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BANGLADESHIS REPRESENT IN INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT



PHOTO: ADITYA BEDRE

THE COMPETITION

The Volkswagen Ameo Cup used to be called the VW Vento Cup – for 2017, Volkswagen Motorsport India decided to introduce the VW Golf based Ameo sedan for competition. The one-make race series has been around since 2009, and now consists of 10 races (with practice, qualifying and race

day), and this year twenty two aspiring drivers were selected after months of grueling tests during driver selection. The races are to be held at Kari Motor Speedway in Coimbatore, at Madras Motor Race Track in Chennai and Buddh International Circuit (a Formula 1 circuit from 2011 to 2013) near Delhi.



THE CAR

The Ameo is basically an enlarged Golf with a boot. Normally a sub-compact runabout for the Indian market, the Ameo race version has a 205 HP/240 lb-ft torque turbocharged inline 1.8 litre 4 cylinder motor mated to a six speed sequential gearbox with XAP shifter system.

Adjustable mono-tube KW race suspension with Eibach springs can be set up according to individual driver's preferences. Tyres are provided by MRF, wrapped around 17 inch lightweight race alloys. For safety, the Ameo Cup cars come with FIA spec rollcages, fire extinguishers and OMP race seats and harnesses.



Affan with his car at the 2016 VW Vento Cup in India.

AFFAN SADAT SAFWAN

With racing experience in British Formula 4 as well as the local rallycross championship, Affan Sadat is no stranger to racing. At only 20 years old, the young talent from Chittagong participated in the 2016 Vento Cup in India and came in 7th, gaining valuable experience for this year's Ameo Cup.

Q: What kind of motorsport or motorsport training have you been involved in before?

A: I have track experience in Buddh International Circuit in India (one of the race locations for the Ameo Cup) and Brands Hatch International Circuit in the UK. Brands Hatch was also like training for me, while giving a test for my racing license.

Q: What do you expect from your participation in the VW Ameo Cup?

A: I am aiming to be the junior Champion in this season of Volkswagen Ameo cup, which consists of 10 races.

Q: How did you train for the VW

THE DRIVERS



Avik with his Rallycross winning Lancer Evo X at the first Nitol-Tata Rallycross Championship.

AVIK ANWAR

We caught up with Avik Anwar, three-time local Rallycross champion and director of Car House Limited, to talk about his entry into the VW Ameo Cup 2017. He's a car geek through and through, and has participated in track days in Canada.

Q: What got you into track driving?

A: I started watching Formula 1 at a very young age and I wanted to be a F1 driver but obviously my circumstances didn't allow it. I went abroad to study Economics and that's when the opportunities opened up for me to explore track driving.

Q: You've won the Rallycross Championship thrice. What was that like?

A: The challenges in the Rallycross Championship did not really make me work that hard since I won once with a broken leg and once in an underpowered car, so I would say it was a stepping stone towards something bigger. I think the Ameo Cup might be that.

Q: What do you think your chances are?

A: One of the organisers saw my profile and said I should definitely be in the top 5, although it will be very challenging because the favourites to be in the top 10 are champions in some discipline or the other (open wheel, karting, etc.) in India so it won't be

easy. I race to win, so let's see. It's a championship, so I don't have to win every race – consistency is key and I am good at that.

Q: How do you usually prepare before a race?

A: Fitness is a huge requirement. I have been working hard at the gym and burning at least 2500 calories a day. Sleep and diet are important as well. I watch a lot of track videos and I recently got some open wheel track experience in Canada. I also have a similarly powered car to the Ameo Cup car – a Honda Civic Type R, so I know what to expect. There's also a lot of simulation driving with Gran Turismo, which always helps.

Q: So how close is simulation racing to actual track driving, since you have experience with both?

A: The difference is huge. In real life there are so many factors that aren't simulated – wind, for example. Matching lines is also quite difficult, not to mention the physical strains on your body because of the racing suit, cabin temperatures and so on. It takes a lot of preparation, so it's not like someone can suddenly decide to be a race car driver – you have to be mentally and financially prepared.

SHAER REAZ

Avik Anwar came in 4th overall in the first round, while Affan Sadat could not finish due to a mishap in the first lap. Watch our Facebook page for regular updates.

Spotted: Toyota's sports coupes

The Toyota Corolla/Sprinter is as exciting as a warm glass of milk – just not as interesting as a fizzy drink. However, they've always had hot versions of the Corolla, and these gained legendary status for their high revving 4AGE motors, nimble handling, and good looks. Here's a tribute to the local Levins and Truenos – some built and maintained properly, others on their way there. Spotted a Levin/Trueno? Message us on our Facebook page!

PHOTOS: SHADMAN AL SAMEE



AUTO NEWS

Audi's latest flagship – 2018 A8

Audi has been teasing the latest A8 flagship sedan for months now – in one publicity stunt, Audi called in automotive journalists, blindfolded them and helped them navigate around a finished A8, so they could touch and feel the surfaces, materials and gauge the comfort of the luxo-boat without actually being able to see it. It's officially out now, and it's quite the looker.

It's lower and sleeker despite the largest front grille ever fitted to any Audi. The profile is unmistakably Audi, and provides a visual link to the outgoing model. The rear has a continuous running LED strip, with a sloped boot design that makes the car look like it's moving even when stationary.

It's a flagship Audi, so it's obviously filled to the brim with tech and has one of the best car interiors on the planet. There's laser headlights, active noise cancellation of the engine, wireless charging on the A8L e-tron, active suspension, dynamic all wheel steering, as well as an Audi AI system that helps users navigate in traffic and park. That last feature means the new A8 will literally drive around a parking lot by itself – find an empty space, park,



and shut down. Stuff of nightmares in Dhaka then, since the A8 might have to drive all the way to Mirpur since it can't find parking space in Dhanmondi.

Engine sizes and configurations are aplenty. There's a 3.0 turbo V6 in petrol or diesel form, a 4.0 turbo V8 in petrol or diesel form, and the range topping W12. The outputs are quite impressive, with the basic entry level V6 petrol motor putting out 286 HP and an astonishing 443 lb-ft torque.

Will we get the Audi A8 in Dhaka? Progress Motors Limited is set to launch as the first official Audi dealership in Bangladesh soon, and we hope to see the A8 on the roster. The local luxury car market has only seen BMW and Mercedes Benz at loggerheads, and with Audi set to make an official appearance in the ring, those who appreciate German craftsmanship are surely in for a treat.

SHAER REAZ

COLLECTIBLES

Introducing: Motorama



I came upon a few Motorama model cars only recently. I was surprised with the level of attention given to the detailing for something aimed mainly at children.

Motorama primarily has a deal with Disney where they make the cartoon characters like Goofy and Mickey riding their brightly coloured cars. Somewhere along the way they decided to also make something a bit more detailed such as this 1:43 scale Lamborghini Murcielago.

Pros: Decals are sharp with almost no jagged or overlapping printing. The wheels are properly shaped with a visible brake disc and caliper setup behind the rims. The interior is also accurately moulded.

Cons: Well, not quite cons, at this price range. The head and taillights are mostly black plastic with moulded details that needed a touch of paint. The scale may also be a tad tinier than 1:43. The mirrors are rubber which allows them to be flexible but also, well, rubber mirrors flop around.

Verdict: These are mainly designed for children to play with so they will withstand a little abuse. These are also detailed nicely enough that grownups can put up on a shelf. Here in Bangladesh, they mostly sell for 600-1000 taka. For the lower end of the price, the details were great and makes for a good addition to anyone's 1:43 scale collection.

If you want bigger, these same cars are also available in 1:24 scale with opening hood and doors. A lot of these are licensed racecars but a few stock cars like the new Fiat 500 and Alfa 8C are also available.

WORDS AND PHOTO: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

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