



World SBK Championship

## At the wheel of a safety car

- / **We discover the secrets of the car under the spotlight at the WorldSBK 2017 through the eyes of its two drivers, Nicola and Cristian**
- / **Ensuring that the track is in optimum conditions and driving with the riders on the warm up lap are the main functions of this car**
- / **The production model SEAT Leon CUPRA, which accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in less than five seconds, fulfils the requirements of versatility and performance needed for a safety car**

**Martorell, 18/10/2017.**– 13 races around the world, seven manufacturers, 28 motorcycles on the track and two cars safeguarding the competitions. Cristian Siso and Nicola Cursi take their place at the wheels of the safety cars at the MOTUL FIM Superbike World Championship. These two motoring enthusiasts, who are also expert drivers, have been working together for the past four years: **“On the track we are the eyes of the race direction”**, says Nicola as they get ready for action on France’s Magny Cours circuit. **“We spend 10 months out the year travelling, so more than a job, this is a lifestyle for us”**, adds Cristian.

- **Four wheels see more than two:** The two SEAT Leon CUPRA safety cars are the first on the track at every competition. They are responsible for verifying that the pavement is in optimum conditions for the motorcycles to compete on: **“Sometimes bits of rubber come off the tyres. If they remain on the track they could pose a danger to the riders”**, say both drivers.
- **Race officials, in your position:** Before the motorcycles ride onto the track, the drivers of the safety cars also carry out a fast lap to check that the race officials are correctly positioned, an essential prerequisite before the race can begin.
- **“Car 1 calling car 2”:** When the motorcycles are on the track, the second safety car trails behind them on the warm up lap, and safety car 1 accompanies them on the fast lap. **“There is always a medic on board the vehicles in the event of an accident”**, assures Cursi.
- **A matter of seconds:** The SEAT Leon CUPRA is a production model that is able to accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in under five seconds. **“The motorcycles are very fast, so we need the car we drive to also be powerful and give good acceleration”**, explains Siso. In fact, this car can reach 250 km/h on the track.
- **Up to 600 km per competition:** Checking the conditions of the track, performing timings or carrying out warm up laps. The distance covered by the two safety cars to ensure the safety of a race can amount to 600 km. **“And that’s if we aren’t called onto the track, which fortunately hasn’t happened so far this season”**, adds Cristian Siso.



- **13 races on four continents:** 90% humidity in Thailand, 45 degree heat in Qatar or rain and wet pavement on the track in France. The cars **“have to adapt to all possible weather conditions. That’s essential to ensure our safety as well as that of the motorcycles and the riders”**, comments Cursi, the driver of the second vehicle.

- **Concentration and nerves of steel:** Towards the fifth or sixth lap, when it is clear that the race has begun, Nicola and Cristian’s cars remain on standby outside the track, with both drivers intent on the competition. **“We only assist if, in the event of an accident or any other incident, the competition is stopped and has to resume”**. You need **“concentration and precision”** to be able to act when necessary, says Siso.

- **A lifestyle:** These drivers travel all over the world for 10 months out of the year, and their job has become a lifestyle. **“It’s a job you have to love because it takes up so much of your time”**, explains Siso. **“I spend practically my whole life in the car so by now it’s almost a part of me, it’s a friend”**, he adds.

SEAT is the only company that designs, develops, manufactures and markets cars in Spain. A member of the Volkswagen Group, the multinational has its headquarters in Martorell (Barcelona), exporting 81% of its vehicles, and is present in over 80 countries through a network of 1,700 dealerships. In 2016, SEAT obtained an operating profit of 143 million euros, the highest in the history of the brand, and achieved worldwide sales of nearly 410,000 vehicles.

SEAT Group employs more than 14,500 professionals at its three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza, Leon and Arona. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca and the Toledo in the Czech Republic, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii in Slovakia.

The multinational has a Technical Centre, which operates as a knowledge hub that brings together 1,000 engineers who are focussed on developing innovation for Spain’s largest industrial investor in R&D. SEAT already features the latest connectivity technology in its vehicle range and is currently engaged in the company’s global digitalisation process to promote the mobility of the future.

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