

RACE CENTRE

TCR INTERNATIONAL
MONZA (I), MAY 24 RD 5/11

Morbidelli wins thrillers to take TCR points lead

GIANNI MORBIDELLI BECAME THE first driver to score a maximum TCR International weekend points maximum with both race victories and pole position at Monza – but he had to work hard for them.

The West Coast Racing Honda man was forced to win race one the hard way as a slow getaway meant he fell to fourth as the pack charged into the Rettifilo chicane. When Stefano Comini attacked Pepe Oriola for the lead on lap five of 11, that allowed Morbidelli through. The Italian pressed Oriola for the lead for two laps before making a move stick, then raced clear to win from Oriola and Andrea Belicchi.

“We showed today that we were not as quick on the straights as many people think,” said Morbidelli after the race. “I was very fast on the last corner. That was the key for me; I was very quick there and at Ascari.”

Pre-weekend points leader Comini – who’d dropped out of the



Comini braves it out with Hondas
Morbidelli and Gleason

first race – found himself in the lead halfway through race two when his Target Competition SEAT was tapped across the Rettifilo by Morbidelli, who fell to fourth.

Jordi Gene then emerged in second after going four-wide down the main straight with Morbidelli, Belicchi and the vastly improved Campos Racing Opel Astra of Fernando Monje.

Morbidelli relieved Gene of second before hunting down Comini. Entering the final lap, Morbidelli outdragged the SEAT out of the Parabolica before sweeping across to the inside for the Rettifilo. Comini braked later and turned in on the Honda but was spun around in the resulting contact, dropping to fourth behind Gene and Monje.

● Alex Kalinauckas

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Gianni Morbidelli (Honda Civic T 11 laps in 22m31.918s; 2 Pepe Oriola (SEAT Leon Racer), +1.198s; 3 Andrea Belicchi (SE 4 Jordi Gene (SEAT); 5 Fernando Monje (Op Astra OPC); 6 Kevin Gleason (Honda). **Race 2** 1 Morbidelli, 11 laps in 22m37.847s; 2 Gene +2.717s; 3 Monje; 4 Stefano Comini (SEAT); 5 Belicchi; 6 Igor Skuz (Honda). **Points** 1 Morbidelli, 146; 2 Comini, 132; 3 Oriola, 4 Gene, 120; 5 Belicchi, 102; 6 Gleason, 89.