

## **i30 N TCR performance and strength on show in bruising Dubai races**

- The i30 N TCR was again among the quickest cars on the TCR International Series grid, on a bruising final weekend of the season at Dubai Autodrome
- Running with an incredible 50kg of ballast Gabriele Tarquini charged from last on the grid to third in the opening race, only to slow with a puncture in the closing laps
- Alain Menu finished fifth in the season finale after a race-long battle, while Tarquini collected fastest lap despite being spun out in the opening corners.

Dubai, UAE

November 18, 2017 – On their return to the TCR International Series for the final races of the season Gabriele Tarquini and Alain Menu again proved the performance of the i30 N TCR amid a bruising contest at Dubai Autodrome.

At an event when both drivers found themselves innocent parties in early race contact the strength of the i30 N TCR, both physical and in terms of pace, shone through in their displays on track.

Both i30 N TCR started the weekend laden with the additional 40kg hastily handed to them, together with a 5% reduction in engine power, under the Balance of Performance (BoP) regulations immediately after the car's debut race in China last month. The unprecedented penalty was further compounded by the 10kg extra success ballast given to Gabriele Tarquini following his individual performance at the previous round.

Furthermore, though both drivers proved to be on the pace of the frontrunners throughout the practice sessions, neither could qualify higher than 13th due to the temporary homologation the i30 N TCR is competing under this year, which leaves them ineligible to progress to the final part of qualifying. Still, in the opening segment of the session both drivers held provisional pole, setting the second and fourth fastest times, Tarquini ahead of Menu.

A stewards' decision following the session further demoted Tarquini to back of the grid for the opening encounter. The lowly position proved little obstacle for the Italian and the i30 N TCR. In a race that included an interruption by the safety car Tarquini powered his way through the field to third position on the penultimate lap. Unfortunately, while chasing down second place he suffered a front-left puncture, caused by a combination of the debris left on track from earlier incidents and carrying the additional BoP weight around the punishingly long right-hand corners that dominate the 3.5km National circuit at Dubai Autodrome.

Menu, meanwhile, was forced out early by damage following first lap contact, demoting him to the rear of the Race 2 grid, while Tarquini started the season finale from 12<sup>th</sup>, due to the withdrawal a driver ahead.

The Italian made a fantastic start, immediately climbing into the top ten and setting the scene for

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another great race result. Sadly, during the opening lap a driver behind made an error under braking, harpooning the right-rear of the i30 N TCR. The contact punted Tarquini into a spin, dealing heavy damage to both cars involved. While the other driver immediately retired, Tarquini was able to recover. He quickly made up the 12 second deficit to the back of the pack, blazing to the fastest lap in the process, and was able to climb to ninth position before the fall of the chequered flag.

Alain Menu inherited Tarquini's role in the fraught midfield battle after the opening laps. Having started from the back of the grid he was able to move up into the top ten and then, despite being the innocent party in some minor contact himself, to fifth position before the end of the race.

Gabriele Tarquini said: *"That is racing. We knew it would be difficult with the additional weight on this circuit, but the i30 N TCR was very fast, and handled well all weekend. To be able to go from the back to fighting with the front two with a few laps to go is a very good performance, and we should have had a podium to show for it. However, I got a puncture, from a piece of debris perhaps. In the second race I got hit very hard, which damaged the rear corner, but I continued pushing back into the top-ten and took fastest lap. This really shows the performance, and the strength of the car, to still have the pace after such heavy contact. The i30 N TCR is very strong all-round package."*

Alain Menu said: *"It was a tough weekend for both me and Gabriele on track, but the performance of the i30 N TCR was exactly where we needed it. We were fast in practice and qualifying, but we had to start in the middle of pack where there is always a chance of contact and unfortunately we got involved in other people's incidents. Driving through the field in Race 2 was really fun, I could rely on the handling of the car through the corners and power of the engine on the straight. These are the real strengths of the i30 N TCR which our customers will be able to enjoy when they compete at the front of any of the TCR championships next year."*

Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing Manager Andrea Adamo said: *"This weekend both Gabriele and Alain have again showed how competitive the i30 N TCR is in the strongest current TCR championship. We had to cope with the extra weight following the unprecedented, extreme BoP ruling from China, as well as some aggressive driving in the midfield. The car is clearly the fastest in the series at the moment with Alain's result from the back of the grid, and Gabriele's fastest lap in Race 2, as well as his charge through the field. We have raced on three circuits now, and been at the front in all of them. The i30 N TCR will be at the front of any TCR series next season with our customers."*

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### **About the Hyundai Motorsport TCR project**

Announced in February 2017 the TCR project marks Hyundai Motorsport's first steps into circuit racing following three full seasons in the World Rally Championship (WRC). Built and developed by the Customer Racing department at the team's headquarters in Alzenau, Germany the touring car racer will be based on the road-going New Generation i30 model. Design work for the project began in September 2016, taking advantage of the TCR regulations which, since their introduction in 2015, have been adopted by more than a dozen national and international championships. Testing of the first completed chassis began in April 2017, with the first car planned to be delivered to customer teams in early December 2017.

Further information about Hyundai Motorsport is available at: <http://motorsport.hyundai.com>

### **About Hyundai Motor**

Established in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is committed to becoming a lifetime partner in automobiles and beyond. The company leads the Hyundai Motor Group, an innovative business structure capable of circulating resources from molten iron to finished cars. Hyundai Motor has eight manufacturing bases and seven design & technical centres worldwide and in 2015 sold 4.96 million vehicles globally. With more than 110,000 employees worldwide, Hyundai Motor continues to enhance its product line-up with localised models and strives to strengthen its leadership in clean technology, starting with the world's first mass-produced hydrogen-powered vehicle, Tucson Fuel Cell and IONIQ, the world's first model with three electrified powertrains.

More information about Hyundai Motor and its products can be found at: <http://worldwide.hyundai.com> or <http://globalpr.hyundai.com/>

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