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THREE FANTASTIC YEARS OF THRILLING BATTLES

How the TCR International Series shook up the world of Touring Cars

The two-year agreement between the FIA, WSC Ltd and Eurosport Events Ltd for the establishment of the WTCR – FIA World Touring Car Cup, means that the TCR International Series will be suspended for 2018 and 2019 after three successful seasons that have spread the TCR concept around the world.

When the first ever TCR race kicked off at Sepang on 28 March 2015, within the frame of the F1 Malaysia Grand Prix, it not only shut down the sceptics, but it also marked the beginning of a global revolution for Touring Car racing.

Race after race, the TCR International Series has grown up and won converts everywhere, among promoters, teams, drivers and car manufacturers.

An increasing number of series and championships have converted to TCR at regional and national levels, many important endurance series and races have added a TCR class and no fewer than twelve brands of car manufacturers have been represented so far in TCR competitions.

The figures of the 2017 season say it all: more than 600 TCR racing cars have been built, 213 races for TCR cars were held as part of 19 different series and 537 drivers have taken part in at least one of those races.

During the past three years, the TCR International Series has fully accomplished its role of promoting the concept that has become the most successful Touring Car category for decades.

While closing this particular chapter, it's worth remembering a few key moments that marked the three years of the TCR International Series:

2015

28 March: Stefano Comini wins the inaugural race in a Target Competition SEAT León at Sepang

11 April: Gianni Morbidelli claims the Honda Civic's first win at Shanghai

10 May: at Portimão, Nicky Thiim records the first victory by an Audi

12 July: Pol Rosell drives the Volkswagen Golf GTI to victory at the Red Bull Ring on its maiden appearance

19 September: Kevin Gleason is the winner of the Singapore night race, a prelude to the F1 Qualifying

22 November: at Macau, Comini wins the second race and clinches the Drivers' title ahead of Pepe Oriola

2016

6 May: at Spa, Peugeot makes its first TCR appearance with two 308 Racing Cup cars run by the Sébastien Loeb Racing team



3 July: home favourite Mikhail Grachev wins Race 2 at Sochi; it is the third victory for the Russian driver in four consecutive events since he changed team and car

30 September: TCR Italy champion Roberto Colciago wins his maiden TCR International race at Sepang, beating Comini by the slim margin of 0.176 seconds

20 November: with a fourth place in Macau's Race 2, Comini wins his second Drivers' title in the Leopard Racing WRT Volkswagen Golf, beating James Nash by only 3.5 points

2017

1 April: Davit Kajaia wins the season's opening race at Rustavi in the first international motorsport event ever hosted by Georgia; it is also the maiden victory for the Alfa Romeo Giulietta

5 May: at Spa, Comini claims the first win for the Audi RS3 LMS

18 June: four days after his 18th birthday, Attila Tassi becomes the youngest race winner in the series with a double victory at the Hungaroring

8 October: Gabriele Tarquini and the Hyundai i30 N win the first race at Zhejiang on their maiden TCR appearance

18 November: by finishing third in Dubai's Race 1, Jean-Karl Vernay is crowned champion with his Leopard Racing Volkswagen Golf; Tassi finishes as runner-up

TCR International Series 2015/17 - Key figures

32 events held over the three years

20 circuits visited in **16** countries

7 Formula One events attended

144 drivers of **31** nationalities took part in at least one race

23 drivers won at least one race

12 races won by Comini (Oriola 8, Morbidelli 6)

6 brands of car manufacturers won at least one race

11 brands of car manufacturers were represented

363 laps led by the SEAT drivers

26 cars formed the largest grid (2017 Hungaroring)

0.170 sec. slimmest winning margin: 1st Comini, 2nd Colciago (2017 Monza R1)

425 videos uploaded on YouTube

15,600 subscribers on YouTube

12 Million 800,000 minutes of watch time on YouTube

And the story continues from 2018, with the WTCR, the TCR Europe Series and new series in Australia, Korea, UK and the Americas.