

FIA WTCC: YEAR FIVE

2009 marks the FIA World Touring Car Championship's fifth season since the series was revived in 2005.

Like in 2008, the championship will be set out in twelve race meetings. However, for the first time the WTCC will visit twelve different countries over four continents.

After the first two events in the Americas, the series will move to Morocco that hosts again an international automobile race after half-a-century.

Eight events in Europe will precede the two final race meetings of the season in Asia.

In 2009 the WTCC will be the only automobile World Championship to held rounds in Africa and France.

2009 FIA WTCC CALENDAR

Date	Country	Venue
08 March	BRAZIL	Curitiba
22 March	MEXICO	Puebla
03 May	MOROCCO	Marrakech *
17 May	FRANCE	Pau
31 May	SPAIN	Valencia
21 June	CZECH REPUBLIC	Brno
05 July	PORTUGAL	Porto *
19 July	GREAT BRITAIN	Brands Hatch
06 September	GERMANY	Oschersleben
20 September	ITALY	Imola
01 November	JAPAN	Okayama
22 November	MACAU	Macau

* subject to the FIA homologation of the circuit

BMW CONFIRM THREE NATIONAL TEAMS

BMW Motorsport will compete in the 2009 FIA World Touring Car Championship with the same three national teams that represented the German manufacturer since the 2003 European Touring Car Championship. The three experienced outfits will run five BMW 320si cars, receiving support from the national BMW sales organisations.

Three-time WTCC champion Andy Priaulx stays with the BMW Team UK – RBM, while Jörg Müller and Augusto Farfus have been confirmed for the BMW Team Germany – Schnitzer Motorsport.

The third team, BMW Team Italy-Spain – ROAL Motorsport, retained Alessandro Zanardi and signed the 25-year old Spaniard Sergio Hernández to replace his fellow countryman Félix Porteiro who was Zanardi's team-mate in 2007 and 2008.

"The national team concept has proved itself both from a sporting and a commercial point of view," said BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen. *"This team structure was responsible for us winning every title between 2004 and 2007. It also allows us to involve the national sales organisations at the highest level in the World Touring Car Championship. Our team includes five very ambitious drivers, who will do everything to win back the World Championship in 2009."*

HERNÁNDEZ JOINS BMW ITALY-SPAIN

Sergio Hernández, the winner of the 2008 FIA World Touring Car Championship's Independents' Trophy, has joined the BMW Team Italy-Spain for the 2009 season.

The 25-year old Spaniard will replace his fellow countryman Félix Porteiro, alongside Alessandro Zanardi at the wheel of the second BMW 320si car run by Italian outfit ROAL Motorsport.

Zanardi faces his sixth season with the team directed by 1987 World Touring Car champion Roberto Ravaglia, while Hernández has the opportunity to race for a factory team for the first time in his career. An opportunity he deserved thanks to his brilliant results in the past season: 10 victory out of 20 races in the Independents' Trophy and one overall podium (third in Okayama's Race 2).

The team will hit the track for the first time in 2009 during a three-day test at Portimão, Portugal's new permanent racetrack, from January 15th.

COUNTDOWN: - 58 DAYS



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



The 2008 FIA WTCC ended in Macau on November 16th, when Yvan Muller and SEAT were crowned world champions