

9 June 2018

Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium – 9 / 10 June 2018

RACE 1 REPORT

Jean-Karl Vernay claims his first victory Maxime Potty and Mikel Azcona complete the podium

Jean-Karl Vernay has taken his maiden win in the TCR Europe. In a warm afternoon at Spa, the Frenchman of Leopard Lukoil Racing drove his Audi RS3 LMS to a lights-to-flag victory from pole position. The only one who could resist his pace was local hero Maxime Potty (Comtoy Racing Volkswagen Golf GTI), who took a first podium finish in the series.

With a solid race, Mikel Azcona (PCR Sport Cupra) took third and most importantly, became the new leader in the overall standings, 5 points clear of Dušan Borković who was classified fourth with a Target Competition Hyundai i30 N. In the final laps, the Serbian had to defend fiercely his positions from the attacks of Julien Briché (JSB Compétition Peugeot 308), one of the drivers that put the show on the Belgian track.

Others, like Stefano Comini, Josh Files or Jens Reno Møller were less lucky and had to retire as a consequence of the tough battles. The Dane had a scary moment at the Raidillon after a contact with Attila Tassi, but luckily he managed to stop before crashing into the barriers.

Race 2 will start tomorrow at 14:55, with Danny Kroes on pole on the top-ten reverse grid. Live streaming on www.tcr-series.com and www.tcr-series.tv.

Key facts

Grid – Mora does not make it to the grid, because of an electrical problem; Davidovski's Honda is also missing after suffering from extensive damage in the Qualifying session

Start – Vernay and Potty keep the advantage at La Source and there is no drama in the group

Lap 1 – Vernay leads from Potty who is very close they are followed by Azcona, Borković, Comini, Files, Kroes and Richard.

Lap 2 – Briché fights in the middle group after a poor start; he has a contact after Blanchimont and goes off-track, but manages to rejoin; Paulsen passes Richard and Kroes for 7th; Barr pits after a contact with Paulsen

Lap 3 – Files and Comini have close fight for 5th; Ryba and Baus-Coppens make contact at the Bus Stop chicane

Lap 4 – Vernay's lead is 0.8 seconds, with Potty keeping the pressure; Comini passes Files after the Bus Stop

Lap 5 – The Comini-Files run abreast at La Source, Paulsen tries to sneak in between the two and there is turmoil up to Le Combes

Lap 6 – Files and Comini make contact and retire; Briché benefit from the commotion and climbs to fifth of Paulsen, Richard, Kroes and Nagy

Lap 7 – The four top positions are stable, with Vernay leading from Potty, Azcona and Borković; the gaps between them increases

www.europe.tcr-series.com

Lap 8 – Nagy and Abreu have a close fight for ninth; the Portuguese manages to pass the Hungarian; Møller, Tassi, Piro and Cencetti are fighting for 11th

Lap 9 – Tassi and Møller go side by side through the Eau Rouge and Raidillon; they clash and Dane skids off-track but is able to stop his car without crashing; Tassi keeps on fighting with Piro and Cencetti

Lap 11 – Vernay wins by a slim margin over Potty; Azcona is third while Borkovic successfully defends fourth place from an unchained Briché; Altoè win the DSG trophy in 13th position overall

Paulsen and Tassi receive penalties after Race 1

Stien Paulsen and Attila Tassi were both given a 30-second time penalty after today's Race 1 in Spa-Francorchamps.

Paulsen was dropped from sixth to 14th as he was considered guilty for having caused the incident in second lap of the race that forced Reece Barr to retire.

As for Tassi, he was punished for sending Jens-Reno Møller into a dangerous high-speed spin at the Raidillon while they were fighting for the 11th position on lap 9; this meant that Tassi was demoted from 11th to 17th.

Quotes after the first race at Spa-Francorchamps

Jean-Karl Vernay (1st): *“Everything went according to our plans. We had done part of the job in the morning when we had claimed pole position. I knew everything was up to taking a good start and I managed to do so. Then I focused on not making mistakes, because I had a good pace, but Maxime was putting the pressure on me for the whole race. In the last laps my car began to slow down a bit, but it was too late for him to try to overtake me.”*

Maxime Potty (2nd): *“This was a very good result for me after Paul Ricard and Zandvoort, which weren't so good. It was especially important for me to score a podium result here in Belgium, which is my home race. Jean-Karl was able to open up a gap between us and so it just wasn't possible for me to pass him. This race was the start of the Championship for me!”*

Mikel Azcona (3rd): *“This result is very important for the Championship and the weekend. This is my first time here in Spa and the result is amazing so I'm very happy with the car and the team. Jean-Karl and Maxime are both good drivers and I learned a lot from them as was following for the whole race.”*

Vernay sets the pole position ahead of Potty

Jean-Karl Vernay and Maxime Potty topped the Qualifying session in the morning. The French driver set the pace in both Q1 and Q2 and secured pole position for Race 1.

On his home racetrack, Potty claimed his best result so far, qualifying second; it was a similar story for Julien Briché, who was third fastest.

Championship co-leaders Mikel Azcona and Dušan Borković qualified in fourth and sixth respectively, with Stian Paulsen splitting them in fifth. The best two Honda cars were Josh Files' and Stefano Comini's in seventh and eighth, meaning that cars from six different brands – Audi, Volkswagen, Peugeot, Cupra, Hyundai and Honda – filled the first seven positions.

Target Competition teammates Reece Barr and Kris Richard secured the front row on the reverse grid for tomorrow's Race 2.

Danny Kroes and Attila Tassi were the most disappointed. Kroes had several lap times disallowed for repeatedly infringing track limits in Q2, including a 2:29.978 that would have placed him fifth, while Tassi blamed himself for not going through to Q2, saying that he couldn't quite get his braking points right.

The Q1 part of the session was disrupted by the red flag after only four minutes, when Viktor Davidovski went off at Raidillon and crashed heavily into the tyre wall.

2018 TCR Europe Series – calendar

5/6 May – Circuit Paul Ricard, France (International GT Open)

19/21 May – Circuit Zandvoort, Netherlands (Jumbo Racing Days) *

9/10 June – Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium (International GT Open) *

7/8 July – Hungaroring, Hungary (International GT Open) *

18/19 August – TT Circuit Assen, Netherlands (Gamma Racing Days) *

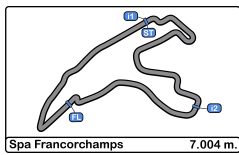
22/23 September – Autodromo di Monza, Italy (International GT Open)

20/21 October – Circuit de Barcelona Catalunya, Spain (International GT Open) **

* With TCR Benelux

** With TCR Benelux and TCR Portugal

Further information, results, points and HD pictures at www.europe.tcr-series.com



Spa Francorchamps
TCR Europe
ROUND 5
Final Results



| Cls | Nº | Driver | Nat | Team | Nat | Vehicle | Laps | Total Time | Gap | Interval | Km/h | Best | Time | Km/h |
|--|-----|------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|------|------------------|----------|----------|-------|------|----------|-------|
| 1 | 69 | Jean-Karl Vernay | FRA | Leopard Lukoil Team | FRA | Audi RS3 LMS TCR | 11 | 28:03.224 | | | 164.7 | 2 | 2:31.425 | 166.5 |
| 2 | 88 | Maxime Potty | BEL | Comtoy Racing | BEL | Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR | 11 | 28:03.929 | 0.705 | 0.705 | 164.7 | 2 | 2:31.479 | 166.4 |
| 3 | 25 | Mikel Azcona | ESP | PCR Sport | ESP | Cupra TCR | 11 | 28:08.279 | 5.055 | 4.350 | 164.2 | 2 | 2:31.764 | 166.1 |
| 4 | 62 | Dušan Borkovic | SRB | Target Competition | SRB | Hyundai i30 N TCR | 11 | 28:18.733 | 15.509 | 10.454 | 163.2 | 2 | 2:32.951 | 164.8 |
| 5 | 4 | Julien Briché | FRA | JSB Compétition | FRA | Peugeot 308 TCR | 11 | 28:18.776 | 15.552 | 0.043 | 163.2 | 6 | 2:32.615 | 165.2 |
| 6 | 94 | Kris Richard | SUI | Target Competition | SUI | Hyundai i30 N TCR | 11 | 28:28.538 | 25.314 | 9.762 | 162.3 | 3 | 2:33.490 | 164.2 |
| 7 | 38 | Danny Kroes | NED | PCR Sport | NED | Cupra TCR | 11 | 28:33.091 | 29.867 | 4.553 | 161.9 | 4 | 2:34.101 | 163.6 |
| 8 | 999 | Dániel Nagy | HUN | M1RA | HUN | Hyundai i30 N TCR | 11 | 28:33.770 | 30.546 | 0.679 | 161.8 | 9 | 2:34.749 | 162.9 |
| 9 | 23 | Francisco Abreu | POR | Sports & You | POR | Peugeot 308 TCR | 11 | 28:35.434 | 32.210 | 1.664 | 161.6 | 3 | 2:34.473 | 163.2 |
| 10 | 13 | Cedric Piro | GER | Autodis Racing by Piro Sports | GER | Honda Civic Type R FK7 TCR | 11 | 28:49.131 | 45.907 | 13.697 | 160.4 | 2 | 2:34.581 | 163.1 |
| 11 | 63 | Giovanni Altoè | ITA | Pit Lane Competizioni | ITA | Audi RS3 LMS TCR DSG | 11 | 28:50.692 | 47.468 | 1.561 | 160.2 | 3 | 2:34.851 | 162.8 |
| 12 | 35 | Munkong | THA | Monlau Competición | THA | Cupra TCR | 11 | 28:50.928 | 47.704 | 0.236 | 160.2 | 3 | 2:35.535 | 162.1 |
| 13 | 34 | Stian Paulsen | NOR | Stian Paulsen Racing | NOR | Cupra TCR | 11 | 28:56.327 | 53.103 | 5.399 | 159.7 | 3 | 2:33.052 | 164.7 |
| 14 | 14 | Loris Cencetti | LUX | Autodis Racing by Piro Sports | LUX | Hyundai i30 N TCR | 11 | 28:56.378 | 53.154 | 0.051 | 159.7 | 3 | 2:34.289 | 163.4 |
| 15 | 17 | Martin Ryba | SVK | Brutal Fish Racing Team | SVK | Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR | 11 | 29:04.872 | 1:01.648 | 8.494 | 158.9 | 7 | 2:36.743 | 160.8 |
| 16 | 21 | Marie | FRA | JSB Compétition | FRA | Cupra TCR DSG | 11 | 29:05.237 | 1:02.013 | 0.365 | 158.9 | 3 | 2:35.524 | 162.1 |
| 17 | 9 | Attila Tassi | HUN | Hell Energy Racing with KCMG | HUN | Honda Civic Type R FK7 TCR | 11 | 29:18.633 | 1:15.409 | 13.396 | 157.7 | 2 | 2:34.690 | 162.9 |
| 18 | 11 | Jens Reno Møller | DEN | Reno Racing | DEN | Honda Civic Type R FK7 TCR | 9 | 24:25.225 | 2 Laps | 2 Laps | 154.8 | 2 | 2:34.334 | 163.3 |
| Not classified: (Requirements: 75% of number laps of leader = 9 Laps) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 8 | Reece Barr | IRE | Target Competition | IRE | Hyundai i30 N TCR | 7 | 20:13.669 | 4 Laps | 2 Laps | 145.4 | 6 | 2:33.954 | 163.7 |
| | 42 | Stefano Comini | SUI | Autodis Racing by THX | SUI | Honda Civic Type R FK7 TCR | 5 | 13:44.310 | 6 Laps | 2 Laps | 152.9 | 3 | 2:34.584 | 163.1 |
| | 99 | Josh Files | GBR | Hell Energy Racing with KCMG | GBR | Honda Civic Type R FK7 TCR | 4 | 10:23.940 | 7 Laps | 1 Lap | 161.6 | 2 | 2:34.457 | 163.2 |

Fastest lap VERNAY in 2:31.425 at 166.5 Km/h in lap 2

Car Number 9 Drive Through penalty converted in 30 seconds Decicion N° 3

Car Number 34 Drive Through penalty converted in 30 seconds Decicion N° 4

Published at:.....

Track Temp: **28.9 °C** Air Temp: **23.2 °C** Humidity: **68 %** Track Status: **DRY**

Stewards:

Race Director:

Timekeeper:



