

10 March 2017

Rounds 5 & 6 – Bahrain International Circuit – 10 / 11 March 2017

QUALIFYING REPORT

Josh Files takes hard-fought pole position

Josh Files conquered the pole at Bahrain International Circuit after an intense and hard-fought battle for pole. The British driver of the Lap 57 Honda Civic beat Davit Kajaia, with the Mulsanne Racing Alfa Romeo Giulietta, by only 68 thousandths of a second, with third-fastest Luca Engstler (Liqui Moly Team Engstler Volkswagen Golf) conceding only 101 thousandths to the poleman, in a result that saw three different car brands represented in the top three and promises a fierce battle in tomorrow's races.

In a warm afternoon, the session saw an early domination by Engstler (1.09.660) before Files took P1 with a lap time of 1.09.689. Shortly after mid-session; then the qualifying turned into a very tactical session, as all drivers stopped to preserve their tyres.

In the closing minutes, a raging battle delivered the final result, with Files holding narrowly the pole ahead of Kajaia and Engstler. They were followed by the other Liqui Moly Team Engstler Volkswagen Golf cars of Brandon Gdovic and Giacomo Altoè. The US driver was happier with the behavior of his car but regretted not having been able to get his best sector times in a sequence, while the young Italian deliberately kept a set of front tyres for the races tomorrow.

In the title fight, gaps have been closed, with Gdovic leading by 5 and 9 points ahead of Engstler and Files respectively.

Race 1 will kick-off at 12:02 local time (10:02 in Central Europe), while Race 2 is scheduled at 15:45 (13:45 CET). They will be streamed live on the internet at www.middleeast.tcr-series.com and www.tcr-series.tv.

Driver quotes after Bahrain Qualifying

Josh Files (pole position): *"It has been a very close and exciting session, and it's nice to win a pole like this! The car felt much better, we changed a lot of things in the set-up and it worked well. Even in excess, as from a lot of understeer we went to some oversteer. The only thing we haven't been able to solve is this tedious misfiring on the main straight, which costs me a hundredth of a second every time it occurs."*

press release



Davit Kajaia (2nd fastest): *“It was a good qualifying, but I am obviously a little bit disappointed about missing the pole for so little. Still, we were able to improve much the set-up of the car an tomorrow, I’ll push hard and I’ll go for the win.”*

Luca Engstler (3rd fastest): *“It was a nice battle and Josh won it on his own merits. I did some little mistakes on my fast laps and in the best of those my driveshaft suddenly broke, with a big bang. Despite all that, the result is very close and I think it will be a nice battle tomorrow.”*

News, results, standings and pictures are available at www.middleeast.tcr-series.com

National Race Day - Round 5 - March 2017

TCR ME - Qualifying

10 - 11 March 2017

Result of TCR ME - Qualifying

Oasis Circuit - 2550 mtr.

Pos	Nbr	Name	Fastest	In	Gap	Diff	Laps	Km/h
1	75	JOSH FILES	1:09.326	8			14	132.42
2	16	DAVIT KAJAIA	1:09.394	7	0.068	0.068	15	132.29
3	8	LUCA ENGSTLER	1:09.427	7	0.101	0.033	8	132.23
4	46	BRANDON GDOVIC	1:10.252	4	0.926	0.825	9	130.67
5	10	GIACOMO ALTOE	1:10.499	2	1.173	0.247	7	130.21

Fastest time : 1:09.326 in lap 8 by nbr. 75 : JOSH FILES ()

Publication-time

Results and Laptimes :

Timekeeping by : Bahrain International Circuit

Clerk of the Course

Steward

Timekeeper

Adel / Mansoor