

ROUNDS 3 & 4 – MARRAKECH, MOROCCO RACE REPORT

Weather: sunny and hot, with a dry track

TARQUINI AND PRIAULX SHARE VICTORIES

Gabriele Tarquini and Andy Priaulx shared victories today in Marrakech, coming home safe after two races that were spoiled by a number of crashes and safety car periods.

In the first race the reigning world champion and his SEAT León TDI car took the lead at the start and benefitted from the fight for second to build a small gap that proved crucial the moment that the race was frozen by the safety car for good.

In race 2 Priaulx made the most out of his pole position on the reverse grid to take command. Two different crashes on laps 1 and 7 chaged the race into a procession behind the safety car until the very last lap in which Priaulx sprinted to BMW's first victory of the season beating Chevrolet's Yvan Muller by a small margin.

It was a sweet and sour weekend for Chevrolet as they obtained two second places with Rob Huff and Muller, but saw Alain Menu and Huff both eliminated in massive crashes in Race 2. This also meant that SEAT Customers Technology took the lead in the Manufacturers' Championship, while Tarquini's win and sixth position propelled him on top of the Drivers' Championship with 70 points from Muller (63) and Huff (46).

BMW drivers also won the two Independents' races. Franz Engstler and local hero Mehdi Bennani encored their successes from last year with the only difference that they swapped Race 1 and 2.

Fredy Barth dominated both races in the Rookie Challenge. Not only was the Swiss driver able to score twice in the overall championship, but he also set the fastest lap in Race 1.

The championship will resume for rounds 5 and 6 at Monza, Italy, on May 23rd.

RACE 1 – TARQUINI SAILS TO VICTORY

Gabriele Tarquini eased to victory in Race 1 on the streets on Marrakech this afternoon, ahead of Rob Huff and Tiago Monteiro, as the first race of the day ended under safety car conditions.

After three formation laps as the drivers got into position, Tarquini controlled the rolling start to lead the pack through the first chicane.

Michel Nykjær and Jordi Gené battled for third running alongside each other through the first chicane and forcing each other wide. Rookie driver Fredy Barth made the best start moving up from eighth to third on lap one.

The order at the end of first racing lap was Tarquini from, Huff, Barth, Monteiro, Coronel, Muller, Michelisz, Menu, Priaulx and Farfus.

After his great start Barth was pushing Huff hard for second, making a move causing the Chevrolet to go into a massive slide. Huff did a brilliant job to control the car, not only avoiding a huge accident but also holding on to his second position. In the drama, Monteiro found a way past demoting the rookie to fourth.

Further back the battle was on for eighth and Race 2 pole position, between Alain Menu and Andy Priaulx. Priaulx was all over the Chevrolet finally finding a way through with a great move on the inside of the final chicane. The two cars jostled for position on the exit with Priaulx making his move stick.



Huff was driving a very defensive race to keep Monteiro at bay as Tarquini eased away up in front. The action was however cut short as Andrei Romanov crashed his BMW 320si at T15 bringing out the safety car until the chequered flag.

Despite losing positions to the BMW Team RBM's Priaulx and Farfus, Franz Engstler remained the best Independent in 12th.

With a great result of fourth overall Barth was the top rookie in Race 1, while Morocco's Mehdi Bennani finished 15th.

Monroe Performer

Overall: Fredy Barth 1:46.925; Independent: Franz Engstler 1:48.055

Withdrawals

S. D'Aste: driveshaft; A. Romanov: racing incident; I. Sbaï: spin.

RACE 2 – PRIAULX CLAIMS VICTORY FOR BMW

BMW Team RBM's Andy Priaulx won a chaotic Race 2 ahead of Yvan Muller, in the only Chevrolet to reach the chequered flag, and Tom Coronel in his SEAT León TDI.

With two big accidents on the street circuit of Marrakech, the race had two safety car interruptions but resumed racing for a last lap dash to the flag.

Priaulx made a good getaway from pole position as the drama unfolded behind him before the pack had even reached the first chicane.

Norbert Michelisz stalled on the front row of the grid while Tiago Monteiro jostled for position with Rob Huff. Huff then spun into the wall crashing out. Sergio Hernández and the two bamboo-engineering cars of Harry Vaulkhard and Darryl O'Young also got caught up in the incident with Hernández making a heavy impact with the wall and Vaulkhard also crashing out. O'Young managed to limp back to the pits and rejoined after repairs.

The safety car came out on track bunching up the pack behind race leader Priaulx. The order behind him was Muller, Coronel, Monteiro, Farfus, Barth, Menu, Bennani, Tarquini and Engstler. Michelisz eventually got going off the start but was now down in 14th.

On lap seven of 13 the safety car came in and racing resumed briefly with only a few seconds before the next big crash. Fredy Barth past Farfus for fifth and Alain Menu began to follow. Farfus ambitiously tried to hold his line, the front wheels interlocked the two cars spun and crashed into the concrete wall. Farfus made it back to the pits but with the Chevrolet stranded on track amongst the debris the safety car was deployed once more.

The order was now: Priaulx leading from Muller, Coronel, Monteiro, Barth, Tarquini, Bennani, Nykjær, Engstler and Gené.

Racing resumed with just one lap remaining but Priaulx fought hard to take his first win of the season for him and BMW. Bennani lost out on the final lap dropping two places to ninth but still took the Independents' trophy. Engstler was the only other driver to lose positions on the final lap dropping down from ninth to 12th in his BMW 320si. SEAT Swiss Racing by SUNRED's Frey Barth took the rookie honours for the second time today adding a fifth position to his earlier fourth place finish.

Monroe Performer

Overall: Jordi Gené 1:47.894; Independent: Stefano D'Aste 1:49.871

Withdrawals

A. Romanov: DNS; I. Sbaï: DNS; R. Huff: race incident; S. Hernández: race incident; H. Vaulkhard: race incident.

FLASH NEWS

JEAN TODT VISITS MARRAKECH

FIA President Jean Todt paid a visit to Marrakech's circuit.

On Saturday, Todt spent time with Marcello Lotti, promoter of the FIA WTCC, and representatives of the Fédération Royale Marocaine de Sport Automobile.

He was then shown around the racetrack and its facilities and took a walk along the pit lane to meet WTCC teams and drivers. He finally joined the drivers for a family picture in support of the United Nations' Make Roads Safe campaign.

On Sunday the president enjoyed watching the WTCC and the Formula 2 races.

GRID PENALTY FOR ANDREI ROMANOV

Liqui Moly Team Engstler's driver Andrei Romanov joined fellow Independent competitor Stefano D'Aste at the back of the starting grid for today's Race 1.

The Russian who had qualified 19th, was dropped because of an engine change on his BMW 320si car.

THE WORD TO THE WINNERS

Gabriele TARQUINI – Winner of Race 1: *"The first race was shorter than usual. I had a small gap at the start but the safety car made it easy. I had no problems with the car. I think the key moment was when Huff lost the slipstream as it is easier to challenge and fight for position when you are in the slipstream. I am very pleased with the weekend overall. Curitiba was a good track for us and so was Marrakech. Depending on what weight we have, Monza should also be good for us."*

Andy PRIAULX – Winner of Race 2: *"It was really tough and we didn't expect this coming into the weekend. It's a great result as the team have worked really hard since Brazil. I'm just glad I past Menu in Race 1 as this gave me the pole for Race 2. It's disappointing for the fans and viewers that we didn't get more time racing though. But even with just two racing laps it was hard work. I had to work really hard to keep heat in the tyres."*

2010 FIA World Touring Car Championship
RACE 1 RESULT

POS	NO	CLS	DRIVER / TEAM	NAT	CAR	TIME	LAPS	GAP	KPH	BEST
1	1		Gabriele TARQUINI	ITA	SEAT Leon TDI	32:12.815	13		110.05	1:47.193
2	7		Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Cruze	32:13.932	13	1.117	109.98	1:46.999
3	3		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	32:14.607	13	1.792	109.94	1:47.396
4	18		Fredy BARTH	SUI	SEAT Leon TDI	32:15.251	13	2.436	109.91	1:46.925
5	2		Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon TDI	32:16.328	13	3.513	109.85	1:47.153
6	6		Yvan MULLER	FRA	Chevrolet Cruze	32:18.430	13	5.615	109.73	1:47.461
7	5		Norbert MICHELISZ	HUN	SEAT Leon TDI	32:20.715	13	7.900	109.60	1:47.787
8	11		Andy PRIAULX	GBR	BMW 320si	32:21.707	13	8.892	109.54	1:47.841
9	8		Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Cruze	32:22.928	13	10.113	109.47	1:47.928
10	10		Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	32:24.774	13	11.959	109.37	1:47.977
11	17		Michel NYKJAER	DEN	SEAT Leon TDI	32:25.691	13	12.876	109.32	1:47.383
12	15		Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	32:27.195	13	14.380	109.23	1:48.055
13	4		Jordi GENE	ESP	SEAT Leon TDI	32:27.975	13	15.160	109.19	1:47.228
14	25		Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si	32:29.162	13	16.347	109.12	1:49.672
15	21		Mehdi BENNANI	MAR	BMW 320si	32:29.650	13	16.835	109.10	1:48.106
16	19		Harry VAULKHARD	GBR	Chevrolet Lacetti	32:30.872	13	18.057	109.03	1:49.908
17	20		Darryl O'YOUNG	HKG	Chevrolet Lacetti	32:32.552	13	19.737	108.93	1:50.313

NOT CLASSIFIED

30		Ismail SBAI	MAR	Chevrolet Lacetti	18:25.870	8	D.N.F.	118.36	1:51.100
16		Andrei ROMANOV	RUS	BMW 320si	14:38.006	6	D.N.F.	111.81	1:51.154
26		Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	7:01.530	2	D.N.F.	77.63	3:29.559

FASTEST LAP

18		Fredy BARTH		SEAT Leon TDI	1:46.925	7	95.08mph	153.02kph
15		Franz ENGSTLER		BMW 320si	1:48.055	7	94.09mph	151.42kph

Marrakech

Circuit Length = 4.5450 km.

Start: 13:18 End: 13:50

Weather/Track: Sun 26c/Dry 47c

Steward:	Steward:	Steward:	Issued at:
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2010 FIA World Touring Car Championship
RACE 2 RESULT

POS	NO	CLS	DRIVER / TEAM	NAT	CAR	TIME	LAPS	GAP	KPH	BEST
1	11		Andy PRIAULX	GBR	BMW 320si	36:15.763	13		97.76	1:48.282
2	6		Yvan MULLER	FRA	Chevrolet Cruze	36:16.600	13	0.837	97.72	1:48.825
3	2		Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon TDI	36:16.991	13	1.228	97.70	1:48.377
4	3		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	36:17.227	13	1.464	97.69	1:48.347
5	18		Fredy BARTH	SUI	SEAT Leon TDI	36:17.712	13	1.949	97.67	1:48.439
6	1		Gabriele TARQUINI	ITA	SEAT Leon TDI	36:18.158	13	2.395	97.65	1:48.334
7	17		Michel NYKJAER	DEN	SEAT Leon TDI	36:20.318	13	4.555	97.55	1:48.892
8	4		Jordi GENE	ESP	SEAT Leon TDI	36:21.128	13	5.365	97.52	1:47.894
9	21	I	Mehdi BENNANI	MAR	BMW 320si	36:21.679	13	5.916	97.49	1:50.498
10	5		Norbert MICHELISZ	HUN	SEAT Leon TDI	36:21.872	13	6.109	97.48	1:48.062
11	26	I	Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	36:24.274	13	8.511	97.38	1:49.871
12	15	I	Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	36:24.703	13	8.940	97.36	1:51.706
13	20	I	Darryl O'YOUNG	HKG	Chevrolet Lacetti	36:35.339	11	2 LAPS	81.98	1:59.660

NOT CLASSIFIED

10			Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	17:37.520	6	D.N.F.	92.83	2:46.545
8			Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Cruze	17:38.229	6	D.N.F.	92.77	2:44.912
25	I		Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si		0	D.N.F.	N/A	
19	I		Harry VAULKHARD	GBR	Chevrolet Lacetti		0	D.N.F.	N/A	
7			Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Cruze		0	D.N.F.	N/A	

FASTEST LAP

4			Jordi GENE		SEAT Leon TDI	1:47.894	13		94.23mph	151.64kph
26	I		Stefano D'ASTE		BMW 320si	1:49.871	13		92.53mph	148.92kph

Marrakech

Circuit Length = 4.5450 km.

Start: 14:34 End: 15:10

Weather/Track: Sun 28c/Dry 47c

Steward:	Steward:	Steward:	Issued at:
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2010 FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP - DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

position	driver	Curitiba (BRA) 7 March		Puebla (MEX) 11 April	Marrakech (MAR) 2 May	Monza (ITA) 23 May	Zolder (BEL) 20 June	Portimão (POR) 4 July	Brands Hatch (GBR) 18 July	Brno (CZE) 1 August	Oschersleben (GER) 5 September	Valencia (ESP) 19 September	Okayama (JPN) 31 October	Macau (CHN) 21 November	TOTAL		
		12	25														
1	Gabriele TARQUINI (ITA)	12	25	CANCELLED	25	8										70	
2	Yvan MULLER (FRA)	25	12		8	18											63
3	Robert HUFF (GBR)	18	10		18	0											46
4	Andy PRIAULX (GBR)	10	0		4	25											39
5	Tiago MONTEIRO (POR)	0	6		15	12											33
6	Alain MENU (SUI)	15	15		2	0											32
7	Tom CORONEL (NED)	4	0		10	15											29
8	Jordi GENÉ (ESP)	6	18		0	4											28
9	Fredy BARTH (SUI)	2	0		12	10											24
9	Augusto FARFUS (BRA)	8	8		1	0											17
11	Michel NYKJÆR (DEN)	0	4		0	6											10
12	Norbert MICHELISZ (HUN)	1	2		6	1											10
13	Mehdi BENNANI (MAR)	0	0		0	2											2
14	Sergio HERNÁNDEZ (ESP)	0	1		0	0											1

2010 FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP - MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

position	manufacturer	Curitiba (BRA) 7 March		Puebla (MEX) 11 April	Marrakech (MAR) 2 May	Monza (ITA) 23 May	Zolder (BEL) 20 June	Portimão (POR) 4 July	Brands Hatch (GBR) 18 July	Brno (CZE) 1 August	Oschersleben (GER) 5 September	Valencia (ESP) 19 September	Okayama (JPN) 31 October	Macau (CHN) 21 November	TOTAL		
		23	43														
1	SEAT CUSTOMERS TECHNOLOGY	23	43	CANCELLED	40	27										133	
2	CHEVROLET	43	27		30	18											118
3	BMW	22	18		18	35											93