

## ROUNDS 21 & 22 – OKAYAMA, JAPAN RACES 1 & 2 REPORT

*Weather:* rainy, with a wet track.

### SEAT WIN MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

The first appearance of the FIA World Touring Car Championship in Japan turned out to be a great success. Spectators flocked to the track in spite of winterlike weather – 28,000 was the official figure released by the event promoter – and were rewarded with two breathtaking races with plenty of overtaking and tangles.

A close battle between the BMW and SEAT drivers ended in Rickard Rydell claiming his second victory of the season ahead of Jörg Müller and Andy Priaulx. A victory that won the Spanish brand the Manufacturers' Championship (pending official confirmation by the FIA).

The second race was won by Tom Coronel who became the 14<sup>th</sup> different winner in the 22 races so far. Coronel crossed the line inches ahead of Augusto Farfus, with Independent Sergio Hernández claiming his first podium in the championship.

The championship will resume for rounds 23 and 24 – the last ones of the season – in Macau, on November 16<sup>th</sup>. There is still the Drivers' Championship at stake, but only two SEAT Sport drivers can claim it: Yvan Muller and Gabriele Tarquini. With the latter scoreless in Japan, Muller has now a comfortable lead of 14 points out of the 20 to be awarded in the final meeting.

### RACE 1 – RYDELL TAKES SEAT TO CHAMPIONSHIP

In a dramatic first race Rickard Rydell gifted SEAT Sport the Manufacturer's Championship.

The race started on a wet track and in a light rain. Augusto Farfus led the field into the first corner, but Alain Menu and Jörg Müller bumped into him and sent him down to thirteenth. Gabriele Tarquini took a risk from eighth position, where he started after his penalty in Monza, went for the outside line but ran wide and rejoined at the back.

Müller took the lead ahead of Tiago Monteiro and Rydell, with Robert Huff behind them. Menu suffered terminal damage from the incident with Farfus and retired. Rydell and Monteiro swapped positions for several laps until Rydell emerged as the quicker and chased the leader.

James Thompson had the best start jumping up from the seventh row to sixth position. Stefano D'Aste held his ground during the start and finished the first lap in fifth. Andy Priaulx also had a good start and jumped up to seventh place after the first corner incidents. D'Aste began to slide down the field as Yvan Muller, Priaulx, Farfus and Thomspson all overtook him by the end of the third lap. Next to challenge him was his team mate Sergio Hernández.

Rydell chased after Müller, and eventually overtook him to win the race. Monteiro had the task of holding up the three Britons behind him: Huff, Thompson and Priaulx. Priaulx dived past Huff and set about passing the very wide SEAT. Once he had done so he disappeared off to claim third position. Behind Monteiro the fight continued between Thompson and Huff. Huff finally made it past Monteiro; then Thomspson tried to get past but Monteiro closed the door. Eventually Thompson collided with Yvan Muller and spun off. This left Monteiro finish in fifth with Farfus in



sixth and Muller in seventh. Tom Coronel sneaked into eighth and claimed pole for Race 2.

Independent driver D'Aste eventually finished in ninth position overall and won his class ahead of Hernández.

### **RACE 2 – CORONEL HOLDS OFF FARFUS FOR FIRST WIN**

Tom Coronel took a fantastic first WTCC win as he managed to hold off a charging Augusto Farfus. Coronel began from pole on the reverse grid, but was overtaken into the first corner by Tiago Monteiro who came up from the second row.

Farfus lost places at the start once again, but was quick to claw his way ahead of Monteiro. He then chased Coronel for several laps, but the Dutchman made his car as wide as possible and refused to make a mistake on the drying track.

Championship leader Yvan Muller fell from second on the grid to fifth, and was to struggle for pace for the rest of the race, eventually finishing sixth. Independent driver Stefano D'Aste was in the mix again finishing the first lap in fourth position and chasing those ahead of him. D'Aste was hungry for a podium position and tried to pass Rickard Rydell early in the race. He was successful, but then ran wide and fell back down to eleventh.

While the fight for the points was going on behind, the leaders fought until Coronel finally overtook Monteiro and made it stick. Coronel took his chance to put some space between himself and the other drivers, leaving Monteiro to be caught. Priaulx went past Monteiro for third position, only to brake too late into a corner, run wide into the gravel and retire. At almost the same moment a climbing D'Aste attempted a move over Monteiro, and ended up losing a wheel and having to retire.

As Coronel defended his lead against Farfus, the fight for third eventually calmed down, and Independent driver Sergio Hernández found himself not only leading his own race, but also set for an overall podium. After a competitive but unlucky first race James Thompson fought his way up to fourth, ahead of Robert Huff who scored valuable points this weekend to keep his hopes for third in the Championship alive.

Championship runner up Gabriele Tarquini ended a pointless weekend in his garage after suffering mechanical problems with the car and being forced to retire with a couple of laps to go.

### **BULLET NEWS**

#### **SHAPOVALOV HANDS ENGINE TO VAN LAGEN**

Victor Shapovalov's LADA 110 withdrew from the event.

After Jaap van Lagen's sister car suffered from a blown engine yesterday during the second free practice session, the Russian Bears Motorsport team was forced to transplant Shapovalov's engine in van Lagen's car before the qualifying.

#### **GRID PENALTY FOR VAN LAGEN AND KANO**

Jaap van Lagen and Masaki Kano were given grid penalties for not slowing down under yellow flags during yesterday's qualifying session.

The penalty consisted of five grid positions and resulted in van Lagen being demoted from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> on the grid for Race 1, while Kano, who had qualified 28<sup>th</sup>, was pushed back to the last spot.

#### **PRIAULX FASTEST IN WET WARM UP**

On a dark and rainy morning, Andy Priaulx set the fastest lap towards the end of the warm-up with a lap of 1:49.951. Priaulx ousted fellow BMW driver Augusto Farfus who had topped the time sheet from the beginning, improving several times down to 1:50.086. James Thompson's Honda set the third fastest lap (1:50.497)

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

Rickard RYDELL

*"It is very nice to win after being here for three years with Formula 3. After I had thought about that my thoughts went to the title, and how fantastic it is that we were able to take the Manufacturers' title here. It is so nice to finish today already as champions, and after Tom's (Coronel) win it proves we have the best car whether it had petrol or diesel in it! I like racing in these conditions, and the team did a great job changing the car between the warm up and the race. I was very surprised that we were able to beat BMW as they have been so fast all weekend."*

Tom CORONEL

*"Japan has been great for me, especially after living here for five years in the past. I love these sorts of conditions for races. I went out for the second race with wet tyres on the back and slicks on the front. They thought I was mad but I told them to trust me, and it paid off. I was waiting for Monteiro's tyres to go off and then took advantage. I then made a mistake, which allowed Farfus to close up behind me, and so the final two laps were the most important of my career."*

Jörg MÜLLER

*"I had a good start in the first race and managed to get through the trouble at the first corner. I built up a three second lead and thought it would be easy to bring the car home. However, then my tyres went off and Rickard (Rydell) began to catch me by a second a lap, so I knew he would be able to overtake me. With that in mind I am happy with second place."*

Augusto FARFUS

*"I had a fantastic start to the weekend and everything was good in the warm up this morning. I was spot on going into the rolling start for race 1, but went over the pitlane white line and slipped, locked the wheels and went to the outside. It was completely my fault, and after that I fought my way back to about six. I did not push too hard as I had the second race grid position in mind. In race two I had problems, but was then able to close of Tom (Coronel) but not get past him."*

Andy PRIAULX

*"I have to face up to the fact that SEAT have been the fastest this year and although we have had a fantastic reign it is now over. I feel I have been beaten by the best team this year with great drivers. I want to congratulate them, and Yvan Muller who I think will win the title. Hopefully we will be able to go away over the winter, improve and come back fighting next year. Every race is important and so it would be great to go out on a high in Macau with a win so we will see what happens."*

Sergio HERNÁNDEZ

*"I had a bit of good luck today with Stefano (D'Aste) having problems, especially in the second race. The team has done a great job this season and we have been so close to a podium. It is great to do it here but I want to repeat it in Macau!"*

Stefano D'ASTE

*"It was fun on the wet track, I had a good first race even though it was slippery. There were cars everywhere in the second race and it was impossible to take my proper lines. I had a good fight with my team mate but it did not turn out as well as the first."*

Jaime PUIG – SEAT Sport Director

*“It has been a fantastic season and we have been fighting for that for several years. We have been given new technology from Tdi that has enabled us to do something more with the car. I am very happy as we have not needed to wait until the last race but have taken it in Japan. Everyone has worked together to bring home the Manufacturers’ title – all of the mechanics, engineers and our five drivers. We are proud to say now that Spani has won all the three main Championships: Formula One with Fernando Alonso, WRC with Carlos Sainz and not WTCC with SEAT.”*

## 2008 FIA World Touring Car Championship

### RACE 2 - PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

POS	NO	CL	DRIVER	NAT	CAR	TIME	LAPS	GAP	KPH	BEST
1	20		Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon	26:15.135	14		118.55	1:50.591
2	3		Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	26:15.232	14	0.097	118.55	1:50.364
3	31	I	Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si	26:21.561	14	6.426	118.07	1:50.505
4	15		James THOMPSON	GBR	Honda Accord Euro R	26:22.342	14	7.207	118.01	1:48.767
5	7		Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Lacetti	26:23.498	14	8.363	117.93	1:48.786
6	12		Yvan MULLER	FRA	SEAT Leon TDI	26:30.711	14	15.576	117.39	1:51.670
7	18		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	26:33.127	14	17.992	117.22	1:51.171
8	5		Felix PORTEIRO	ESP	BMW 320si	26:33.827	14	18.692	117.16	1:50.866
9	10		Rickard RYDELL	SWE	SEAT Leon TDI	26:35.303	14	20.168	117.06	1:51.754
10	9		Jordi GENE	ESP	SEAT Leon TDI	26:35.400	14	20.265	117.05	1:50.380
11	42	I	Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	26:38.433	14	23.298	116.83	1:52.310
12	6		Nicola LARINI	ITA	Chevrolet Lacetti	26:45.014	14	29.879	116.35	1:52.704
13	8		Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Lacetti	26:46.675	14	31.540	116.23	1:49.257
14	88	I	Matthew MARSH	HKG	BMW 320si	26:50.917	14	35.782	115.92	1:52.150
15	43	I	Andrey ROMANOV	RUS	BMW 320si	26:57.298	14	42.163	115.46	1:52.702
16	75	I	Norbert MICHELISZ	HUN	SEAT Leon	26:57.419	14	42.284	115.46	1:52.760
17	29	I	Jaap VAN LAGEN	NED	Lada 110	27:01.126	14	45.991	115.19	1:53.897
18	80		Manabu ORIDO	JPN	Chevrolet Lacetti	27:06.646	14	51.511	114.80	1:51.338
19	72		Yukinori TANIGUCHI	JPN	Honda Accord Euro R	27:36.974	14	1:21.839	112.70	1:54.443
20	69	I	Melvin CHOO	SIN	BMW 320si	26:18.588	13	1 LAP	109.85	1:55.220
21	81	I	Masaki KANO	JPN	BMW 320i	26:38.621	13	1 LAP	108.47	1:58.975
22	1		Andy PRIAULX	GBR	BMW 320si	18:55.009	10	4 LAPS	117.55	1:51.391
23	26	I	Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	18:56.471	10	4 LAPS	117.40	1:51.395

#### NOT CLASSIFIED

11			Gabriele TARQUINI	ITA	SEAT Leon TDI	17:46.196	9	D.N.F.	112.63	1:53.417
2			Jorg MULLER	GER	BMW 320si	13:23.860	7	D.N.F.	116.22	1:50.908
27	I		Kirill LADYGIN	RUS	Lada 110	7:59.035	4	D.N.F.	111.55	1:56.229
4			Alessandro ZANARDI	ITA	BMW 320si	2:08.548	1	D.N.F.	104.59	2:08.548
17	I		Takayuki AOKI	JPN	BMW 320si		0	D.N.F.	N/A	

#### FASTEST LAP

15			James THOMPSON		Honda Accord Euro R	1:48.767	14	122.56kph	76.15mph	
31	I		Sergio HERNANDEZ		BMW 320si	1:50.505	14	120.63kph	74.95mph	

Subject to Technical Scrutineering.  
Weather/Track: Cloudy 14°/Wet 17°

Okayama  
Circuit Length = 3.7030 km.  
Start: 16:03 End: 16:29

Race Director:	Steward:	Timekeeper:
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**2008 FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP - DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

position	# - driver	Curitiba (BRA)		Puebla (MEX)		Valencia (ESP)		Pau (FRA)		Brno (CZE)		Estoril (POR)		Brands Hatch (GBR)		Oschersleben (GER)		Imola (ITA)		Monza (ITA)		Okayama (JPN)		Macau (CHN)		TOTAL
		2 March	6 April	18 May	1 June	15 June	13 July	27 July	31 August	21 September	5 October	26 October	16 November													
1	Yvan MULLER (FRA)	10	4	3	5	5	1	8	2	1	4	6	8	8	0	0	1	10	4	10	5	2	3			100
2	Gabriele TARQUINI (ITA)	4	10	4	6	8	4	4	5	3	10	0	0	2	4	0	0	4	0	8	10	0	0			86
3	Robert HUFF (GBR)	0	0	0	0	10	8	5	4	0	0	5	4	0	0	8	6	5	6	3	0	5	4			73
4	Rickard RYDELL (SWE)	8	2	8	8	0	2	3	6	0	0	10	1	0	0	3	0	8	3	0	0	10	0			72
5	Andy PRIAULX (GBR)	5	8	0	1	2	6	1	10	0	1	3	6	6	0	0	4	0	2	6	0	6	0			67
6	Jörg MÜLLER (GER)	6	5	0	0	4	5	0	0	4	2	0	2	10	5	0	0	1	8	0	0	8	0			60
7	Augusto FARFUS (BRA)	0	3	0	0	0	0	10	3	5	6	0	0	0	3	10	3	2	1	0	1	3	8			58
8	Jordi GENÉ (ESP)	0	1	10	4	6	3	6	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4	5	0	0	2	8	0	0			53
9	Félix PORTEIRO (ESP)	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	5	1	5	3	8	1	10	0	0	0	0	0	1			51
10	Nicola LARINI (ITA)	0	0	6	0	3	0	2	8	0	0	8	3	0	0	0	0	3	5	4	6	0	0			48
11	Alain MENU (SUI)	0	0	1	2	1	10	0	0	6	3	0	0	1	10	6	0	0	0	0	4	0	0			44
12	Tiago MONTEIRO (POR)	0	0	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	3	4	2			43
13	Tom CORONEL (NED)	2	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	8	0	0	0	0	1	10			35
14	Alessandro ZANARDI (ITA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	8	0	0	5	6	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0			32
15	James THOMPSON (GBR)	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	10	0	0	0	5			24
16	Sergio HERNÁNDEZ (ESP)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6			9
17	Stefano D'ASTE (ITA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			2
18	Olivier TIELEMANS (NED)	1	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	0			1

**2008 FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP - MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

position	manufacturer	Curitiba (BRA)		Puebla (MEX)		Valencia (ESP)		Pau (FRA)		Brno (CZE)		Estoril (POR)		Brands Hatch (GBR)		Oschersleben (GER)		Imola (ITA)		Monza (ITA)		Okayama (JPN)		Macau (CHN)		TOTAL
		2 March	6 April	18 May	1 June	15 June	13 July	27 July	31 August	21 September	5 October	26 October	16 November													
1	SEAT	18	15	18	18	14	7	14	11	8	15	16	18	13	9	9	13	18	7	18	18	14	13			304
2	BMW	11	14	7	8	8	11	13	13	18	14	7	11	16	14	13	14	5	10	9	7	14	14			251
3	CHEVROLET	0	7	11	10	14	18	9	12	8	6	13	7	6	13	14	9	9	11	9	11	8	6			211
4	HONDA	-	-	-	-	3	3	2	2	5	4	0	0	3	2	2	0	6	10	2	2	3	6			55