

Automotodrom Brno, 14th September 2014

Title race not over yet. Will Lithuanian driver become Polish Champion?

During the sixth, penultimate round of the season 2014 Volkswagen Castrol Cup, only wet weather tyres were needed. Difficult conditions at the Czech track Automotodrom Brno were not an obstacle for Robertas Kupcikas. Lithuanian driver won both races and gained maximum number of points. Thanks to this Robertas is very close to the final triumph. Kupcikas needs just 28 points to seal it, which means that the Lithuanian has to finish first race in Poznan at least in 7th place.

Qualifying session

On wet tarmac of Automotodrom Brno Robertas Kupcikas left his rivals hopeless. Lithuanian driver needed 2:30.441 sec. to cover one lap of 5,40-kilometre loop in Brno. It was Pawel Krezelok who came closest to Kupcikas in wet conditions (+0.360 s.). Jan Kisiel set third best time of this session.

Kupcikas didn't wait too long to show great pace in qualifying. Driver from Vilnius set his best lap time already on his second quick lap. He was the only one driver, who could cover one lap of Automotodrom Brno under 2:30.500 s. Pawel Krezelok also felt great on wet tarmac. The young driver from Szczecin immediately got a good rhythm, which resulted in a second best time of the session (+0.360 sec.). Also Janek Kisiel showed that he is concentrated. Highest ranked Pole in Volkswagen Castrol Cup overall standings was classified in third position.

In the top there were also Jonas Gelzinis (4th result), Jeffrey Kruger (5th) and Jakub Litwin (6 results). In addition to the mentioned five, yet only Marcus Fluch was less than a second behind Kupcikas (7th place, + 0.786 s.).

Meanwhile Maciek Steinhof could not find a good pace. In the middle of the session he was ranked in the end of the top ten. Experience gained at this track didn't help Ales Jirasek to set a good time. Local driver was 11th, but eventually he finished qualifying with 13th time. After 15 minutes of driving Gosia Rdest was placed on 15th position while Jerzy Dudek was 14th.

Rain stopped during qualifying, so the track conditions improved slightly from lap to lap. Despite this, most competitors scored their best results on the very beginning of the session, on fresh rubber. Krystian Korzeniowski, who won a second race here in previous season couldn't be happy with his performance. 13th time is the result below expectations driver from Bielsko. Five minutes before the end of the session Gosia Rdest and Jerzy Dudek lost their positions and fell to the 17th and 18th place respectively.

Eventually Robertas Kupcikas won the qualifying session. Following spots on the grid before first race will belong to: Krezelok, Kisiel, Gelzinis, Kruger, Litwin, Fluch, Gadomski, Steinhof and Pereira respectively.

For Kupcikas it was very successful qualifications, because Lithuanian driver won the pole position for Sunday's race too. Next to Kupcikas would start Jonas Gelzinis. The second line took Jakub Litwin (pos. 3) and Jeffrey Kruger (pos. 4). Next places belong to: Kisiel, Fluch, Gadomski, Pereira, Korzeniowski and Strzesak respectively. The second best time set by Paul Kręzelok gave him only 11th position on the grid. Also Maciek Steinhof performed slightly worse (12th position). Gosia Rdest and Jerzy Dudek (17th and 18th place) did not have reasons to be satisfied.

Quotes after qualifying session at Automotodrom Brno:

Pawel Kręzelok (race 1 – 2nd on the grid, race 2 – 11th on the grid):

- It seems that I needed wet tarmac to have my best qualifications of the season. The first lap went almost flawlessly, but at the end of the lap I went a bit sideways, what cost me some precious parts of a second. My time would certainly be better without this mistake. However I am very happy with second position in first race.

Marcus Fluch (race 1 – 7th on the grid, race 2 – 6th on the grid):

- The car was very good, and I had a great feeling behind the wheel, but even though the speed was not there. Unfortunately I even don't know why I struggled a lot with the speed. Yesterday in practice it was quite OK. I had no such problems with speed. Today I felt I was driving well and smoothly, so I'll be quick, and yet it was a bit different.

Dylan Pereira (race 1 – 10th on the grid, race 2 – 8th on the grid):

- Brno is a very nice track, but not easy to drive. There are a lot of tricky places here, as the tarmac goes up and down. Qualifying was pretty good for me. We set the tire pressure well and I managed to reach my goal. I wanted to be in the top ten and I am.

First race

Jan Kisiel was the driver, who performed best start when the lights over Automotodrom Brno went out. Before first corner Kisiel was already next to Kupcikas, and he managed to overtake Lithuanian driver on the outside. However, Kupcikas' pace was slightly better than Kisiel's, and driver from Vilnius soon regained his first position. This opened him a free road to 7th win of the season.

Maciek Steinhof had a very busy first lap and moved up from ninth to seventh place. Jeffrey Kruger also worked hard and jumped from 5th to 3rd position. The beginning of the race was not good for Pawel Kręzelok, who had second position on the grid. Just after three laps, Kręzelok fell to fifth place. Marcus Fluch was one of the drivers who overtook Kręzelok. The driver of the black Golf number 16 was 7th on the grid. Steinhof and Fluch gained their positions, meanwhile Jonas Gelzinis and Kuba Litwin dropped to 7th and 8th position respectively. Pawel Kręzelok still was losing position on following laps. Three laps until the finish Szczecin-born driver was already on 10th position.

The hero of the last laps was Krystian Korzeniowski. After a poor start, he began to overtake one rival after another and eventually moved up to ninth position. Maciek Steinhof dropped to seventh place and had to fight against Michael Gadomski. All in all Gadomski was able to pass Steinhof. Jonas Gelzinis improved his pace, and overtook Marcus Fluch, in fight for 4th position. When Gelzinis was already in front of Fluch, he lost rear end of his car in one of the corners. It happened just in front of Fluch's car, but fortunately Swede kept his head cool and avoided any collision.

Kupcikas set the fastest lap of the race. On third lap, Lithuanian covered 5.4-mile lap in 2:29.769 sec.

Quotes after 1st race:

Krystian Korzeniowski (12th in qualifying, 9th in race 1):

- At the start I wanted to drive safely, because visibility in the rain was extremely poor. It is easy to damage the car in crash in such a conditions. Due to this I lost some positions. On the next lap my pace began to produce good results. This way I was able to move from the 9th to 16th position.

Jerzy Dudek (17th in qualifying, 16th in race 1):

- I am happy with my lap times in the race. I hope that I will soon be able to finish in top ten. After analysing the telemetry I can see that the pace is good, but I need to be more concentrated. Many thanks to Gosia Rdest for good, clean fight on the track.

Janek Kisiel (3rd qualifying, 2nd in race 1):

- I'm really happy with my start. This was probably my best start of the race in this season. After a great start, I knew that on the outside of the first corner grip is slightly better. I used this to pass Robertas. I wanted to keep him behind me, but I knew that his pace is a bit better and will struggle to do so. I am glad that I defended against Jeffrey Kruger, who is known to be very fast and effectively attacking the driver.

Second Race

Before the second race in Brno it seemed that, for the first time this round, drivers would use slick tyres. Eventually 10 minutes before the start a real shower began. The rain stopped just before the start, so the track surface was still very wet, and visibility was very poor. Robertas Kupcikas, who brought another 50 points home safely, won the race. Still, Kupcikas did not seal the championship title yet.

In the second race, once again this weekend, Janek Kisiel had a great start. Not only Janek performed well. Kuba Litwin managed to move to the second position just before first corner. Soon, however,

Kuba lost his position in favour of Kisiel. After this Kuba had to defend himself against Jeffrey Kruger, who was trying to pass Litwin. Jonas Gelzinis could not be happy with this how this race developed for him. Lithuanian dropped to sixth position on the very first kilometres.

After first lap Fluch was fifth, while behind Swede there were: Gelzinis, Gadomski, Korzeniowski, Pereira and Krężelok respectively. On the second lap, Jeffrey Kruger passed Kuba Litwin, and since that Kuba had to defend himself against Marcus Fluch. A similar task had Jonas Gelzinis, because Michael Gadomski was pushing really hard. Finally on the fourth lap one of Gadomski's maneuvers was successful and Pole overtook Lithuanian driver. Gelzinis poor pace meant that Jonas soon had to deal with Krężelok behind him. The fifth lap was very effective for Dylan Pereira, who moved up to the fifth place. The Luxembourg representative was in the zone and soon he gained another position. Michael Gadomski also continued his chase. The driver of the yellow Golf passed Marcus Fluch and jumped to the 6th position. Gadomski did not stop and two laps before the finish was already in 5th place, in front of Kuba Litwin.

Meanwhile Jerzy Dudek, but thanks to consistent driving and the use of error-rivals, the goalkeeper has moved from 21st to 17th. In the final laps Janek Kisiel lost his position and Jeffrey Kruger moved up to second place.

Fastest lap time – 2:29.529 – belonged to Robertas Kupcikas. Driver from Vilnius achieved this result on the second lap.

Quotes after 2nd race:

Dylan Pereira (8th in qualifying, 4th in race 2):

- My performance is getting better and better, but the first laps were extremely difficult, because of the very poor visibility. After a few laps conditions improved and we were able to push. I tried to drive quickly, so I was able to move from eighth to fourth position.

Pawel Krezelok (11th in qualifying, 8th in race 2):

- The second race was much better for me. I had noticeably better pace, but my start was poor. I dropped to 15th position and began to chase my rivals. I was able to move to the 8th position, and could be even 7th, but I made a small mistake on one of the final laps.

Robertas Kupcikas (1st in qualifying, 1st in race 1):

- I like to drive on wet, and as a leader I could drive with clear, racing line, while my competitors were competing with each other. I want to appreciate the work done by mechanics. They had a lot of work with the tyres.

Michal Gadomski (7th in qualifying, 5th in race 2):

- In these conditions, fifth place is a really good result and reason to be satisfied. As we began the race I couldn't see anything. It was the most difficult conditions we had this season. We drove literally like blind guys. In the last round, I would like to achieve my goal and finish the season on 7th position.

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