

TARQUINI TOPS FIRST TEST IN BRAZIL

SEAT Sport driver Gabriele Tarquini posted the fastest lap during today's test that opened the 2009 WTCC season.

During the dying minutes of the session, the Italian completed a lap of 1:25.497, ousting the BMW Team Germany duo of Augusto Farfus (1:25.554) and Jörg Müller (1:25.555) who had jumped on the top just a couple of minutes earlier.

Former champion Andy Priaulx (1:25.737) and reigning champion Yvan Muller (1:25.883) were fourth and fifth fastest respectively. Rickard Rydell, who broke first the 1:26. wall at mid-session, settled in sixth with a lap of 1:25.856.

Nicola Larini was the fastest of the Chevrolet men, driving his new Cruze car to the ninth best lap of 1:26.301, while Proteam Motorsport's Félix Porteiro topped the Independents' class with a time of 1:26.785 good enough for the 11th position overall.

The best of the LADA cars – Jaap van Lagen's – was classified in 17th with a gap of 2.2 seconds. Tom Coronel and Kristian Poulsen did not clock any time; the former had to stop on the track when the engine of his SEAT died, while the latter did not hit the track at all due to a fuel pump failure.

Gabriele Tarquini said: *"The team have done good job, because these were the cars' first laps after they were shipped from Europe. It is nice to start from the top; however heat will be a major problem during the weekend, as we are already two seconds slower compared to last year."*



Gabriele Tarquini was fastest in the test session at Curitiba

DRIVERS MEET FANS AND MAYOR

Official proceedings to the WTCC season of 2009 got underway yesterday in the centre of Curitiba. A promotional day began with the drivers meeting the fans in two crowded autograph sessions in front of the HSBC palace, on the central Ruas das Flores.

Four FIA WTCC racing cars – SEAT, BMW, Chevrolet and LADA – were exhibited in front of the building.

In the afternoon drivers from the WTCC and the IRC joined the Mayor of Curitiba, Mr Beto Richa, Marcello Lotti, general manager of KSO and other local personalities, for a press conference and cocktail reception attended by large representation of media, at the elegant Parque das Pedreiras.

YVAN MULLER “ENJOYS” A RALLY RIDE

The opening event of the FIA World Touring Car Championship in Brazil is twinned with the Rally Internacional de Curitiba, second round of the IRC (Intercontinental Rally Challenge).

While the WTCC event began today with the test session, the rally will come to an end on Saturday afternoon in the service park set up behind the racetrack’s main grandstand.

Yesterday morning, the reigning WTCC champion Yvan Muller was a special guest at the Peugeot Belgium rally team, having a ride alongside his French countryman Nicolas Vouilloz (winner of the 2008 IRC). When asked if he enjoyed the ride, Muller replied: *“Enjoy is not the right word, because for a driver to be on the passenger seat is not an enjoyable feeling. I admit that after a couple of corners I was really tempted to switch off the ignition! But Nicolas drove very safely and now that I have survived I can say: it was an interesting experience!”*



Yvan Muller on board Nicolas Vouilloz’s rally car

MEDIA ACCREDITATION FOR PUEBLA

Rounds 3 and 4 of the 2009 FIA World Touring Car Championship will take place at Puebla, Mexico, 21st and 22nd March.

The deadline to apply for media credentials is Tuesday, 10th March.

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
- **Mexican Press** must send applications to Rodolfo Sánchez Noya
tel: 055 646697, fax: 055 640786; email: rsancheznoya@yahoo.com.mx
- **TV and Radio** must send applications to Antonios Argyropoulos
tel +33 1 40938517; email: antonios@eurosport.com

COUNTDOWN: - 2 DAYS



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

2009 FIA World Touring Car Championship TESTING

POS	NO	CL	DRIVER	NAT	CAR	TIME	LAPS	GAP	KPH
1	2		Gabriele TARQUINI	ITA	SEAT Leon TDI	1:25.497	11		155.58
2	8		Augusto FARFUS	BRA	BMW 320si	1:25.554	17	0.057	155.48
3	7		Jorg MULLER	GER	BMW 320si	1:25.555	16	0.058	155.47
4	6		Andy PRIAULX	GBR	BMW 320si	1:25.737	17	0.240	155.14
5	1		Yvan MULLER	FRA	SEAT Leon TDI	1:25.883	13	0.386	154.88
6	3		Rickard RYDELL	SWE	SEAT Leon TDI	1:25.886	14	0.389	154.88
7	5		Tiago MONTEIRO	POR	SEAT Leon TDI	1:26.055	14	0.558	154.57
8	4		Jordi GENE	ESP	SEAT Leon TDI	1:26.130	13	0.633	154.44
9	14		Nicola LARINI	ITA	Chevrolet Cruze	1:26.301	11	0.804	154.13
10	12		Alain MENU	SUI	Chevrolet Cruze	1:26.402	11	0.905	153.95
11	23	I	Felix PORTEIRO	ESP	BMW 320si	1:26.785	17	1.288	153.27
12	11		Robert HUFF	GBR	Chevrolet Cruze	1:27.000	11	1.503	152.89
13	9		Alessandro ZANARDI	ITA	BMW 320si	1:27.010	15	1.513	152.87
14	10		Sergio HERNANDEZ	ESP	BMW 320si	1:27.051	15	1.554	152.80
15	27	I	Stefano D'ASTE	ITA	BMW 320si	1:27.262	12	1.765	152.43
16	25	I	Franz ENGSTLER	GER	BMW 320si	1:27.267	13	1.770	152.42
17	18		Jaap van LAGEN	NED	LADA 110	1:27.752	13	2.255	151.58
18	28	I	Marin COLAK	CRO	SEAT Leon	1:27.840	16	2.343	151.43
19	24	I	George TANEV	BUL	BMW 320si	1:28.543	16	3.046	150.23
20	22	I	Tom BOARDMAN	GBR	SEAT Leon	1:28.730	16	3.233	149.91
21	19		Kirill LADYGIN	RUS	LADA 110	1:28.984	18	3.487	149.48
22	20		Viktor SHAPOVALOV	RUS	LADA 110	1:29.981	12	4.484	147.83
23	21	I	Tom CORONEL	NED	SEAT Leon	17:19.264	1	15:53.767	12.79

Car 26 did not participate
Weather/Track: Sun 30°/Dry 35°

Curitiba
Circuit Length = 3.6950 km.
Start: 15:05 End: 15:35

Race Director:	Steward:	Timekeeper:
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