

MARRAKECH: WORKS ARE ON SCHEDULE

The works for building the Marrakech street circuit that will host the third WTCC meeting on May 3rd go on according to schedule. Everything will be finished by the mid of April, in time for the FIA final inspection.

Aly Horma, president of the event promoter MGP, explained: *"We have already built 1,300 4-metre concrete blocks out of the 2,600 needed for the impact walls. We have received 10 km of F1-standard grid fences from South Africa. We are finishing rebuilding the 4.6 km of public road that make the track; we had to dig into the ground for 1.2 metres to rebuild the foundations that were not strong enough for the racing cars."*

At the same time the 12-hectar paddock is also taking shape. *"The materials for the 3,000sqm pit building are already here: steel frames from South Africa, steel pillars from Germany, glass and wood from Australia. It will be 200m long and will host 30 garages of 60sqm each, the three-floor race control tower, offices and 65 suites. It will be assembled in 45 days between March and April. Twenty temporary structures will be erected, including the media and medical centres, five footbridges and grandstands with 11,500 seats, and everything will be dismantled after the race day,"* said Horma.



Works progress in Marrakech in view of the WTCC Race of Morocco

LADA SPORT CONFIRM DRIVERS

The LADA Sport team have confirmed their three drivers for the 2009 FIA World Touring Car Championship.

Jaap van Lagen, 32-year old from the Netherlands and the Russians Kirill Ladygin (30) and Viktor Shapovalov (44), who took part in last year's championship, will start the new season in Curitiba at the wheel of the same LADA 110 cars they drove in 2008.

The team, which is backed by LADA Avtovaz – the first Russian car manufacturer to commit to an FIA world championship – plan to switch to the new Priora car halfway through the season. Two units of LADA's new model are due to make their first appearance in Brno (June 21st) or Porto (July 5th).

SEAT SPORT'S LAST TEST IN BARCELONA

Yvan Muller and SEAT Sport are ready to defend the World Touring Car Championship Drivers' and Manufacturers' titles they have claimed in 2008. Yesterday the team completed their testing programme in view of the season's opening meeting at Curitiba.

After having tested at Estoril and Valencia, SEAT Sport spent two days at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya, where the new livery of the León TDI cars was also unveiled.

During this last test the team paid special attention to the suspension setting and adjustments.

Xavi Serra, SEAT Sport's head engineer commented: *"Test sessions give us the chance to try out technical solutions that can't be tested on a race weekend. The work and information shared by the drivers are vital for the first races, as they help us to decide the basic set-up we will use in Brazil."*



Yvan Muller's SEAT León TDI sports the number 1

ČOLAK TO DRIVE PETROL SEAT

Croatian youngster Marin Čolak will compete in the full season of the FIA World Touring Car Championship at the wheel of a petrol-powered SEAT León car run by the Čolak Racing Team.

The 24-year old from Zagreb is not a new face in the WTCC paddock; last year he was a regular competitor in the SEAT León Eurocup and, following his victory in the Brands Hatch round, he was awarded with the participation in the WTCC event at Oschersleben. Driving a SUNRED-run León, Čolak put in a consistent performance finishing the first race in 13th position overall and third in the Independents' Trophy. He classified second in the SEAT Eurocup with two race wins.

After Tom Boardman, Čolak is the second SEAT Eurocup driver who decided to move to WTCC.

MEDIA ACCREDITATION FOR CURITIBA

Rounds 1 and 2 of the 2009 FIA World Touring Car Championship will take place at Curitiba, Brazil, 7th and 8th March.

The deadline to apply for media credentials is Tuesday, 24th February.

Please remind that media passes issued by National Sporting Authorities and/or any other series will NOT be valid.

The Accreditation form may be downloaded at the websites www.fia.com and www.fiawtcc.com.

- **International Press** must send applications to Fabio Ravaioli
tel +39 06 39729497, fax +39 06 39729470, email: media@fiawtcc.com
- **Brazilian Press** must send applications to Márcio Fonseca
tel/fax: 011 55429834/55314621; email: fonsecamarcio@terra.com.br
- **TV and Radio** must send applications to Antonios Argyropoulos
tel +33 1 40938517; email: antonios@eurosport.com

COUNTDOWN: - 23 DAYS



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