

‘Wagner Finds Harmony Between Speed and Environmental Consciousness’

Far from the media circus surrounding Danica Patrick at the Daytona International Speedway, 21-year old Jenna Wagner sat anxiously in her seat as the plane touched down on the runway in Las Vegas, Nevada.

In a few short hours, the Bristol, Virginia native would join 49 other hopefuls as part of the Volkswagen Jetta TDI Cup invitational tryouts for the upcoming 2010 racing season. The stakes were high, as half of the invitees would be headed home with little more than a hat and commemorative t-shirt.

“It was an honor just to be invited,” Wagner said. “We knew we couldn’t pass up the opportunity. We just wanted to try our best and things were going to happen the way they were supposed to happen.”

After a crash course in road racing, several physical fitness tests, and a workshop with IndyCar Series star Townsend Bell; Wagner began feeling the excitement of a new racing season on the horizon.

However, of the 25 spots on the 2010 VW Jetta TDI Cup roster, nine of those were to be held by drivers returning to the series from previous seasons. This meant that whatever learning curve Wagner had to overcome making the transition from circle track to road course racing needed to be a quick one.

“Driving on a road course was a new experience for me. It took me a few laps to get used to turning left and right,” Wagner explained. “The instructors are there to help you with anything you need and any questions you have. I learned a great deal about road course racing, just by being there for 3 days.”

“I learned it’s okay to turn right, as long as you’re on a road course. I also discovered that I could learn a lot about racing from other drivers and instructors. Being a good listener is key in this series,” said Wagner.

After the third day, Wagner was announced as one of the 25 drivers that will be taking the green flag on April 23 at the Virginia International Raceway as part of the SCCA Pro Racing-sanctioned event.

“We knew by selection day that we had done our best. It was all up to God now,” stated Wagner. “When my name was called out, I was filled with emotion! I was in complete shock. I think I am still in shock.”

“The whole weekend was a roller coaster of emotions, wondering if you, as a driver, had done enough to get selected,” admitted the 21-year old driver.

Wagner’s selection to the 2010 Jetta TDI Cup roster will take her to places such Miller Motorsports Park in Utah, the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Road America in Wisconsin, and the Autodromo AMOZOC in Puebla, Mexico.

In addition to traveling across North America, Wagner will be participating in a truly ‘green’ racing series. The Jetta TDI engine uses a direct injection system that can improve fuel economy by 24 percent. The move to B5 biodiesel for the 2009 season reduced carbon emissions by 2,583 pounds for the series. The transporters, support vehicles, and generators used by the series will also run on biodiesel.

“I love the fact that this series is ‘green’. It’s nice to know that I can race cars, without heavily impacting the environment and leaving a carbon footprint,” said Wagner. “The series is green in everything they do, even down to the silverware in the hospitality tents. It’s an amazing idea and a trend that I think will catch on in other series.”

Jenna Wagner is scheduled to graduate from James Madison University with bachelor degrees in Media Arts and Design & Technical and Scientific Communication. Wagner was also the 2009 Charger Division Rookie of the Year at ASA-sanctioned Lonesome Pine Raceway in Coeburn, VA.

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The Jetta TDI Cup car is powered by a 2.0-liter, 170 horsepower, four-cylinder TDI clean diesel engine mated to a six-speed, double-clutch, automatic DSG transmission

Following a grueling three-day testing session that included a variety of driving activities, physical fitness tests, and media training, Wagner was selected as one of the 25 drivers to compete in the 2010 edition of the Volkswagen Jetta TDI Cup.

The 2010 season will begin on April 23rd at the Virginia International Raceway located in Alton, VA. The 10-round schedule will conclude on September 26th at the Autodromo AMOZOC in Puebla, Mexico.



Wagner turned several laps in an open-wheel kart prior to a karting event involving drivers vying for a spot on the 2010 Volkswagen Jetta TDI Cup.