10th June 2013

**FIRST FIA WTCC RACE IN RUSSIA**

Yvan Muller and Michel Nykjaer displayed strong determination and skill at Russia’s first FIA WTCC races held at the Moscow Speedway over the weekend.

The maiden races turned out to be as exciting as the circuit itself, with action galore – accidents included - and excitement to the end.

Race 1 was dominated from the outset by the Frenchman who continues to distance himself from the rest and is a clear frontrunner for the Championship nearly doubling the points from the second placed in the table – Gabrielle Tarquini. Race 1 however was hampered by the early incident which involved Charles Ng who crashed and affected several other cars including Fredy Barth, who also had to retire and was unable to run on race 2 with an injured hand. The red flag certainly flew in Moscow’s Speedway for several laps until the speedway was once again cleared of debris and the racing continued. At the end of the dramatic action, Muller came first with Coronel closely behind and Michelisz in third.

Not only did Muller win the first race after having qualified for pole position and adding even more points to his treasure trove, but his second race was possibly even more impressive starting from 6th place to end in a fantastic second place behind Michel Nykjaer. A particularly distinct moment of the race was in the last laps, when Bennani, who had been leading all the time, felt the immense pressure put on him by current World Champion Rob Huff desperately trying to overtake him, and in the end Bennani spun, and Muller showed his superb skills overtaking them both, and left wondering how he managed that manoeuvre. Eventually Huff also overtook to claim his podium place in third, but by the time this happened, Michel Nykjaer, who had earlier been in hot pursuit of Bennani himself, was also well on his way to his third victory of the season.

Nykjaer, also at the wheel of a Cruze car also showed off his speed and talent and is now in the running not only for the YOKOHAMA trophy which he now leads with 1 point ahead of James Nash, but in the overall classification too, hot on the toes of Tarquini who is currently second.

Meanwhile, Mitsuyuki Yumoto, Vice-President Sales and Marketing of YOKOHAMA Russia, expressed delight with the first WTCC race to be held at the speedway and commented, “It is the first FIA WTCC race event in Russia which is world class level and several thousand spectators have enjoyed the races. It is history in the making in Russia and indeed will have a very big impact here.”

The championship will resume in Porto on June 29th and 30th for rounds 13 and 14.