



Volkswagen in Customer Sport

New champion: Luca Engstler wins the TCR Middle East in a Golf GTI

- **First TCR title of the year goes to a Volkswagen driver**
- **At 17 years of age, Luca Engstler is the youngest TCR champion ever**
- **More success in the team championship: Titles number 11 and 12 for the racing Golf**

Wolfsburg (27 February 2018). Luca Engstler (D) is the 2018 TCR Middle East champion. The 17-year-old driver from Liqui Moly Team Engstler won the first TCR title of the year for Volkswagen in the 350-hp Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR at the final round of the touring car championship in Bahrain (BRN) this weekend. This makes Engstler the youngest champion to date across all the TCR series. Team Engstler also won the team championship, which meant titles number eleven and twelve for the production-based racing Golf from Wolfsburg, since the car made its debut on racetracks around the world in 2016.

"I am delighted with the success here, and to have won the title. It was a perfect race for me," said Engstler after the race in Bahrain, which took place despite extremely heavy rainfall. The second race was cancelled due to the adverse weather. "Our Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR felt perfect, although the conditions were very tough. That was certainly not the kind of weather you expect here, but it was not a problem for the Golf. I'd like to say a big thank you to my team, who did a fantastic job."

Volkswagen Motorsport Director Sven Smeets: "We would like to congratulate Luca and the Engstler team on their title in the TCR Middle East series. The team once again showed what they are capable of, under extremely challenging conditions in Bahrain. We are obviously also pleased to see the first TCR title of the year go to a Volkswagen driver and a Volkswagen customer team. This is a very promising start to the new TCR season for the Golf GTI."

More Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR on the grid than ever before

Luca Engstler caught the eye last season, when he won the rookie competition in the TCR Germany. Alongside his team-mates in the Golf, the young man from the Allgäu region of Bavaria won the TCE class of the 24-hour race in Dubai (UAE) this January. He then backed this up with three wins in five races in TCR Middle East – a run that was ultimately instrumental in his winning the title at the season finale in Bahrain.

More Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR cars than ever line up in the global TCR series in 2018 – notably as the defending champion in the newly-formed TCR International series, which has been renamed the "WTCR – FIA World Touring Car Cup" this season. Here, as in TCR Asia,



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where the Golf GTI TCR also lines up as defending champion, the Golf GTI TCR was recently recognised as the best TCR racing car of the year with the title "Model of the Year 2017".





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