

14 November 2016

Rounds 21 & 22 – Macau – 17 / 20 November 2016

PREVIEW

A four-way fight to decide the Drivers' Championship

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The battle for the second TCR International Series Drivers' title will be decided this upcoming weekend on Macau's street circuit.

Two pairs of teammates – James Nash and Pepe Oriola of Craft-Bamboo Lukoil and Stefano Comini and Jean-Karl Vernay of Leopard Racing – will face in a four-way fight, representing two brands, SEAT and Volkswagen respectively.

Nash has a lead of 17 points over last year's champion Comini. In third place, a further 16 points adrift, is Oriola while Vernay lies fourth, 39 points off the lead. Both Oriola and Vernay have acknowledged that the title is all but beyond them and so both have pledged to help their teammates, but Macau is widely regarded as being a complete lottery and impossible to predict and so the pair aren't out of the fight just yet...

Just as in 2015, when Comini was crowned the category's first ever champion, the final races are set to provide some thrilling battles.

Track activity will start on Thursday morning with a 30-minute Free Practice; a second Practice session will follow on Friday, while the Qualifying session split into Q1 (25 minutes) and Q2 (15 minutes, for the twelve fastest in Q1) will be run on Saturday in the early morning.

The two back-to-back races will take place on Sunday morning; the finishing order of Race 1 will determine the grid for Race 2.

TCR in Macau – the event at a glance

Lap distance: 6.12 km

Race distance: 10 laps

Start: standing

Grid for Race 1: determined by the Qualifying results (Q1+Q2)

Grid for Race 2: determined by the final results of Race 1

Timetable:	Thursday, 11:25/11:55	Free Practice 1
	Friday, 12:30/13:00	Free Practice 2
	Saturday, 07:30/08:30	Qualifying (Q1 + Q2)
	Sunday, 10:05	Race 1
	Sunday, 11:20	Race 2

all times: GMT +8

Success Ballast only for James Nash's SEAT

Current championship leader James Nash will be the only driver to carry the Success Ballast on board his car during the TCR International Series final race meeting. The Briton's SEAT León will be laden by 30 extra kilos, as Nash emerged as the best scorer in the previous race meeting.

At Sepang, Nash collected 33 points, more than the two race winners of the Malaysian event: Roberto Colciago (30) and Kevin Gleason (29). However, none of them will take part in the season's finale.

Nash's SEAT will weigh 1345 kg, against the 1315 kg of the Honda Civic and other SEAT cars, while the Volkswagen Golf cars will run on 1285 kg.

Tiago Monteiro and Josh Files join the final party

The season-ending weekend won't just be all about Nash, Comini, Oriola and Vernay; the finale always attracts guest drivers and this year is no exception, with two newcomers who are more than capable of springing surprises. Portugal's Tiago Monteiro will be in the third WestCoast Racing Honda Civic, while British driver Josh Files competes in the same Target Competition Honda with which he won this year's TCR Germany title.

Earlier this season, Monteiro had made a couple of appearances at the wheel of the Civic TCR at Spa and Zandvoort.

"Thanks to my relationship with Honda I have been able to get to know the car in the TCR Benelux series where I won two races, and I enjoyed it right away! The car is quite easy to drive and very fun, as well as very competitive. So it was an honour and a great joy when I was invited to join the International Series for Macau!" said Monteiro who is aware of the tough commitment: *"I know the level is very high. I know most of the front-runners, so I'm aware that the task ahead will be tough, especially as they have been doing the whole season with this cars. If I can be at the front, I will be glad and that's my goal... But first of all, I intend to enjoy myself and give it all. I also know that the championship is being decided there, and I don't want to interfere."*

Files made a one-off appearance in the International Series, last year: *"I am excited to return to Macau, especially at the wheel of my German championship-winning Honda Civic with my championship-winning team Target Competition! I feel this year we have a real shot to be right towards the front of the field! I genuinely can't wait for the event to start. All I need to do is de-familiarise myself with the track and learn the Michelin tyres, whilst obviously tweaking the car to suit the conditions. Will be a lot of fun, and a great feeling to come up against the TCR International guys, and of course Monteiro. As long as we stick to our normal routine and work ethic, we should hopefully been in the thick of it and have two really fun races. Obviously I don't want to get in the way of any championship deciding battle though, so hopefully we can be in front of it!"* Files declared.

press release



Fulín and Belicchi are back with Mulsanne Racing

After fielding only one car in the three previous race meetings at Buriram, Singapore and Sepang, Mulsanne Racing will run two Alfa Romeo Giulietta cars once again in the season finale.

Petr Fulín will be back at the wheel after skipping Sepang for a previous commitment; the Czech driver will be joined by Andrea Belicchi in the team's second Giulietta.

As Michela Cerruti is still undergoing medical checks since she suffered from the consequences of renal colic, Mulsanne Racing has called Belicchi to replace her.

The Italian driver was a regular competitor in last year's TCR International Series, claiming one race victory and finishing sixth in the Drivers' Championship; he also obtained a brilliant second place in Macau's Race 2.

During the current season, Belicchi made two occasional appearances with TCR cars: driving an Opel Astra in the International Series opening at Bahrain and a Honda Civic in the ADAC TCR Germany at the Red Bull Ring where he finished second in Race 2.

TCR International Series season finale live on the Internet

The TCR International Series season finale will benefit from live timing and streaming of all sessions and races on the web (www.tcr-series.com and www.tcr-series.tv), according to the timetable here below:

Thursday, 11:25 (03:25 CET) – Free Practice 1, **timing & streaming**

Friday, 12:30 (04:30 CET) – Free Practice 2, **timing & streaming**

Saturday, 07:30 (Friday, 23:30 CET) – Qualifying, **timing & streaming**

Sunday, 10:00 (02:00 CET) – Races 1 & 2, **timing & streaming**

(all times local, GMT +8)

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	Team	driver	car
1	Leopard Racing	Stefano Comini (SUI)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
2	Leopard Racing	Jean-Karl Vernay (FRA)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
3	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Andy Yan Cheuk Wai (HKG)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
7	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Davit Kajaia (GEO)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
8	West Coast Racing	Mikhail Grachev (RUS)	Honda Civic TCR
9	B3 Racing Team Hungary	Attila Tassi (HUN)	SEAT León TCR
10	West Coast Racing	Gianni Morbidelli (ITA)	Honda Civic TCR
14	Son Veng Racing Team	Neric Wei Chao Yin (CHN)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
17	Roadstar Racing	Terence Tse Kin Leung (HKG)	SEAT León Cup Racer
20	Elegant Racing Team **	Lou Hon Kei (MAC)	SEAT León Cup Racer
22	Mulsanne Racing	Petr Fulín (CZE)	Alfa Romeo Giulietta TCR
23	Mulsanne Racing	Andrea Belicchi (ITA)	Alfa Romeo Giulietta TCR
27	TeamWork Motorsport	William O'Brien (HKG)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
28	TeamWork Motorsport	Kevin Tse Wing Kin (MAC)	Volkswagen Golf Gti TCR
35	Target Competition	Rafaël Galiana (FRA)	SEAT León TCR
38	Champ Motorsport	Michael Ho Hon Keong (MAC)	Honda Civic TCR
48	LMS Racing	Antti Buri (FIN)	SEAT León Cup Racer
50	Target Competition	Josh Files (GBR)	Honda Civic TCR
54	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	James Nash (GBR)	SEAT León TCR
62	B3 Racing Team Hungary	Du!an Borkovi" (SRB)	SEAT León TCR
65	Viper Niza racing	Douglas Khoo Kok Hui (MAS)	SEAT León Cup Racer
68	Team TRC **	Tang Chi Lun (HKG)	Honda Civic TCR
70	B3 Racing Team Hungary	Mat'o Homola (SVK)	SEAT León TCR
74	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Pepe Oriola (ESP)	SEAT León TCR
77	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Sergey Afanasyev (RUS)	SEAT León TCR
81	West Coast Racing	Tiago Monteiro (POR)	Honda Civic TCR
83	Team Thailand	Tin Sritrai (THA)	Honda Civic TCR
97	Asia Racing Team **	Edgar Lau Shek Fai (HKG)	SEAT León Cup Racer

** pending decision on scoring points for the TCR International Series classification