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MacauDaily 澳門每日時報®
Times

SUPPLEMENT

FRI 15.11.2024



**ABSOLUTE
RACING**

**GT WORLD CUP
PORSCHE
LEADS THE WAY**

FIA GT WORLD CUP PICARIELLO SURPRISES IN FP2

RENATO MARQUES

ALESSIO Picariello (Porsche 911 GT3 R) took advantage of a disrupted Free Practice 2 (FP2) session yesterday afternoon to top the time sheets in the FIA GT World Cup.

The Guia Circuit was relatively dry compared to the morning session, and Picariello made the most of the frequent interruptions caused by on-track incidents to clock in a fast lap at 2:21.329.

Closely behind him was Laurens Vanthoor, also in a Porsche 911 GT3 R, hi-

ghlighting the Absolute Racing Team's success in finding the best setup for the unpredictable track conditions, with a mix of wet and dry areas.

The third best performance was Daniel Serra (Ferrari 296 GT3), who posted a personal best of 2:21.937.

The Top 5 was rounded out by two BMW M4 GT3s, from reigning champion Raffaele Marciello and Augusto Farfus.

Earlier in the day, Edoardo Mortara (Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO2) topped the time sheets during the FP1 with

a best of 2:33.309 in very damp conditions. However, Mortara could only manage the 10th best time in the FP2, with a time of 2:25.281.

While these results are somewhat deceiving due to the ever-changing track conditions, it is clear that Porsche has a theoretical advantage in today's Qualifying session of the GT3 cars, to take place at 2:05 p.m.

The results from today's Qualifying form the grid of the 12-lap Qualification Race scheduled for Saturday at 1:50 p.m. before the grand finale on Sunday.



FIA FR WORLD CUP Goethe jumps ahead of the competition

RENATO MARQUES

OLIVER Goethe set the fastest lap of the first Qualifying session for the FIA FR World Cup.

The MP Motorsport driver completed a lap around a very wet Guia Circuit in 2:32.482, 0.202 seconds quicker than Tuukka Taponen and almost three seconds faster than his teammate at MP Motorsport, Valerio Rincella.

Goethe and Taponen stood out as clear leaders in the competition under challenging conditions, navigating difficult sections of the track that were still covered in standing water that caused cars to snake around the circuit yesterday afternoon.

These difficult conditions led to five interruptions during the session, with yellow and red flags preventing many drivers from posting competitive lap times.

Out of 27 racers, only 19 managed to achieve times that allowed them to qualify for the race, with four of the remaining eight unable to clock any qua-

lifying lap times. Among them was local driver Tiago Rodrigues, who, after being caught on three interruptions, went straight at Lisboa Bend into the safety road and was unable to rejoin the track and forced to abandon the car.

Earlier in the morning, Alexander Dunne topped Free Practice 1 in even worse weather, with a lot of water on track and low visibility due to the heavy spray. Dunne clocked a lap in 2:41.270, followed by Goethe with a 2:43.708.

Dunne qualified seventh in the afternoon session, with a best time of 2:37.985.

Today, two more sessions will take place in the FR World Cup. The 40-minute Free Practice 2 session is scheduled for 9:20 a.m., followed by Qualifying 2 at around 3 p.m. This will determine the grid for Saturday's 10-lap Qualifying Race, set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

By then, the leading contenders for Sunday's 15-lap race – and the name of the one to be crowned the first-ever FR World Champion – should become clearer.



MOTORCYCLE GP PRACTICE CANCELED DUE TO RAIN

RENATO MARQUES

THE 71st edition of the Macau Grand Prix got off to a challenging start as the Motorcycle GP, which was scheduled to kick off the event, was called off due to rain.

Weather forecasts proved accurate, as the rain that fell in Macau overnight and in the early hours of yesterday morning made it impossible for the motorcycles to inaugurate this year's edition of the local GP.

The race organizers canceled the free practice session at the start time (7:45 a.m.) and announced that adjustments could be made

for today, too.

The rules of the motorcycle GP clearly state that there are to be no "Wet Race" sessions for two-wheeled vehicles and no allocation for wet tires.

The weather played a very relevant factor not only in this race but in all the sessions of the day, which proceeded, even if in precarious conditions, despite the fact that Typhoon Signal 3 remained hoisted for the whole day.

If all goes as initially planned, the motorcycles will go out on track at 7:45 a.m. this morning, although, at this point, it is not clear if this session will be the Qualifying 1

that was originally planned for Friday morning or for the Free Practice session that was canceled yesterday.

According to what the Times could ascertain, today's morning session is likely to serve as the Free Practice session from yesterday, while the originally assigned Qualifying 2 session (scheduled to take place at 4:15 p.m.) today will be the only Qualifying session for the motorcycles.

Either way, this session is once again dependent on weather conditions, as Tropical Storm Toraji is expected to bring additional rain throughout a significant part of today.





TCR World Tour Title down to the wire

RENATO MARQUES

THIS year, the TCR World Tour Event of Macau will be the last event (Rounds 13 and 14) of the season, meaning that this year's champion will be crowned in Macau.

Leading the standings is Norbert Michelisz, driving the Hyundai Elantra N, with 274 points after 12 rounds. Close behind is Esteban Guerrieri (Honda Civic Type R FL5) with 264 points, followed by Thed Björk in Lynk & Co 03 with 255 points.

With 75 points still up for grabs at the Guia Circuit (15 for qualifying + 30 for each race), the chances are that the final win in this championship may still go to any of the top six contenders.

Besides the top three mentioned, Yann Ehrlacher (Lynk & Co 03), Mikel Azcona (Hyundai Elantra N), and Santiago Urrutia (Lynk & Co 03) are all mathematically in range to take the laurels this year.

Michelisz, aiming for his third international title in six years, holds a 27 point lead over Azcona, currently in fifth place. This is a slim lead in a challenging circuit such as Guia, where minor mistakes can lead to tragic consequences and collisions with barriers and walls.

Adding to this difficulty is a packed field of 32 cars, including many non-regular racers who have a consequently slower pace than the front runners, posing yet another challenge on the path to final glory.

This race will also feature significant regional participation, with five drivers from Hong Kong, 11 from the mainland, two from Indonesia, and one from Korea, making up more than half the field.

After two free practice sessions yesterday, TCR cars will go out on track for the first of two qualifying sessions at 12:55 p.m., with a second session starting at 1:35 p.m.

The session will award the first 15 points of the weekend and pave the way for Race 1 (10 laps), scheduled for Saturday (Nov. 16 from 12:35 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.).

The final race of the season (10 laps) is scheduled for Sunday (Nov. 17) from 10:55 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.



Thed Björk

TCR WORLD TOUR

Rainy Day 1 closes with Girolami on top

RENATO MARQUES

A first very wet day at the Macau Grand Prix saw Néstor Girolami (Hyundai Elantra N) emerge as the fastest driver in the TCR World Tour, topping the timesheets despite not being a title contender.

Girolami topped the sheets with a lap in 2:37.165 during the Free Practice 2 (FP2) that took place in the early afternoon yesterday.

Macau expert Rob Huff (Audi RS3 LMS) was the second fastest (2:37:554), with the third best time being achieved by Marco Butti (Honda Civic Type R FL5),

with a lap in 2:39.279.

With the TCR World Tour title to be decided in Macau this weekend, none of the title contenders were willing to take on too much risk in the very wet Guia Circuit.

From the Top 5 of the championship, only Esteban Guerrieri (Honda Civic Type R FL5), currently in second position overall, achieved a relatively fast lap during Thursday's sessions, posting a best time of 2:39.815. Still, this time was just enough to place him in sixth position in FP2.

Further down the rankings, the second title conten-

der, Thed Björk (Lynk & Co 03), clocked a personal best lap in 2:42.255, at 10th overall.

Björk was immediately followed by Mikel Azcona (Hyundai Elantra N) and the championship leader Norbert Michelisz (Hyundai Elantra N), who only made it to post a best of 2:43.723, almost six and a half seconds slower than Girolami.

Nonetheless, points counting towards the championship will only be awarded starting today from 12:55 p.m. when Qualifying 1 starts, followed immediately by the Qualifying 2 session at 1:35 p.m.



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SIMILAR to last year during the 70th anniversary of the Macau Grand Prix, the Macau Roadsport Challenge will be divided into two separate races this year: The Macau Roadsport Challenge and the Macau Roadsport Macau SAR Establishment Cup.

Both races will feature either Toyota GR86(ZN8) or Subaru BRZ(ZD8) cars in a single-make-style competition.

Formerly known as the Macau Touring Car Series and running under different specifications and multiple car brands, the Roadsport Challenge continues the legacy of its predecessor, featuring mainly but not exclusively Macau and Hong Kong racers that qualify for the GP via a series of events held on the mainland over recent months.

All drivers are privateers and amateur racers. Some have a long history in the GP that dates back 30 years or more. For others, these races are a more affordable opportunity to test their skills in real-life racing action compared to other higher-ranked categories.

In many ways, the Roadsport category retains some of the original grassroots spirit of motorsport in Macau, which has played a fundamental

RENATO MARQUES



MACAU ROADSPORT GRASSROOTS RACE CONTINUES ITS LEGACY

role in the evolution of the event today.

It is also a chance for local spectators to watch their relatives, family members, and friends taking on the Guia Circuit.

Last year, Hong Kong's Tse Ka Hing (Toyota GR86)

won the Macau Roadsport Challenge Race, while local driver Lei Kit Meng (Toyota GR86) and Hong Kong driver Adrian Chung (Toyota GR86) won Races 1 and 2 of the Macau 70th Anniversary Challenge respectively.

This year, the Roadsport

Challenge race goes on track Saturday (Nov. 16) at 10:55 a.m. for a 12-lap race, while the Macau Roadsport - Macau SAR Establishment Cup - Race (also 12 laps) will follow from 9:35 a.m. Sunday (Nov. 17).

The first of the races will feature 25 drivers at the

start, including Macanese racers Rui Valente and Jerónimo Badaraco.

For the second race, 27 racers will compete in this special event that celebrates the 25th anniversary of Macau's handover, including Sabino Osório and last year's winner Tse Ka Hin.

During recent qualification races held across two separate groups, the best-classified drivers in Group B were Jactin Chung, Chan Ka Ping, and Hu Zuoliang, while Damon Chan, Adrian Chung, and Huang Ying were the most highlighted racers in Group A.

SCHEDULE

November 15 (Friday)

- 07:45 ~ 08:30 Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - Qualifying 1
- 09:20 ~ 10:00 FIA FR World Cup - Free Practice 2
- 10:15 ~ 10:45 Roadsport Challenge- Qualifying
- 11:00 ~ 11:30 GBA GT Cup (GT 4) - Qualifying
- 12:10 ~ 12:40 Roadsport - Macao SAR Cup- Qualifying
- 12:55 ~ 13:25 FIA TCR World Tour Event of Macau - Qualifying 1
- 13:30 ~ 13:45 FIA TCR World Tour Event of Macau - Qualifying 2
- 14:05 ~ 14:35 FIA GT World Cup - Qualifying
- 14:55 ~ 15:35 FIA FR World Cup - Qualifying 2
- 16:15 ~ 17:00 Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - Qualifying 2

November 16 (Saturday)

- 07:20 ~ 07:40 Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - warm up
- 09:30 ~ 10:15 Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - Race (12 laps)
- 10:55 ~ 11:40 Roadsport Challenge - Race (12 laps)
- 12:35 ~ 13:15 FIA TCR World Tour Event of Macau - Race 1 (9 laps)
- 13:50 ~ 14:50 FIA GT World Cup - Qualification Race (12 laps)
- 15:30 ~ 16:30 FIA FR World Cup - Qualifying Race (10 laps)

November 17 (Sunday)

- 08:15 ~ 09:00 GBA GT Cup (GT 4) - Race (12 laps)
- 09:35 ~ 10:20 Roadsport - Macao SAR Cup - Race (12 laps)
- 10:55 ~ 11:35 FIA TCR World Tour Event of Macau - Race 2 (9 laps)
- 12:25 ~ 13:35 FIA GT World Cup (16 laps)
- 13:45 ~ 14:25 Special Event
- 15:15 ~ 15:20 Lion Dance
- 15:30 ~ 16:30 Macau Grand Prix - FIA FR World Cup (15 laps)

