

Polo Cup India



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PRESS RELEASE

Sailesh Bolisetti wins inaugural race of Volkswagen-JK Tyre Polo Cup India 2010

Pune, May 30, 2010 – Sailesh Bolisetti, the 22-year old driver from Vishakhapatnam, won the inaugural race of the Volkswagen-JK Tyre Polo Cup India 2010 on the street track in the Balewadi Sports Complex in Pune. The racer from Hyderabad led from start to finish as he created history by becoming the first winner of the Polo Cup today. He was followed home closely by Saran Vikram from Chennai and Karthik Shankar from Delhi.

Mohammed Fahad Kutty had finished in 3rd place but had then been given a 15 second penalty by the stewards for overtaking under yellow flags. It was a close finish as the top 6 were covered by less than 10 seconds at the chequered flag.

Sailesh had a great start and led from the start with Saran Vikram and Karthik Shankar behind him. Starting from 6th on the grid, Fahad Kutty (Mohammed) made a brilliant overtaking move to pass Shankar (Karthik) for 3rd position on lap 2. As he closed on second-placed Saran Vikram he clipped the tyre barrier into the first corner damaging his car in the process. He was unable to challenge Saran after that but did cross the finish line in third place. He was later penalised for overtaking under yellow flags.

A delighted Sailesh commented, "This is a great day for me and I would like to thank Volkswagen for giving me this amazing opportunity. I made a good start and after that just had to make sure that I did not make any mistakes. It was quite a tough race as the cars behind me were really close together but am really satisfied with the result."

Prof Heizmann, Member of Board of Volkswagen AG, commented, "I would like to congratulate all the drivers for putting on a fantastic performance today. This is a proud day for motorsport in India and Volkswagen is really happy to be a part of it. We look forward to the rest of the season and am sure all the drivers will give it their best."

Second placed Saran Vikram, "I am really happy to race here on this circuit and am satisfied with the result. As overtaking is tough on this circuit I knew challenging Sailesh would not be possible. I will now try to do my best for the second race."

Third placed karthik Shankar commented, "A big thank you to the organizers of this event for hosting such an amazing event. This is a historic day as not only is this only the second street race in India but also Volkswagen's big entry into motorsport in India. Fahad Kutty overtook me under yellow flags and I knew that it was illegal so did not fight back. Will now look forward to a good result in the second race."

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Karthik Shankar from Hyderabad finished in 3rd position while Vishnu Prasad (Chennai), Sahil Shelar (Pune) and Fahad Kutty rounded off the top 6. The only woman driver on the grid Alisha Abdullah finished in an impressive 14th place in her debut race.

There were a host of dignitaries present for the inaugural race of the Volkswagen-JK Tyre Polo Cup in India. This included Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, President, IOA, Mr. Suresh Shetty, Minister of Sports for the state of Maharashtra, Mr. Raghupati Singhania, VP & MD, JK Tyre and Industries, Prof. Jochem Heizmann, Member of Board of Volkswagen AG, Mr. Joerg Muller, Volkswagen Group Chief Representative India and Mr. Kris Nissen, Volkswagen Motorsport Director.

Another surprise was in store as Bollywood actress Soha Ali Khan was invited to flag off the race, along with Prof. Heizmann and Mr. Kris Nissen. The Bollywood star was an instant hit with both the fans and media as she attended her first race.

Motor sports enthusiasts interested in getting further information can log on to the website, www.polocup.in. This website will display information about the format of The Polo Cup India, race updates and driver profiles.

About Volkswagen Motorsport

Volkswagen is committed to broad-scale motor sport as in internationally staged cross-country rally racing programmes in countries including Germany, Europe and the United States apart from other countries in Asia and has a long tradition of promoting young talent. Following the legendary Formula V as of 1966 the brand, in 1976, sponsored a one-make touring car cup for the first time. Among others, the Scirocco Cup produced drivers like the subsequent Formula 1 racer Manfred Winkelhock. In 1977 the first-generation Golf GTI replaced the Scirocco as the cup vehicle and remained the popular competition car for a generation of young racers up to 1982. In 1983, the second-generation Polo followed as the cup vehicle – initially using the 88-hp normally aspirated engine version and, from 1986, the 112-hp compressor engine. At the relaunch in 1998, Volkswagen presented the Lupo, which offered top-class sport at fair prices, as well as the Volkswagen New Beetle Cup.

The year of 1998 stands for an all-new concept in the world of racing. To this day, this new concept featuring centrally fielded vehicles and car swapping among the drivers guarantees maximum equality of opportunity. In 2004 the 150-hp Polo replaced the small Lupo as the cup vehicle and the concept was subjected to further refinement. The Polo Cup's success story is closely linked to the DTM-Deutsche Tourenwagen Meisterschaft. The premier league of touring car racing has evolved into a real crowd-puller and is envisaged as a concrete career goal by many junior racers.

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