

FIA WTCC NEWSLETTER

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CAR COMPENSATION WEIGHT REPLACES DRIVER BALLAST

From next season a system of Compensation Weights will replace the Success Ballast system that has previously adjusted car weights based on driver results. Compensation Weight will balance the performance between car models rather than the difference between the drivers. Therefore all drivers in the same model of car will carry the same weight.

Although results and lap times proved its effectiveness, the Success Ballast system had two weak points, firstly it hid the identification of who really were the best drivers and secondly because of major technical differences between the cars (front or rear-wheel drive, petrol or diesel engine), forced the FIA Touring Car Bureau to issue a number of technical waivers to further balance performance.

Compensation Weight will solve these problems, being an objective system based on models (by homologation number) instead of driver's results.

HOW IT WILL WORK

The new system will be based on a **lap time calculation process**.

The best lap times of the two fastest cars of each model in qualifying, and the best two lap times of the two fastest cars of each model in both races will be averaged.

The calculation will be based on a **three event** rolling average, except it will be applied for the first time after the first two events. For example, the results of Events 2, 3 and 4 will determine the Compensation Weight for Event 5.

When after this calculation, a model's average is within a **0.3s threshold** in relation to the fastest model, no action will be taken.

If a model is slower than the fastest model by more than 0.3s, **10 kg will be deducted** for every complete 0.1s more than the 0.3s threshold, up to a maximum of 60 kg. If subsequently the model gets within 0.3s, it will lose the weight deduction on the same basis of 10kg per 0.1 sec.

The system does not attempt to achieve exact equality; it seeks to get slower cars up to a competitive position (+0.3s). Therefore success will depend on the best car/driver/team combination and not the compensation system.

BMW CONFIRM WTCC PROGRAMME

BMW have confirmed their participation in the FIA World Touring Car Championship for the 2009 season. The announcement was released yesterday night in Munich, during the marque's traditional Sport Pokal party.

"Touring cars have traditionally been very important to BMW," said BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen.

Between 2005 and 2007, BMW won for three consecutive times the WTCC Drivers' and Manufacturers' Championships, while this year, despite six race victories, they had to settle with second place in the Manufacturers' Championship behind SEAT and fourth in the Drivers' Championship.

Theissen commented: *"I am pleased that a compromise was reached regarding the 2009 rules. This balances out the different engine concepts and should allow for fair and even competition between the manufacturers. We are absolutely determined to be back at the top of the WTCC at the 2009 season finale in Macau. We shall announce our team and driver line up later."*

PANTA WIN TENDER FOR WTCC BIO-FUEL

Following an invitation to tender, the FIA World Motor Sport Council appointed Italian company PANTA as the official fuel supplier for the 2009 and 2010 FIA World Touring Car Championships.

PANTA will supply both petrol and diesel fuels that will be composed by 10 per cent of second generation bio-ethanol and 90 per cent of commercial unleaded fuel.

The second generation bio-ethanol is made from waste biomass, derived from recently dead biological material, such as the stalks of wheat, corn and wood. This distinguishes it from fossil fuel, which is derived from long dead biological material and also from the first generation bio-ethanol that is made from food crops, such as sugar, starch, vegetable oil, or animal fats, using conventional technology.

The use of second generation bio-ethanol can reduce the use of fossil fuels, greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, without interfering with the production of foods.

In a few days the first samples will be delivered to the teams, so that they can start testing with the new bio-fuel. The 2009 FIA WTCC will start the season in Brazil on March 9th, with the whole field powered by PANTA bio-fuel, reinforcing the championship's support to the FIA Make Cars Green campaign.

WTCC AND WRC CHAMPIONS TO TEAM AT WEMBLEY

Newly crowned WTCC champion Yvan Muller will partner his World Rally Championship counterpart Sebastien Loeb in the French squad at this year's Race of Champions on December 14th.

Muller's appearance at Wembley will be the fourth time he has contested the RoC, and means that the WTCC, WRC and Formula One champions will all be in action at the event, with Lewis Hamilton set to demonstrate his McLaren F1 car while Muller and Loeb take part in the main competition.

"When you are invited to take part in the Race of Champions, you say yes," said Muller. "It is a great event and, to be able to race without having special targets, just to give some fun to the fans is good. Racing in a stadium like Wembley is a very different experience to what I do the rest of the year."

SEAT SPORT DRIVERS VISIT FACTORY

Within the celebrations for their victory in the 2008 FIA World Touring Car Championship, SEAT Sport drivers Yvan Muller, Tiago Monteiro, Gabriele Tarquini and Jordi Gené paid a visit to the SEAT factory in Martorell and shared their success with the SEAT workers.

The visit began at breakfast, when drivers and team members were personally congratulated by SEAT president Erich Schmitt.

They were later escorted to a complete visit of the factory's facilities and workshop, that was followed by an exhibition drive in the factory's courtyard, with Gené at the wheel of the León TDI racing car.

Later on, the visitors had lunch with the workers in the canteen of Workshop 9, where they also signed hundreds of autographs.

The visit ended in the corporate building, where the office staff also had the opportunity to congratulate the world championship winners.

COUNTDOWN: - 98 DAYS



to the 2009 FIA WTCC Race of Brazil – 7th / 8th March in Curitiba