

20 October 2015

**Rounds 19 & 20 – Buriram Festival of Speed, Thailand – 24/25 October 2015**

## PREVIEW

### TCR brings international car racing to Thailand

The TCR International Series will set a new record this week, being the first international car racing championship to visit Thailand, at Buriram's Chang International Circuit.

The racetrack was inaugurated in 2014 and hosted a round of the World SuperBike Championship in March this year. It is located on the Southern outskirts of Buriram, the capital city of the homonymous province, and some 400 kilometres East of Bangkok.

Designed by the German architect Hermann Tilke, the circuit features twelve corners for a length of 4.5 kilometres, with modern facilities.

The programme of the TCR International Series will begin with a two-hour test session on Friday.

Two thirty-minute Free Practice sessions will be held on Saturday, followed by the thirty-minute Qualifying, split into Q1 (20 minutes for all drivers) and Q2 (10 minutes for the fastest twelve in Q1).

The two races will then take place on Sunday, back-to-back over a distance of about 60 kilometres.

### TCR in Buriram – the event at a glance

Lap distance: 4.55 km

Race distance: 14 laps (63.75 km)

Start: standing

Grids: determined by Qualifying results (Q1+Q2) with top-10 reversed for Race 2

Timetable:	Friday, 12:00/14:00	Testing
	Saturday, 09:00/09:30	Free Practice 1
	Saturday, 11:00/11:30	Free Practice 2
	Saturday, 15:00/15:35	Qualifying (Q1 + Q2)
	Sunday, 12:35	Race 1
	Sunday, 14:05	Race 2

All times: local (GMT +7)



## The TCR field increases further to 25 entries

After featuring a record field of 22 entries in the previous event at Singapore, the TCR International Series increases further to 25 for the Thai event.

Two new outfits will make their first appearance in the series: Asia Racing Team from China and Niza Racing from Malaysia; they both will compete also in the TCR Asia series running two and one SEAT León cars respectively.

The drivers represent 15 different nationalities. The contingent of newcomers is led by a couple of well known international touring car aces: Alain Menu in the Top Run Subaru STi and Hugo Valente at the wheel of one of the Campos Racing Opel Astra OPC.

Taiwan's Johnson Huang replaces his fellow countryman George Chou in one of the three SEAT cars run by Roadstar Racing; Robb Holland from USA will be driving the Focus TCR of FRD Ford HK Racing Team; Douglas Khoo from Malaysia will compete for Niza Racing; local driver Munkong Sathienthirakul steps in for Frank Yu in the Craft-Bamboo SEAT León; a second Thai, Tin Sritrai, is entered by Asia Racing Team alongside Kevin Pu from China.

See the ENTRY LIST at the end of this release

## Five drivers are still in contention for the title fight

With two events and four races left, the fight for the first Drivers' title in the TCR International Series is wide open, with five drivers still in contention.

Target Competition's Stefano Comini regained the lead of the standings after Singapore; the Swiss has built a gap of 11 points ahead of Pepe Oriola of Craft-Bamboo Lukoil. Oriola's teammate and countryman Jordy Gené is classified third, 30 points behind the leader. All of the top-three are racing SEAT León cars.

Two WestCoast Racing drivers in Honda Civic cars – Gianni Morbidelli and Kevin Gleason – are lying in fourth and fifth. Morbidelli has a 47-point gap from Comini, while Gleason is a further 16 points adrift. However, with 110 points still to be awarded, they retain hopes to bounce back.

In the Teams' classification, Craft-Bamboo Lukoil and Target Competition are split by only two points, while WestCoast Racing ranks in third position with a gap of 71 points.

The current leader of TCR Asia after four events is Michael Choi of Prince Racing Hong Kong.



## Maximum success ballast for Stefano Comini

Target Competition's Stefano Comini's SEAT León will carry the maximum success ballast of 30 kilos in the next event at Buriram's Chang International Circuit.

The current championship leader was the best scorer in the previous race meeting at Singapore, collecting 41 points thanks to a couple of second places in the races plus pole position.

Kevin Gleason of WestCoast Racing and Jordi Gené of Craft-Bamboo Lukoil, who won one race apiece at Singapore, will be laden by 20 and 10 kilograms of success ballast respectively.

As for the competitors in the TCR Asia Series, the 30 kilos of ballast will be allocated to Michael Choi (Prince Racing Hong Kong).

## Civic TCR 'Step 2' is ready for debut in Thailand

The JAS Motorsport-built Honda Civic TCR has undergone significant technical developments in recent weeks. The 'Step 2' version of the Japanese car will make its racing debut next week in Thailand.

*"The most significant update concerns the engine," explained the JAS co-owner Maurizio Ambrogetti. "The first version of the Civic TCR was powered by a normally-aspirated engine with the addition of a turbocharger. The 'Step 2' car is powered by the production turbocharged unit from the new Civic Type-R. We are confident that this will give our TCR customers a solid base for the 2016 season."*

The engine might represent the peak of the technical update, but a number of other small changes have also been made.

*"We have adjusted something here and there on the basis of the experience we had gained during the season so far. Indeed, the Civic TCR has been tested in racing conditions during all the previous events. Now the two final rounds in Thailand and Macau will help us to test the changes that will be implemented in the cars that will be available to customers in 2016,"* Ambrogetti said.

Meanwhile, production of the Civic TCR is quickly moving forward.

*"We have just completed the fourteenth chassis and our goal is to build and sell twenty-five cars before the beginning of the 2016 season. We wish to have at least two cars running in each TCR series."*



## Two Thai drivers join the TCR field for home race meeting

Thai fans will be delighted to cheer for two of their local drivers during the TCR International Series at Buriram: Tin Sritrai and Munkong Sathienthirakul.

In one of the Asia Racing Team SEAT León cars, Sritrai is facing his first appearance in an international series, but he can claim perfect knowledge of the Buriram circuit, as he lives nearby. On top of this, he is an experienced touring car driver in spite of his young age (25), having grabbed four titles in the Touring Car Series Asia and two in the Super 2000 class of the Thai Super Series in the last four years. *"This will be a new challenge for me. The SEAT is a front-wheel drive turbo car; very different from what I am used to driving. I'm not going to know what to expect until I get out there on Friday and get a proper feeling of it. It's going to be a great experience though and I'm going out to do a good job in front of my home fans,"* Sritrai stated.

Sathienthirakul will drive a SEAT too, for Craft-Bamboo. The 30-year old from Bangkok switched to touring cars five years ago after claiming three national karting championships; he is a regular front-runner in the Thai Super Series. *"I know that for me TCR is a very competitive series, but that is the beauty of racing, it has driven me to work harder,"* he said.

## Robb Holland at Buriram in the FRD Ford Focus

FRD Ford Racing Hong Kong has signed Robb Holland to drive its Ford Focus in the TCR International Series event at Buriram, Thailand.

The Afro-American driver tackled touring car competitions in the SCCA World Challenge, before becoming a regular competitor in the British Touring Car Championship and the VLN endurance series in Germany. He also took part in the American round of the FIA WTCC in 2012.

*"I have worked with the FRD Team for a few years and I know that Kenneth Ma runs a very good programme. The Ford Focus has struggled this year, but now that FRD has taken over the car I am sure that it can be developed very quickly into one that can challenge for wins. I have no expectations for this weekend other than to help the team develop the Focus into a competitive package. If we can get some good results on the weekend it would be a great bonus,"* Holland said.

Team principal Kenneth Ma, who drove the Focus in Singapore, added: *"Robb has good experience of the Ford Focus car and helped us in its technical development. I hope he can prove the performance of the Focus TCR in Thailand."*





# pressrelease



## Live streaming and timing available from Buriram

The TCR International Series event in Thailand will receive extensive coverage on the Internet.

Both Sunday's back-to-back races will be streamed live on the series' official website [www.tcr-series.com](http://www.tcr-series.com) from 12.30 (noon) local time, or 6.30am in Central Europe.

Live timing will also be also available on the official website, covering all sessions and races from Friday to Sunday.



[www.tcr-series.com](http://www.tcr-series.com)

# entry list



## Rounds 19 & 20 – 24/25 October 2015 BURIRAM FESTIVAL OF SPEED

#	team	driver	car
4	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Tomas Engström (SWE)	Volkswagen Golf TCR
7	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Lorenzo Veglia (ITA)	SEAT León
8	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Mikhail Grachev (RUS)	Volkswagen Golf TCR
10	WestCoast Racing	Gianni Morbidelli (ITA)	Honda Civic TCR
15	Target Competition	Loris Hezemans (NED)	SEAT León
23	WestCoast Racing	René Münnich (GER)	Honda Civic TCR
24	WestCoast Racing	Kevin Gleason (USA)	Honda Civic TCR
25	Target Competition	Stefano Comini (SUI)	SEAT León
27	FRD Ford HK Racing Team	Robb Holland (USA)	Ford Focus ST
28	Campos Racing	TBA	Opel Astra OPC
29	Asia Racing Team	Kevin Pu (CHN)	SEAT León
31	Asia Racing Team	Tin Sritrai (THA)	SEAT León
35	Target Competition	Rafaël Galiana (FRA)	SEAT León
38	Prince Racing Hong Kong	Kenneth Lau (HKG)	Honda Civic TCR
45	Campos Racing	Hugo Valente (FRA)	Opel Astra OPC
52	Top Run Motorsport	Alain Menu (SUI)	Subaru STi TCR
56	Roadstar Racing Team	Samson Chan (HKG)	SEAT León
65	Niza Racing	Douglas Khoo (MAS)	SEAT León
66	Roadstar Racing Team	Filipe C. de Souza (MAC)	SEAT León
68	Prince Racing Hong Kong	Michael Choi (HKG)	Honda Civic TCR
74	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Pepe Oriola (ESP)	SEAT León
77	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Sergey Afanasyev (RUS)	SEAT León
80	Craft-Bamboo Racing	Munkong Sathienthirakul (THA)	SEAT León
88	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Jordi Gené (ESP)	SEAT León
97	Roadstar Racing Team	Johnson Huang (TPE)	SEAT León

