

Autodrom Most, 10 August 2014

Kupcikas increases his lead, Hannawald faster than Dudek in Volkswagen Castrol Cup 4th round

Volkswagen Castrol Cup - international racing series returned after the summer break. Round on the Czech track in town of Most, held on 8-10 August, opened the second half of the season. Already in the first of the two races there was no sign of boredom. After a collision in the first corner and a few laps behind the safety car we saw great performance by Robertas Kupcikas. Behind his back there was an exciting fight for positions 2-6. It was Jeffrey Kruger and Maciek Steinhof who finished this battle victorious. The first race ended in disappointment for Krystian Korzeniowski who was 2nd in qualifying. His car was damaged in a collision in the first corner. In the second race Kupcikas again started from the pole position, but this time Lithuanian driver had to work harder to defend his lead, as Jan Kisiel and Jeffrey Kruger chased Kupcikas. In duel of sports stars Sven Hannawald was faster than Jerzy Dudek in both races.

Qualifying session

Just from the beginning of the qualifying session at the top of timetable, we saw not only the drivers who were expected to rule in this session. After the first two laps, best time belonged to the leader of the cup – Robertas Kupcikas. Surprising second time scored Krystian Korzeniowski, for whom this was just the third session in his career at this track. As we expected Janek Kisiel used his experience gained on this track in previous seasons. Driver from Warsaw showed great performance what gave him third result. Jeffrey Kruger, just like Korzeniowski, was driving at this track for the third time, after first two runs in practice sessions. Cape Town born driver, in his third approach to this circuit, scored fourth time. Maciek Steinhof completed top five. Eighth place belonged to Gosia Rdest. One place higher than Gosia was local driver – Ales Jirasek.

Kuba Litwin and Pawel Krężelok chose a slightly different qualifications tactics. Both of them stayed in the pit lane until 15 minutes of the session. On their first flying laps Kuba scored 6th time, while Pawel was 13th. In a duel of sport starts Sven Hannawald was faster. German ski jumper got 16th time, while Dudek came 17th.

As consecutive minutes passed the situation at the top of the timetable remained unchanged. Only Michael Gadomski jumped to sixth place, dropping Kuba Litwin into seventh place. We didn't need to wait long for the counterattack. Already on the next lap Kuba regained sixth position.

Kupcikas won finally qualifying session. Behind driver from Vilnius came Korzeniowski, Kisiel, Kruger and Steinhof. Gosia Rdest had to settle for the 10th time.

The starting order for the second race was determined by the second best times achieved in qualifying. Again in this classification Robertas Kupcikas was unbeaten. Krystian Korzeniowski was the one who also showed consistent performance. A driver from Bielsko also on Sunday will start the race from the first row, just behind Kupcikas. Meanwhile Jeffrey Kruger was ranked one place higher. Kruger swapped places with Kisiel, who will start the race from 4th grid. Kuba Litwin's second time was better than one scored by Maciek Steinhof. Therefore on Sunday Golf with the number 21 (Litwin) will be in front of car with the number 9 (Steinhof). Jerzy Dudek also won better starting position. Famous goalie will start from the 15th place. Sven Hannawald got slightly worse result, and he will run from 20th spot. The only woman among the pack of drivers – Gosia Rdest – scored 11th result.

Quotes after qualifying session:

Krystian Korzeniowski (Race I – 2nd on the grid, Race II - 2nd on the grid):

- During the summer break between rounds I concentrated on analysis of my driving and paid off. Moreover, together with my engineers, we set perfect tire pressure and eliminated my mistakes, spotted on telemetry. I changed my driving style a bit and I'm glad that it is so effective now.

Jan Kisiel (Race I – 3rd on the grid, Race II – 4th on the grid):

- I am satisfied with the result, although I know that I could go faster. Robertas Kupcikas followed me in the wind tunnel, so he had no such aerodynamics resistance, which helped him to achieve fastest time. However, I am positive about the race. Definitely I will fight for the win.

Maciek Steinhof (Race I – 5th on the grid, Race II 6th on the grid):

- I am moderately pleased. I like this track. Yesterday I showed it, by winning both practice sessions. Today the top drivers have chosen a slightly different tire tactics. They had chosen to go on four new tyres, while I had fresh rubber only on front wheels. I took this risk, because it seemed to me that I would go as quickly as they did. It turned out, however, that their tactics was better this time.

First race

Collisions after the start and the fierce battle for positions 2-6 meant that Robertas Kupcikas, who took pole qualifying, had an easier task in today's race at the Autodrom Most. Despite minor difficulties in the first corner, Kupcikas led from start to the finish. Jeffrey Kruger won second place after a great start. Maciek Steinhof came third.

Race winner admitted later that his start was not his best performance ever. Because of this Kupcikas had to defend his position against Jeffrey Kruger. Driver from South Africa was running from fourth grid, but he made a great start. This let him to overtake Korzeniowski and Kisiel, despite the fact that he drove on the dirty side of the track.

The driver of second Interia.pl-branded Golf also failed to complete a good start. Krystian Korzeniowski had problems with Push-to-Pass system, and lost several positions. However, this was not the end of his trouble. In the first corner, Korzeniowski's car was hit, by Golf driven by Gosia Rdest. This crash caused problems also for Kuba Litwin. Kuba had to avoid the crash and dropped from 6th to 8th position. Pawel Krężelok also had some bad luck. Young driver from Szczecin damaged front of his car, but still was able to finish the race without major problems.

After the collision between Korzeniowski and Rdest on the safety car went out, followed by Kupcikas, Kruger, Steinhof and Kisiel, Gadomski and Fluch. After the restart Kupcikas quickly gained pretty comfortable gap. After this driver from Vilnius could focus just on driving fast and clean laps. Behind his back rivals were involved in fights between each other.

Not only Gosia Rdest and Krystian Korzeniowski did not see the chequered flag. Patryk Strzesak, Ignas Gelzinis and Jerzy Dudek, also didn't finish the race. The first was eliminated from the competition after a contact with Adam Rzepecki. While Dudek too much delayed braking before the last corner and went wide off the track.

The situation in the lead has not changed. Kupcikas won, Kruger arrived second, and Steinhof was third. Kisiel, Fluch, Gadomski, Jirasek and Litwin took next places respectively. Sven Hannawald closed the top ten.

Quotes after the first race:

Jeffrey Kruger (4th in qualifying, 2nd in race 1):

- This was probably my best start of the season, but then throughout the race I had to defend against drivers behind me. As soon as I saw that they activate Push-to-Pass, I also turned on this system in my car, not to let them catch me. Frankly I didn't focus on chasing Robertas. I wanted to keep Steinhof and Kisiel behind me. I am pleased with the large number of points I won today.

Michał Gadomski (7th in qualifying, 6th in race 1):

- At the beginning, as many predicted, we had a crash. Fortunately I was able to use this situation to get on the fifth place. We drove it like this to the point where the yellow flags were shown. Unfortunately those flags were visible only for guys in front. Two drivers in front of me slowed down a lot and I had to escape to the grass in order not to hit them. As I returned to the track my car accidentally touched Maciek Steinhof's Golf, which slightly damaged the rear suspension. In these conditions, I thought just to maintain my position.

Ales Jirasek (9th in qualifying, 7th in race 1):

- I'm not entirely happy. My goal was to be on the podium, and finished seventh. It is true that I was able to advance from the ninth position, but it is still not what I expected. I must admit that I did not

expect that my competitors are going to be so fast on this track. I have two new tires for tomorrow, so I hope for a much better result.



Second race

In Sunday's race at the 4,2-kilometer loop in Czech town of Most, there were no crashes or collisions, but even though the fight between drivers was extremely fierce. Czech track is very narrow full of tricky corners, so on each of the 13 laps we had a lot of close battles between the competitors.

Even before the first corner Robertas Kupcikas, starting from pole, found himself in trouble. Krystian Korzeniowski this time made much better start than yesterday and almost caught up with Robertas. Jeffrey Kruger was also the one who wanted to take the lead. Kruger began the race even better than Korzeniowski and was very close to overtaking both Krystian and Robertas. Meanwhile it was Jan Kisiel who took advantage. Driver of Golf number two made a clever maneuver and took second position already on the first lap. On the next lap Korzeniowski lost his third position, as Kruger overtook him.

This time Kupcikas has no time to rest behind the wheel, because of Kisiel and Kruger. These two were pushing very hard to get Lithuanian driver. Further in the field Korzeniowski bravely defended himself against Kuba Litwin. Eventually the driver from Szczecin did not manage to overtake the Golf number 14 and Korzeniowski defended his fourth position.

On further positions Marcus Fluch was struggling to keep Steinhof, Jirasek and Krężelok behind him. These three drivers were furiously fighting with each other. The Swede had a difficult task as his car started to understeer badly on the second lap. Fluch was fighting to keep himself on the track. Few times we saw him running wide to the grass, but finally calm Swede did his job and finished sixth.

Sven Hannawald made another solid performance. Former ski jumper drove his Golf well to finish 15th. Jerzy Dudek crossed the finish line on 18th place. It was another unlucky race for Patryk Strzesak. After contact with one of the competitors young driver returned to the pits. Eventually, he managed to finish the race, but he could forget about good result.

Gosia Rdest did not start in this race. Her car was badly damaged in yesterday's crash with Krystian Korzeniowski. Unfortunately, damage proved to be impossible to repair at the track. Robertas Kupcikas won the race, and behind him were Jan Kisiel and Jeffrey Kruger. Korzeniowski, Litwin, Fluch, Steinhof and Jirasek took next positions respectively.

Quotes after second race:

Marcus Fluch (7th in qualifying, 6th in race 2):

- After round in Poznan I said that it were my most difficult races in Volkswagen Castrol Cup, but this was even more difficult. From the second lap my car started to understeer badly. I struggled to keep myself in corners, but I could not slow down, because Steinhof and Jirasek were very close behind me. You can imagine how I had to work hard to keep my sixth place.

Jakub Litwin (5th in qualifying, 5th in race 2):

- After this round I have a much better mood. Finally I did a proper, normal race. I kept my position, although I wanted to fight for the podium. It was hard to get Krystian. I drove in his wind tunnel, which was quite bad for my engine, as it started to overheat. On the next laps I could not chase him so furiously, because I had to take care about my engine.

Dylan Pereira (16th in qualifying, 11th in race 2):

- I am satisfied with the second race. We found a good tire pressure and it helped me to drive quickly. At the beginning I was driving very well, but at this temperature the tires wear more quickly and in the final laps I did not have enough grip.

Sven Hannawald (20th in qualifying, 15th in race 2):

- I had a great time behind the wheel of the Golf, even though it was incredibly hot. I started from 20th position and I managed to overtake a few guys. For me it was a very valuable experience and a lot of fun. I learned a lot this weekend.

After the races at the track in Most Robertas Kupcikas leads cup overall standings (320 pts.). Following belong to Jeffrey Kruger (272 pts.), Marcus Fluch (256 pts.), Jan Kisiel (232 pts.) and Maciek Steinhof (224 pts.).

Next round of Volkswagen Castrol Cup will be held on 22-24 August 2014. at the modern track Slovakia Ring. Both races at the track next to Bratislava will be available live on the Internet through live streaming technology.

Latest news at www.volkswagencastrolcup.pl/en/

At cup website you can find information about every round, competitor, track, and car. During the race weekend up-to-date information about the practice sessions, qualifications and races will be published at the website. Press releases and high resolution photos can be found in media area.

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