

ROUNDS 7 & 8 – ZOLDER, BELGIUM RACE REPORT

Weather: cloudy with a threat of rain, the track was dry

BELGIAN VICTORIES FOR SEAT AND BMW

SEAT and BMW shared victories in Zolder, on the first ever visit of the FIA WTCC to Belgium that was blessed by a crowd of 23,000 despite a cold wind from the North. Jordi Gené came home first in Race 1, but it was his team-mate Gabriele Tarquini who inherited victory after the Spaniard's car failed to pass the technical checks because the air restrictor did not conform.

Chevrolet's duo of Yvan Muller and Alain Menu completed the podium.

The second race saw one of Andy Priaulx's famous solo escapes from the pole position on the reverse grid. The Briton rejected the assaults from Rob Huff and Tiago Monteiro and claimed a much-longed home victory for Bart Mampaey and his BMW Team RBM.

Thanks to the solid performances posted by their three top drivers, Chevrolet collected a great deal of points that enabled Muller to maintain his leadership in the Drivers' Championship (but Tarquini and Priaulx closed the gap) and the American brand to stay on top of the Manufacturers.

Norbert Michelisz achieved two wins in the Rookie Challenge – and also 12 further points in the overall championship. These results meant that the Hungarian youngster is now one point ahead of Fredy Barth in the Challenge.

Kristian Poulsen claimed his first victory in the Independents' Trophy, while point-leader Sergio Hernández won the second race.

The championship will resume for rounds 9 and 10 at Portimão, Portugal, on July 4th.

RACE 1 – TARQUINI INHERITS WIN FROM GENÉ

Jordi Gené seemed to have taken his first victory of the season, his first win since Mexico 2008. However, the Spaniard was later excluded for a technical infringement and his teammate and poleman Gabriele Tarquini inherited victory while Chevrolet's Yvan Muller and Alan Menu completed the podium.

Norbert Michelisz was top in the Rookie challenge finishing seventh overall. Kristian Poulsen found a way around local favourite Pierre-Yves Corthals to win the Independents in 12th. Further down the field Andy Priaulx made an important move to get ahead of Coronel and finish eighth winning pole for Race 2.

Gené had a good run on his teammate as the field came across the line for the rolling start. Priaulx dropped down to tenth while Darryl O'Young made contact with Michel Nykjær. After a promising weekend O'Young spun into the gravel although got his Chevrolet Lacetti going to rejoin in last position.

As the top three edged away the order by the end of the first racing lap was Gené from Tarquini, Muller, Menu, Monteiro, Huff, Michelisz, Coronel, Priaulx and Barth.

By lap four Gené had pulled out a 1.4-second lead on his teammate but Monteiro was beginning to push Menu for fourth. Muller began to hunt down Tarquini for second but at half race distance began falling back into the grasp of his teammate Menu as the Frenchman tried to save the front-left tyre on his Chevrolet Cruze.

Kristian Poulsen was bouncing his BMW 320si across the kerbs while chasing local racer Pierre-Yves Corthals for 12th and the Independents lead, which he eventually took from the Belgian driver to claim his first category win this season.



On lap seven Priaulx found his way through to take P8 from Tom Coronel when the Dutchman ran wide at the chicane and with it claimed pole position for Race 2 at what is his BMW Team RBM's home event. His teammate, Augusto Farfus also made up a position to take 10th from Fredy Barth.

Gené took the chequered flag to claim his first WTCC victory since Mexico in 2008, 2.6 seconds ahead of Tarquini. Despite the pack beginning to bunch up behind the Chevrolet of Muller, the current championship leader held off the challenge to hold onto the third place. Menu finished fourth ahead of Monteiro in fifth and Huff, sixth. Norbert Michelisz finished seventh to win the Rookie Challenge ahead of Fredy Barth (P11) and Mehdi Bennani (P15). Michelisz will now start alongside Priaulx on the front row for Race 2. Poulsen took victory in the Independents' from Corthals (P13) and Sergio Hernández (P14).

Monroe Performer

Overall: Andy Priaulx 1:40.138; Independent: Darryl O'Young 1:40.294

Withdrawals

F. Engstler: gearbox.

RACE 2 – PRIAULX CLAIMS HOME WIN FOR RBM

Andy Priaulx claimed his third win of the season in Belgium this afternoon, taking victory on home soil for his BMW Team RBM based 150km from Circuit Zolder. Britain's Rob Huff finished second for Chevrolet ahead of Tiago Monteiro.

Norbert Michelisz claimed his second rookie honours while, after a race long battle, Sergio Hernández secured the Independents' victory.

Priaulx made a clean getaway from pole to lead the pack into the first corner but Michelisz, alongside him on the front row, was slow off the line dropping down to eighth. Tom Coronel also stalled on the grid and held up Pierre-Yves Corthals behind.

The field made it cleanly through the first corner with Monteiro close to the back off Huff's Chevrolet. As the cars came across the line to complete the first lap, Huff was right on the bumper of the leading BMW 320si of Priaulx and challenging for the lead. The order was now Priaulx from Huff, Monteiro, Menu, Muller, Tarquini, Farfus, Michelisz, Poulsen and Barth.

Huff continued to hound Priaulx, desperately looking for a way through while his tyres were working well but Priaulx kept a steady head and kept the Chevrolet firmly behind.

Further down the field a great battle in the Independents category was emerging with Kristian Poulsen first losing the lead to Sergio Hernández but continuing to fight back; on lap three Harry Vaulkhard, who was third in the class, went off after losing the front-left tyre.

On lap seven, Michel Nykjær bounced across the kerbs spinning into the gravel. He managed to get his SEAT León TDI going but retired in the pits.

BMW Team RBM's Farfus was defending sixth from Tarquini but Priaulx was now out in front with a 0.7-second gap.

Stefano D'Aste made a clean move down the inside to take 13th position from Moroccan driver Mehdi Bennani. As the battle in the Independents continued, Poulsen briefly regained the lead but was re-passed by Hernández for ninth. In the action, Coronel capitalised getting his SEAT León TDI down the inside of the BMW 320si of Poulsen dropping him down the order a further position to eleventh.

Priaulx now had a 1.5-second lead out in front while Huff dropped back towards Monteiro in third. The order was now Priaulx from Huff, Monteiro, Menu, Muller, Tarquini, Farfus, Michelisz, Barth, Hernández, Coronel and Poulsen.

Farfus then ran wide after getting alongside Tarquini in sixth allowing Michélsz to come through into seventh. On the last lap D'Aste dropped two places to fifth locking up and then running wide with Bennani making contact with him from behind.

As the chequered flag was waved, Priaux claimed his third victory of the season by just over a second from Huff and Monteiro. Menu, Muller and Tarquini were next across the line. Michélsz came home in seventh to claim another rookie victory ahead of Darryl O'Young (P16) and Fredy Barth (P18).

Farfus was eighth in the second BMW Team RBM car. Hernández took the Independents' trophy in ninth with Coronel rounding out the top ten. Hernández's closest Independent rivals were Poulsen and D'Aste in 11th and 12th respectively.

After victory in Race 1, Jordi Gené's SR-Sport team had to do some fast work on the grid to replace the flat bottom of his SEAT León TDI but he then retired in the pits before the start because of a turbo failure.

Monroe Performer

Overall: Andy Priaux 1:40.181; Independent: Sergio Hernández 1:40.701

Withdrawals

M. Nykjær: racing incident; H. Vaulkhard: racing incident; J. Gené: turbo

FLASH NEWS

MICHEL VAILLANT "VISITED" THE WTCC EVENT

Michel Vaillant, the hero of motorsport comic books created by Belgian artist Jean Graton, was a "presence" in the air throughout the whole WTCC event at Zolder.

Graton's son, Philippe, who is stepping into his father shoes to carry on with the Vaillante saga, visited the circuit and together with the drivers sat at the VIP Club signing copies of comic books, 10,000 of which were distributed for free to the fans who attended the event.

In addition to this, Belgian journalist Pierre van Vliet drove to Zolder in his Vaillante Grand Défi, which was then exhibited inside the paddock. The car, designed by Luc Donckervolke on a Hommell chassis and fitted with a Peugeot 2-litre engine, was built in only 15 units.

THE WORD TO THE WINNERS

Gabriele TARQUINI – Race 1 winner: (after Gené's disqualification) *"Jordi (Gené) is a good guy so at the first corner I was fair. He was on the outside but had good pace to come in. If had been another car and not my teammate I may have held position more strongly. I tried to push a bit too much on the first couple of laps had Jordi had better pace but this maybe because he was on new tyres. I then made two mistakes at the last chicane which cost me time and once I lost the slipstream I had to start defending for a bit."*

Andy PRIAULX – Race 2 winner: *"It was really nice to see so many spectators supporting the Belgian team so it felt like a home race for me too. It was a similar atmosphere to being at Brands Hatch. Race 1 was much more exciting as after qualifying it was going to be a hard race. I kept attacking Coronel and getting through really was crucial to winning Race 2. I'd love to be able to win Race 1 as well but we just don't have the pace in qualifying so Race 2 is our only chance of victory at the moment."*

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	21:54.209	13		142.47	1:40.226
2	6		Yvan MULLER	FRA	Chevrolet Cruze	21:56.838	13	2.629	142.18	1:40.474
3	8		Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Cruze	21:57.265	13	3.056	142.14	1:40.267
4	3		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	21:57.768	13	3.559	142.08	1:40.281
5	7		Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Cruze	21:58.075	13	3.866	142.05	1:40.197
6	5		Norbert MICHELISZ	HUN	SEAT Leon TDI	21:58.401	13	4.192	142.01	1:40.376
7	11		Andy PRIAULX	GBR	BMW 320si	21:59.036	13	4.827	141.94	1:40.138
8	2		Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon TDI	22:03.504	13	9.295	141.47	1:40.557
9	10		Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	22:03.662	13	9.453	141.45	1:40.509
10	18		Fredy BARTH	SUI	SEAT Leon TDI	22:03.864	13	9.655	141.43	1:40.504
11	24	I	Kristian POULSEN	DEN	BMW 320si	22:07.582	13	13.373	141.03	1:40.830
12	27	I	Pierre-Yves CORTHALS	BEL	SEAT Leon	22:09.609	13	15.400	140.82	1:40.783
13	25	I	Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si	22:11.820	13	17.611	140.58	1:40.471
14	21	I	Mehdi BENNANI	MAR	BMW 320si	22:12.449	13	18.240	140.52	1:40.618
15	19	I	Harry VAULKHARD	GBR	Chevrolet Lacetti	22:13.632	13	19.423	140.39	1:40.661
16	26	I	Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	22:14.700	13	20.491	140.28	1:41.141
17	35		Vincent RADERMECKER	BEL	Chevrolet Cruze	22:15.086	13	20.877	140.24	1:40.951
18	17		Michel NYKJAER	DEN	SEAT Leon TDI	22:20.698	13	26.489	139.65	1:40.528
19	16	I	Andrei ROMANOV	RUS	BMW 320si	22:48.251	13	54.042	136.84	1:43.549
20	20	I	Darryl O'YOUNG	HKG	Chevrolet Lacetti	21:55.104	12	1 LAP	131.42	1:40.294

NOT CLASSIFIED

15	I		Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	14:59.944	8	D.N.F.	128.04	1:41.635
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FASTEST LAP

11			Andy PRIAULX		BMW 320si	1:40.138	8	89.35mph	143.80kph
20	I		Darryl O'YOUNG		Chevrolet Lacetti	1:40.294	7	89.21mph	143.57kph

Car 4 excluded, Stewards decision 11 refers.

Weather/Track: Cloud 13c/Dry 23c

Zolder

Circuit Length = 4.0000 km.

Start: 13:03 End: 13:24

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	21:52.091	13		142.70	1:40.181
2	7		Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Cruze	21:53.140	13	1.049	142.58	1:40.277
3	3		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	21:53.845	13	1.754	142.51	1:40.318
4	8		Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Cruze	21:54.389	13	2.298	142.45	1:40.352
5	6		Yvan MULLER	FRA	Chevrolet Cruze	21:56.875	13	4.784	142.18	1:40.495
6	1		Gabriele TARQUINI	ITA	SEAT Leon TDI	21:57.879	13	5.788	142.07	1:40.448
7	5		Norbert MICHELISZ	HUN	SEAT Leon TDI	21:58.374	13	6.283	142.02	1:40.430
8	10		Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	21:58.754	13	6.663	141.97	1:40.435
9	25	I	Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si	22:05.582	13	13.491	141.24	1:40.701
10	2		Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon TDI	22:06.901	13	14.810	141.10	1:40.690
11	24	I	Kristian POULSEN	DEN	BMW 320si	22:07.154	13	15.063	141.08	1:40.780
12	20	I	Darryl O'YOUNG	HKG	Chevrolet Lacetti	22:10.318	13	18.227	140.74	1:40.711
13	26	I	Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	22:10.967	13	18.876	140.67	1:40.706
14	35		Vincent RADERMECKER	BEL	Chevrolet Cruze	22:12.769	13	20.678	140.48	1:40.815
15	27	I	Pierre-Yves CORTHALS	BEL	SEAT Leon	22:16.027	13	23.936	140.14	1:41.267
16	15	I	Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	22:16.444	13	24.353	140.10	1:40.781
17	16	I	Andrei ROMANOV	RUS	BMW 320si	22:47.701	13	55.610	136.89	1:42.977
18	18		Fredy BARTH	SUI	SEAT Leon TDI	22:49.602	13	57.511	136.70	1:40.535
19	21	I	Mehdi BENNANI	MAR	BMW 320si	20:28.083	12	1 LAP	140.73	1:40.843

NOT CLASSIFIED

17			Michel NYKJAER	DEN	SEAT Leon TDI	12:47.275	7	D.N.F.	131.42	1:40.758
19	I		Harry VAULKHARD	GBR	Chevrolet Lacetti	3:33.940	2	D.N.F.	134.78	1:41.752
4			Jordi GENE	ESP	SEAT Leon TDI		0	D.N.F.	N/A	

FASTEST LAP

11			Andy PRIAULX		BMW 320si	1:40.181	9		89.31mph	143.74kph
25	I		Sergio HERNANDEZ		BMW 320si	1:40.701	10		88.85mph	142.99kph

Zolder

Circuit Length = 4.0000 km.

Start: 15:19 End: 15:40

Weather/Track: Cloud 14c/Dry 22c

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	
		8	18		12	25	18	10	8	6									25
1	Yvan MULLER (FRA)	25	12	CANCELLED	8	18	12	25	18	10								128	
2	Gabriele TARQUINI (ITA)	12	25		25	8	6	0	25	8									109
3	Andy PRIAULX (GBR)	10	0		4	25	25	10	6	25									105
4	Robert HUFF (GBR)	18	10		18	0	15	15	10	18									104
5	Tiago MONTEIRO (POR)	0	6		15	12	2	6	12	15									68
6	Tom CORONEL (NED)	4	0		10	15	10	18	4	1									62
7	Alain MENU (SUI)	15	15		2	0	0	2	15	12									61
8	Augusto FARFUS (BRA)	8	8		1	0	18	12	2	4									53
9	Jordi GENÉ (ESP)	6	18		0	4	0	8	0	0									36
10	Fredy BARTH (SUI)	2	0		12	10	8	0	1	0									33
11	Norbert MICHELISZ (HUN)	1	2		6	1	0	4	8	6									28
12	Michel NYKJÆR (DEN)	0	4		0	6	4	0	0	0									14
13	Sergio HERNÁNDEZ (ESP)	0	1		0	0	0	0	0	2									3
14	Mehdi BENNANI (MAR)	0	0		0	2	0	0	0	0									2
15	Leonel PERNÍA (ARG)	-	-		-	-	0	1	-	-									1
15	Harry VAULKHARD (GBR)	0	0	0	0	1	0	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	
		30	26		27	40	33	30	40	27									18
1	CHEVROLET	43	27	CANCELLED	30	26	27	40	33	30								256	
2	SEAT CUSTOMERS TECHNOLOGY	23	43		40	27	18	26	37	25									239
3	BMW	22	18		18	35	43	22	18	33									209