason why we have decided to appeal against this one.”

Hans HOTFIEL, Ford Hotfiel Sport Team Principal

“Finishing inside the top 20 and scoring points in both races was a good achievement. It underlines the fact that we are making progress with the car. It’s a sign of encouragement for the entire team to carry on with the development work they have done. We have seen that is paying off, and we’ve got the first reward for all the effort.”