

18 November 2015

**Rounds 21 & 22 – Suncity Group Macau Guia Race – 19/22 November 2015**

## PREVIEW

### Macau hosts the grand finale of the TCR International Series

The Macau Guia circuit will provide the most stunning setting for the grand finale of the TCR International Series' inaugural season.

The 6.1km street circuit is rated as one of the most challenging and demanding by all the drivers who have raced there and the Macau Guia Race – first held in 1972 – is regarded as one of the most sought-after trophies in the careers of the top touring car drivers from all over the globe.

The 2015 edition marks the beginning of a new era for the Guia Race with the introduction of the TCR-specification machines, the newest generation of touring cars.

To fit into the programme of the Suncity Group 62<sup>nd</sup> Macau Grand Prix, the TCR International Series has partly adapted its timetable and format.

Two thirty-minute Free Practice sessions will be held, one on Thursday and the other on Friday, while a forty-minute Qualifying session, split into Q1 (25 minutes for all drivers) and Q2 (15 minutes for the fastest twelve in Q1), with a five-minute break in between, will take place on Saturday.

The two back-to-back 10-lap races will then be run on Sunday. The Grid for the second race, that will also award the Guia Race trophies, will be based on the final results of the first race.

### Suncity Group Macau Guia Race – the event at a glance

Lap distance: 6.12 km

Race distance: 10 laps or 35 minutes (61.20 km)

Start: standing

Timetable:	Thursday, 11:25/11:55	Free Practice 1
	Friday, 12:30/13:00	Free Practice 2
	Saturday, 07:30/08:15	Qualifying
	Sunday, 10:05	Race 1
	Sunday, 11:20	Race 2

All times: local (GMT +8)



## Huff and Nash are the guest stars in a 30-car field

2012 FIA WTCC champion Rob Huff and 2013 FIA WTCC Independent Champion James Nash are the guest stars in a field of 30 cars that sets a new record for participation in the inaugural season of the TCR International Series.

Huff, who has already scored seven race wins in the Macau Guia Race, will be at the wheel of a WestCoast Racing Honda Civic, while Nash makes his touring car comeback in a Ford Focus run jointly by Proteam Racing and FRD Ford HK Racing Team.

*"Macau is the most challenging racetrack I've ever raced on and my record is strong there. I'm really pleased to have been invited to drive in the TCR International Series finale there and I am confident we will have a competitive package for this unique event,"* said Huff.

*"I've been watching TCR develop over its maiden season and the success is amazing. Joining the championship with the Ford team is a great opportunity and racing at Macau is always special. I can't wait to have my first few laps in a TCR car,"* said Nash.

Huff and Nash join another touring car superstar, Alain Menu who will once again be driving the Top Run Subaru after his TCR debut in Thailand.

The Macau finale will also feature a few important comebacks to the series: Andrea Belicchi, the winner of Race 2 in Shanghai, returns to Target Competition after missing the events in Singapore and Thailand; the Italian outfit has entered an impressive six-car line-up that includes Jordi Oriola (who made a couple of appearances earlier in the season) and Francisco Mora (who scored points in both his home races at Algarve).

The drivers represent 12 different nationalities, with seven Hong Kongers forming the largest contingent.

See the ENTRY LIST at the end of this release

## Drivers' and Teams' title fights to be decided in Macau

The fights for both the Drivers' and Teams' titles of the TCR International Series maiden season will be decided in an exciting grand finale on Macau's treacherous street circuit that winds from the Ferry Terminal up the Guia hill.

After the two races at Chang International Circuit in Buriram, where they claimed one victory apiece, Stefano Comini of Target Competition and Pepe Oriola of Craft Bamboo Lukoil are split by only two points.

Oriola's teammate Jordi Gené is still in contention, although the gap of 34 points from the leader does not leave him much hope, even considering that 55 points are still at stake.



In the Teams' Championship, Craft-Bamboo Lukoil has only a 13-point advantage on Target Competition, 95 being the maximum haul that can be scored in the final event. Whatever the outcome, a SEAT driver and a SEAT team will be champions.

## Success ballast for both title contenders

Both TCR International Series' title contenders Stefano Comini and Pepe Oriola will be given extra weight for the final race meeting in Macau.

Comini who is currently leading the championship will carry 20 kilos of success ballast on board of his SEAT León, ten less than Pepe Oriola who has to fill a two-point gap. Oriola was the best scorer in the Thai weekend (44 points) ahead of Comini (35).

Jordi Gené who is still in contention, though lying 34 points behind the leader, will also carry a success ballast of 10 kilos.

Of the TCR Asia Series competitors who will be racing in Macau, only Frank Yu (Craft-Bamboo) will have 10 kilos of success ballast on board.

## Henry Ho and Rodolfo Ávila keep Macau's flag flying

Henry Ho and Rodolfo Ávila – two of the most successful drivers from Macau – will represent the host city in the TCR International Series final.

A three-time winner of the Macau Touring Car Championship (2005, 2009, 2010), Ho will be at the wheel of a Honda Civic TCR run by the PAS Macau Racing Team. During the current season he has successfully competed in the China Touring Car Championship, driving a JAS-built three-volume Honda Civic to two race wins and the second place in the final standings.

*"It's a new category and a new car for me, so it's a brand new challenge. I will just try my best and see where I will end up after the races,"* he said.

Ávila, who was born in Portugal, has established himself as one of the top players in the competitive Porsche Carrera Cup Asia; at Macau he will drive a SEAT León for the Asia Racing Team, with which he won the opening round of the TCR Asia series at Sepang.

*"The Guia Race is very special for Macau drivers and I am no exception. I know the circuit pretty well, but this is only the second time I race there in a touring car. I'll have to make some adaptations to my driving style, but I will put my head down and do the best I can do for the team that is fighting to win the TCR Asia Teams' title,"* Ávila commented.



## Hong Kong drivers flock to take part in the Guia Race

Drivers from Hong Kong form the largest contingent within the record field of the TCR International Series at Macau. Seven Hong Kongers will be in the Guia Race and will also compete for the TCR Asia series.

Michael Choi, the current leader of TCR Asia, and Kenneth Lau will be at the wheels of the Prince Racing Honda Civic cars; another Honda Civic run by WestCoast Racing has been entered for Sunny Wong.

Samson Chan (Roadstar Racing), Sam Lok (Asia Racing Team), Keith Chan (Target Competition) and Frank Yu (Craft-Bamboo Racing) will all drive SEAT León cars.

The field of competitors for the TCR Asia series is completed by Malaysia's Douglas Khoo in the Niza Racing SEAT León and the pair of Johnson Huang and Robb Holland who will be driving for Roadstar Racing.

## Veglia switches to a Golf, as Cunningham joins the Engstler team

The Liqui Moly Team Engstler has reshuffled its driver line-up for the TCR International Series final at Macau.

Guillaume Cunningham will make his first appearance in the series at the wheel of the SEAT León previously driven by Lorenzo Veglia. Although he only started racing two years ago, the Frenchman has claimed some promising results, clinching the 2014 Master Class title in the Asia Formula Renault Championship and currently lies sixth in the National Class of the competitive Japanese Formula 3 Championship; however he has never raced a front-wheel driven touring car before.

*"I'm very excited to race on the legendary Guia circuit and with such a prestigious team as Engstler Motorsport. I have no experience with the track and the car, but I hope my experience in single seaters will help me adapt quickly to both and that I get a decent race pace to have fun,"* he said.

As for Veglia, he will switch to the Volkswagen Golf TCR that was driven to victory at the Red Bull Ring by Pol Rosell and was later raced by Tomas Engström.

*"It's nice to switch to the Golf, though it is the same car as the León, but for the bodywork. This will be an advantage, because I will be able to focus on learning the track. I'm practising a lot on the simulator, but to actually drive in Macau will be a completely different matter. I believe it won't be easy to catch up with the drivers who have already raced there,"* commented Veglia.





## Alfa Romeo Giulietta TCR is ready for maiden track test

Italian engineering company Romeo Ferraris have distributed the first pictures of the Alfa Romeo Giulietta TCR they are developing.

*"It has been hard work, because we had in mind the target of running the Giulietta before the end of the season. Finally the first car was completed and the engine tested on the bench with promising results. We are now ready to begin the technical development on the track,"* said Mario Ferraris.

The company hoped to complete the maiden test during the first week in November, in time to fly the car to Macau and take part in the final event of the TCR International Series.

*"Unfortunately that plan proved to be a bit too optimistic. On top of this, we did not want to risk that lack of preparation and experience could affect our first appearance in the championship. Especially not on a difficult track like Macau!"* explained Ferraris.

The Giulietta TCR is due to be tested in the middle of next week somewhere in Italy with Mario Ferraris and former Alfa Romeo WTCC factory driver Salvatore Tavano sharing driving duties.

The Italian engineering firm has planned to produce the first contingent of ten TCR cars by April 2016. The estimated selling price will be 98,000 euros (plus data acquisition and tax).

## Dejonghe and Dupont win the RACB TCR selection

Sam Dejonghe and Denis Dupont are the winners of the RACB selection launched to foster young talents in TCR racing. The pair will share the wheel of a RACB National Team-supported SEAT León TCR in the 2016 TCR Benelux Series.

Dejonghe and Dupont emerged as winners among the eight contenders that reached the final stage of the selection, which took place at the Jules Tacheney circuit in Mettet on 11 and 12 November. After being coached by Bas Leinders and Marc Duez, the eight racers measured themselves over two timed runs of 4 and 6 laps respectively, at the wheel of a SEAT León TCR.

Geoffroy Theunis, manager of the RACB National Team, commented: *"We are delighted to welcome Sam and Denis in the group of young talents of all disciplines supported by the RACB, and we are impressed with the very high level and the success of this initiative,"* which attracted no less than 565 candidates.



Dejonghe (24) who has experience in karting and single-seaters, with successes in the European F.3 Open, stated: *"This is an extraordinary opportunity for me at this stage of my career,"* while Dupont (22) who had previously contested a similar RACB selection for single-seater drivers, commented: *"My dream to be part of the RACB National Team has eventually come true!"*

## **Files and Wells join Campos Racing for Macau**

In a double last minute deal, Campos Racing has signed British drivers Josh Files and Dan Wells to race in its two Opel Astra cars for the Macau Guia Race, final event of the TCR International Series.

Files and Wells are both 24 years old and proved competitive, but they had developed different racing experiences.

Josh Files is a touring car and front wheel-drive expert. He won races and titles in the Renault Clio Cup and his best season was 2013, when he was crowned champion in both the European and the British series. However, he has never raced at Macau.

On the contrary, Dan Wells is a pure single-seater racer. He debuted in the British Formula Renault before moving to the Far East, where he was a title contender in the Chinese Formula Pilota and Formula Masters series. During the current season he dominated the Asia Formula Renault, winning ten races and the title. Wells has also raced at Macau, finishing a brilliant second in the 2013 Formula Masters Invitational Race.

## **Live streaming and timing available from Macau**

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

Qualifying will be streamed live on Saturday on the series' official website [www.tcr-series.com](http://www.tcr-series.com) from 7.25 local time, or 00.25am in Central Europe.

On Sunday, a recording of the first race will be streamed at 9.50 local time (2.50am in Central Europe) and will be followed by the live streaming of the second race.

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



# entry list



## Rounds 21 & 22 – 19/22 November 2015 SUNCITY GROUP MACAU GUIA RACE 2.0T

#	team	driver	car
7	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Lorenzo Veglia (ITA)	Volkswagen Golf TCR
8	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Mikhail Grachev (RUS)	Volkswagen Golf TCR
10	WestCoast Racing	Gianni Morbidelli (ITA)	Honda Civic TCR
12	WestCoast Racing	Rob Huff (GBR)	Honda Civic TCR
14	Campos Racing	Josh Files (GBR)	Opel Astra OPC
21	Target Competition	Jordi Oriola (ESP)	SEAT León
24	WestCoast Racing	Kevin Gleason (USA)	Honda Civic TCR
25	Target Competition	Stefano Comini (SUI)	SEAT León
27	Roadstar Racing Team	Robb Holland (USA)	SEAT León
28	WestCoast Racing	Sunny Wong (HKG)	Honda Civic TCR
29	Pas Macau Racing Team	Henry Ho (MAC)	Honda Civic TCR
33	Target Competition	Andrea Belicchi (ITA)	SEAT León
35	Target Competition	Rafaël Galiana (FRA)	SEAT León
38	Prince Racing Hong Kong	Kenneth Lau (HKG)	Honda Civic TCR
49	Liqui Moly Team Engstler	Guillaume Cunnington (FRA)	SEAT León
50	Target Competition	Francisco Mora (POR)	SEAT León
52	Top Run Motorsport	Alain Menu (SUI)	Subaru STi TCR
56	Roadstar Racing Team	Samson Chan (HKG)	SEAT León
63	Asia Racing Team	Sam Lok (HKG)	SEAT León
65	Niza Racing	Douglas Khoo (MAS)	SEAT León
68	Prince Racing Hong Kong	Michael Choi (HKG)	Honda Civic TCR
73	Proteam Racing	James Nash (GBR)	Ford Focus ST TCR
74	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Pepe Oriola (ESP)	SEAT León
76	Campos Racing	Dan Wells (GBR)	Opel Astra OPC
77	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Sergey Afanasyev (RUS)	SEAT León
87	Asia Racing Team	Rodolfo Ávila (MAC)	SEAT León
88	Team Craft-Bamboo LUKOIL	Jordi Gené (ESP)	SEAT León
97	Roadstar Racing Team	Johnson Huang (TPE)	SEAT León
98	Target Competition	Keith Chan (HKG)	SEAT León
99	Craft-Bamboo Racing	Frank Yu (HKG)	SEAT León

