



May 2011

Spa 1000km

# SPA 1000KM



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Photo: Dan Bathie

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The classic Ardennes venue played host to nearly 60 cars and served up a thriller.

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# EVENTS

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## Events

### GT1 WORLD: ROUNDS 3 & 4

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There were first time winners in both Portugal and Germany.

## Events

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All the latest reports from around the world of sportscar racing.



Photo: Alex Roache

# June



This month, *l'endurance* photographers will be at the Le Mans 24 Hours, GT1 and GT3 Silverstone and British GT Brands Hatch.

[photography@lendurance.co.uk](mailto:photography@lendurance.co.uk)

# EV

## LES VINGT QUATRE HEURES DU MANS

Circuit de la Sarthe, June 11-12

What is there to say about Le Mans that hasn't been said? This race is simply unmissable, and if you're not going then you should still be staying up for the entire race and listening to John Hindhaugh and the team get steadily more delirious on Radio Le Mans. Look out for our special team by team guide before the race.

UK Coverage: Eurosport, radio at [RadioLeMans.com](http://RadioLeMans.com)



Photo: Brecht Decancq

## GT3 Europe GREAT BRITAIN

Silverstone, June 3-5

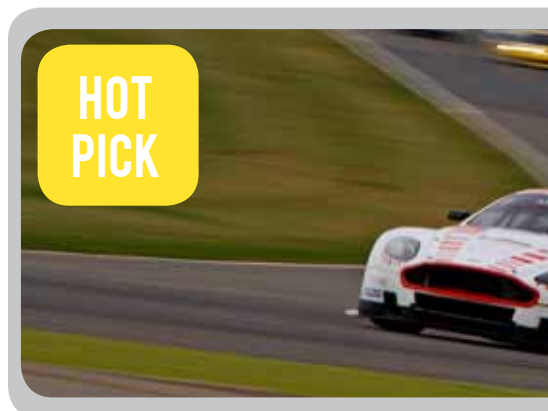
The FIA GT3 European Championship roars into Silverstone for its one and only UK visit in 2011, and you'd be a heathen to miss an opportunity to catch them.

## British GT BRANDS HATCH

June 18-19

The Avon Tyres British GT Championship goes south to visit the full Brands circuit for a two hour endurance race. Expect even more thrills.

HOT PICK



# EVENTS



MUST  
SEE



## GT1 World **GREAT BRITAIN** ROUND 5

Silverstone, June 3-5

GT1 World is back for the traditional Tourist Trophy meeting at Silverstone, and it should be the first ever in 'the wing'.

UK Coverage: Live on [GT1world.com/tv](http://GT1world.com/tv)

Photo: Alex Roache

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**FOCUS**

FIA GT3 European Championship, Algarve  
Alex Roache used a Canon 40D and 10-22 F3.5-5.6  
Canon. Shutter speed 1/10th at F22.







*In*  
**FOCUS**

**British GT Championship, Snetterton**  
Jake Yorath used a Nikon D200 and 10-20 F4-5.6 Sigma. Shutter speed 1/6th at F22.





*In*  
**FOCUS**

ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps  
Brecht Decancq used a Nikon D300S and 300 F2.8  
Nikkor. Shutter speed 1/5000th at F2.8.







**SPEED**

*l'endurance is going to Le Mans*





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*In*  
**FOCUS**

ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps  
Marcel Thomassen used a Canon 40D and 70-200  
F2.8 IS Canon. Shutter speed 1/25th at F22.







*In*  
**FOCUS**

ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps  
Dan Bathie used a Nikon D50 and 70-210 F4-5.6  
Nikkor. Shutter speed 1/40th at F14.





*In*  
**FOCUS**

ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps  
Jake Yorath used a Nikon D200 and 10-20 F4-5.6  
Sigma. Shutter speed 1/1600th at F4.





*In*  
**FOCUS**

FIA GT1 World Championship, Algarve  
Alex Roache used a Canon 40D and 10-22 F3.5-5.6  
Canon. Shutter speed 1/10th at F22.







**in**  
**FOCUS**

ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps  
Marcel Thomassen used a Canon 40D and 17-85 F4-  
5.6 IS Canon. Shutter speed 1/60th at F11.





*In*  
**FOCUS**

**ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps**  
Jake Yorath used a Nikon D300S and 80-200 F2.8  
Nikkor. Shutter speed 1/1000th at F2.8.





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**British GT Championship, Snetterton**  
Jake Yorath used a Nikon D200 and 300 F4 Nikkor.  
Shutter speed 1/6th at F29.





*In*  
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ILMC Spa 1000km, Spa Francorchamps  
Brecht Decancq used a Nikon D300S and 300 F2.8  
Nikkor. Shutter speed 1/1250th at F2.8.







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**FOCUS**

Donington Historic Festival

Dan Bathie used a Nikon D300S and 80-200 F2.8  
Nikkor. Shutter speed 1/2000th at F2.8.





# ROU

Photo: Jake Yorath



# IND UP

## ILMC SPA 1000KM

Page 68

Peugeot took a shock success at the Spa 1000km, comfortably defeating an out-of-sorts Audi squad.

## GT3 Europe ALGARVE

Page 40

Audi and BMW split the spoils as GT3 kicked off in the Portuguese sunshine in a flurry of great racing.

## World ROUND UP

Page 78

All the reports from around the world this month including British GT, GT1 World, and regional championships.

LMS+ILMG SPA 1000KM

# LIONS ROAR IN THE ARDENNES

Spa Francorchamps, Belgium, Round 2, May 5-7 By Dan Bathie



**S**ome things in life are surprising; Peugeot's victory at Spa was one of these surprises.

Going into the second round of both the Le Mans Series and the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, Audi were definite favourites, especially after their

strong showing at the Le Mans test day. Spa however was to be the first time Audi's new R18 had faced Peugeot's latest 908 in race conditions, a completely different ball game. The event poster indicated that there also could be a third challenger in the form of As-

ton's new LMP1 car; this unfortunately was not to be the case when Aston pulled out a few weeks before the event due to insufficient testing - the car clearly not ready.

Practice confirmed most predictions and seemed a game for Audi, who dominated all



three and succeeded in having each car heading a timesheet, number descending order, naturally.

Qualifying looked like it would run to form and see Audi sitting at the top of the charts again. It did, but in more dramatic fashion than anyone

would have liked to have seen. The Peugeots went out late in the session leaving only a few laps to post a time, so when Matthieu Lahaye buried his Oak Pescarolo deep in the arnco (after what looked to be contact with the Genoa FLM car judging from the onboard footage)

bringing out the red flag and a premature end to session, the Peugeots were down in thirteenth, eighteenth and fiftieth for the number eight car which didn't even get a timed lap in. A seemingly uphill battle made even harder now. Lahaye's accident wasn't the first big one

Photos: Jake Yorath and Dan Bathie



IMSA Performance took victory in the GTE AM Class with Nicolas Armindo and Raymond Narac





# 458 BRINGS CORSE FOR CELEBRATION

## GTE

The Ferrari 458 was the car to have around the Belgian circuit; it was just a question of which one would win it. In the end it was the AF Corse liveried version of Gianmaria Bruni and Giancarlo Fisichella which took victory in the GTE class after six hours of close racing.

Right from the start it was another race to forget for Marc Lieb and Richard Lietz, contact with Fisichella on the first lap put the Felbermayr Porsche multiple laps down. The opening part of the race saw an enthralling battle between Jaime Melo and Rob Bell for the lead, the two nose to tail for much of

their stints. Their team mates carried on this fight, James Walker handing the JMW car back to Bell in the lead after a tremendous drive. Bell then made a rare error at Les Combes and bounced his Ferrari off the tyre wall although he carried on seemingly having got away with it. However a few laps later and the JMW Ferrari started resembling a sprinkler, the brush with the wall damaging the radiator and putting the car well out of contention. The BMW of Uwe Alzen was now up to second behind Vilander, BMW hoping that good strategy rather than raw pace would beat the Ferraris. Vilander handed over to

Melo and Alzen to Priaulx, the BMW jumping the Ferrari in the pits. Melo gained quickly on Priaulx though and took the place, in doing so ignoring the yellow flags and earning himself a stop/go penalty and with it what looked like a victory. This left three cars to contend for the win, Fisichella leading the Hankook shod Farnbacher Ferrari and just behind him the Priaulx / Alzen BMW. This is how it would stay until the finish, Fisichella taking his first victory in sportcars, 11 seconds clear of Farnbacher with the BMW just 1.4 behind him.

Pescarolo could not repeat their Paul Ricard victory at Spa but took the honours of best petrol in LMP1

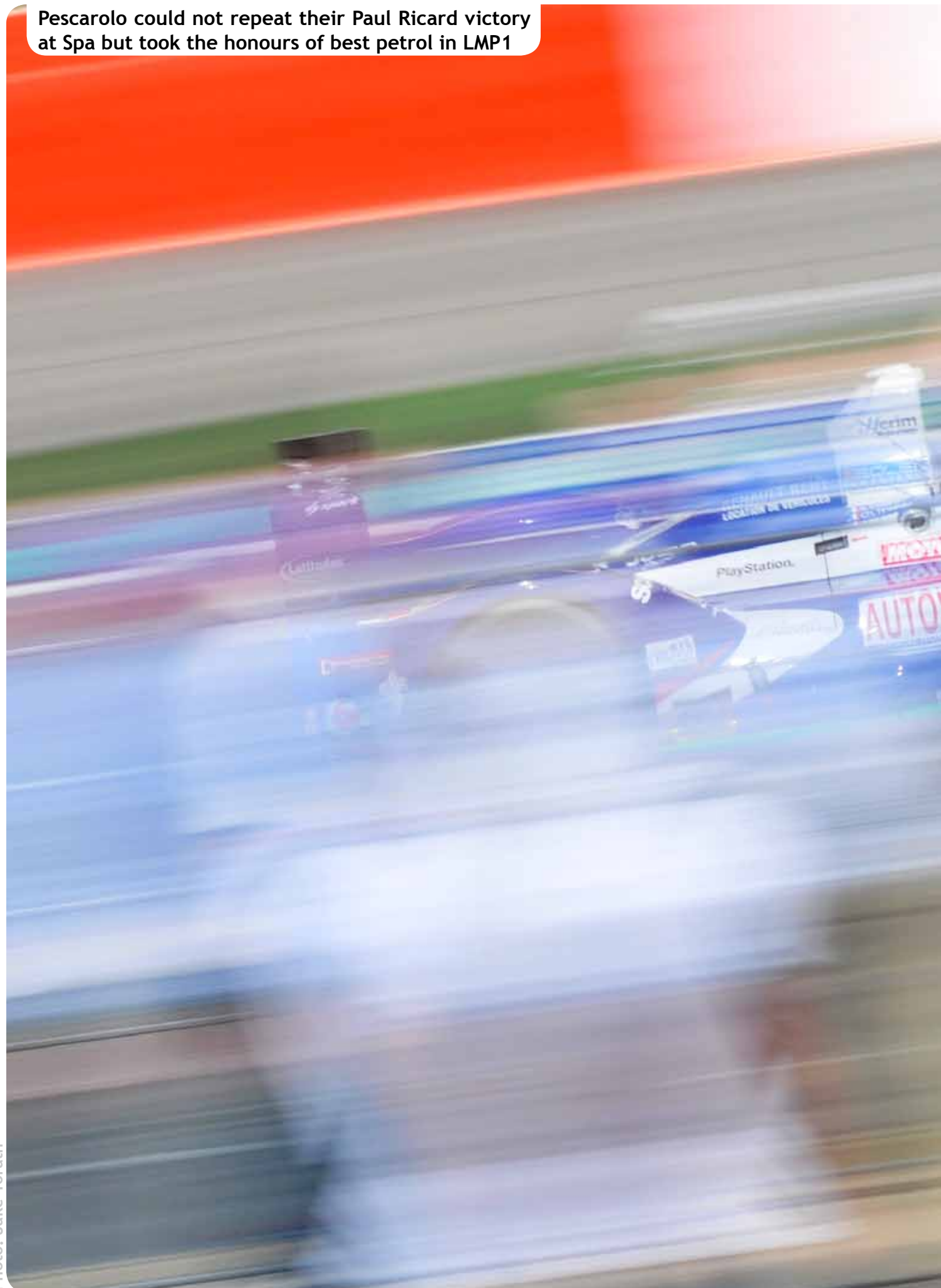


Photo: Jake Yorath



of the weekend. In practice the number thirteen Rebellion suffered a mechanical failure pitching the car into the wall at Eau Rouge, but the biggest accident happened during second practice. Pedro Lamy's Peugeot collided with Mike Newton's RML HPD at the Fange chicane, leaving both cars with considerable damage. Unfortunately for RML this was to be the end of the weekend for them, their HPD chassis destroyed.

Race day was met with blue skies and sunshine, a rarity at Spa. This was to be a day of surprises in the Ardennes. As the green flag flew and the race got underway it didn't take long for Audi's race to start to

unravel. Allan McNish starting the number three Audi, spun under braking as the pack entered Les Combes for the first time, the Scot choosing a spin rather than taking out his team mate, a wise move as Alexandre Prémat would tell you. At the end of lap one Lotterer led from Bernhard with McNish down in sixteenth. Meanwhile the Peugeots were making quick progress and fears of accidents due to a rapid Peugeot making its way through the field did not come to fruition. Before the half hour mark all three Peugeots were ahead of the petrol cars - The diesels really in a class of their own round the 4.3 mile circuit.

Wurz in the seven car was soon on the tail of Timo Bernhard and made his way past the German in traffic, it was clear that Audi wasn't going to have as an easy ride as first thought. Wurz then closed up on leader Lotterer and took the lead as they made their way through a pack of traffic. Behind the factory diesels Sebring winners Oreca were not enjoying the same success they enjoyed while in Florida, Duval bringing the grandfathered 908 in with engine trouble. They would eventually finish tenth, nine laps down. After one hour the seven Peugeot held a four second lead over the number one Audi, which was another four

Audi were favourites, but no one told Peugeot...



Photo: Jake Yorath



Photo: Brecht Decanq

seconds ahead the two car.

Audi's race then took another downturn, Bernhard made contact with the Genoa FLM car sending the Genoa car into a series of spins and causing damage to the rear bodywork of the Audi. The one car pitted immediately, the rear section being replaced while taking on new tyres, fuel, and driver Dumas, however problems getting the section attached lost the number one crew a minute, the car re-joining in sixth. In LMP2 the Greaves Zytek led at the first hour mark but their race was comprised not long after when Karim Ojeh hit the rear of the Level 5 Motorsports Lola causing them both to take a trip into the gravel. Ojeh re-joined quickly but was given a

drive through for his move.

An hour and a half in and the number three Audi which had made its way up to third place suffered another setback, this time in the hands of Capello. The Italian accidentally pressed the pit limiter on the pit straight and as a result lost his position to Stephane Sarrazin in the eight Peugeot. Two hours down and the seven Peugeot still led, second was the two Audi and third the nine Peugeot while in LMP2 Signatech now led the way.

The Audi challenge once again took another hit just after the two hour mark - an unscheduled pit stop for Treluyer to remove a piece of tyre pick up delayed the second placed car and allowed the third Peu-

geot through. The lions now held all podium places, a surprising turn of events considering the dominance of Audi during the rest of the weekend. This lead increased over the Audis when Treluyer put his black machine into the gravel which resulted in a trip back to the pits losing yet more time. The first and only safety car was then called out after Christophe Bouchut suffered a suspension failure on his Level 5 Motorsports Lola that pitched him into the wall at Eau Rouge. Despite the heavy impact Bouchut was fine, and was quick to show displeasure at the marshals who attached the tow truck the wrong point of the car and ripped more pieces off the already beaten Lola.

TDS Racing took victory in LMP2





Photos: Dan Bathie

With just over half the time left the safety car came in and the racing resumed, Peugeot holding positions 1, 2, 3 and Audi 4, 5 and 6 (the number two car losing yet more time after being held at the end of the pit lane for around two minutes.) Peugeot were looking comfortable for a podium lock out, that was until Pedro Lamy ran wide at Rivage and beached his Peugeot in the gravel. He was able to re-join

after the marshals had quickly dug him out, not before the number three Audi now in the hands of Kristensen had passed him for third place. Kristensen was really on a mission and taking time out of both Peugeots ahead of him, however just when it looked like we might have had a battle for the lead, Kristensen was hit by the TDS Racing Oreca and had to pit to fit a new rear section. Audi's challenge was over. Yet not

long after and it was the nine Peugeot that hit trouble once again which allowed the yellow tipped Audi back through to take the final podium spot, the Peugeot suffering a suspension failure with Pagenaud behind the wheel. The nine crew would eventually finish down in eighth. The seven car had no such troubles though, Wurz bringing the car home forty two seconds ahead of the all French crewed car.

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Photo: Alex Roache



## GT1 WORLD PORTUGAL **NISSAN: SUNNY**

Algarve, Round 1, May 8 By Alex Roache







“  
OF COURSE I  
WAS RELIEVED  
THAT I DIDN'T  
HAVE TO BATTLE  
WITH A TEAM  
MATE BECAUSE  
WE DON'T WANT  
TO CRASH INTO  
EACH OTHER  
MICHAEL KRUMM

Last year's FIA GT1 thriller at the Autódromo Internacional do Algarve remains fresh in many fans' memories, not least owing to Brit Richard Westbrook's monumental charge through the field from the back of the grid in the crucial championship race.

In its short tenure as a host circuit on the international sportscar racing scene - during which time both FIA GT and, in 2009, the Le Mans Series, have paid visits - the Portimão venue has won a reputation for being one of the most entertaining, challenging and downright spectacular tracks on the calendar.

There is barely a level piece of tarmac on the entire 4.6km course, such is the sweeping gradient from one dramatic corner to the next. It's very much the latter-day Österreichring, albeit without Julie Andrews prancing across a lush green mountainside in the middle distance.

It comes as no surprise, then, that the arrival of the world's premier GT championships in the Algarve is a welcome occasion both for the teams and drivers, and for fans Grand Touring car racing around the globe.

Marc Basseng and his All-Inkl.com Münnich Motorsport squad arrived on the crest of a wave after a convincing double whammy of victories in Zolder which thrust the German and his compatriot and teammate Markus Winkelhock to the top of the drivers' standings. An eye-watering 50kg of success ballast for rounds 5 and 6, however, would ensure the #38 Lamborghini Murciélago didn't have it quite so easy this time.

The lump of lead certainly had its desired effect - the Lambo was way off the free practice pace set by Stefan Mücke in the #8 Young Driver Aston Martin shared with Darren Turner. It was close at the front, with the Marc VDS Ford GT of Yann Clairay and Maxime Martin (who had been getting in some sneaky practice guest driving the LMP Motorsport GT3 Aston) just three-thousandths of a second shy and their teammates Hennerici and Leinders only two-hundredths off that. Qualifying promised much.

And it delivered - although the chief protagonists were not who we might have expected. Out of nowhere the Nissan GT-Rs rose to the fore, bidding their time through qualifying 1 and 2 and then blitzing the timesheets when it mattered to lock out the front two rows. Westbrook and Dumbreck clinched pole for JR Motorsports, but were less than a tenth ahead of the Sumo Power GT Nissan of Zonta and Bernoldi.

Fans of racing secretly cursed under their breath - we were to be denied a repeat of Westbrook's heroic drive from the back in last year's event - but it was a shot in the arm for the two Nissan squads after their disastrous outings in Zolder.

And besides, the ingredients were still in place for excellent race, with the #23 JRM GT-R of Michael Krumm and Lucas Luhr in 3rd alongside the second Sumo car of Campbell-Walter and Brabham. The #8 Mücke/Turner Aston had let itself down badly after posting what was in fact the fourth quickest time in qualifying - Mücke trundled back into the pits and straight to his garage, com-



## QUALIFYING RACE

# NISSAN SHOW THEIR POWER

**T**he pack taxied through the roller-coaster final turn behind the pace car, then over the crest on the start/finish straight as the lights took a painfully long time to go green.

Impatiently the field broke formation and fanned out across the width of the track, so as the lights changed at last it was difficult to tell who was making up significant ground over whom. Dumbreck and Bernoldi sprinted clear, but, just as at Zolder, one of the front row starters was destined not to make it beyond the first corner in one piece.

Side-by-side into the braking zone, Bernoldi backed off to concede the corner to the JRM Nissan - the Brazilian clearly playing the long game - but he hadn't banked on the ambitiousness of the fast-starting #5 Swiss Racing Murciélago of Peter Kox, who nosed down

the inside and tagged the #20 Sumo Power GT car into a spin as it turned in behind Dumbreck. The car escaped largely undamaged, but any hope of a decent finish was scuppered and Bernoldi and Zonta were cursing their luck once again.

But the carnage had hardly begun. Into turn three Kox was still in the wars, coming together with the Bas Leinders Ford GT to set off a series of collisions involving the #3 Abu Dhabi-winning Hexis Aston of Stef Dusseldorp, and Alex Müller in the #7 Young Driver DBR9 - the German's Aston crunching into the spinning Swiss Racing Lamborghini and launching up on two wheels, the suspension shattered. It was to be an early bath for him and Czech teammate Thomas Enge.

In all the drama the three remaining Nissans had checked out at the front, some distance ahead of the somewhat crip-

pled chasing pack. Dumbreck led from Krumm and Brabham, and once again, as in Belgium, a crafty Nicky Catsburg had negotiated the first corner kerfuffle to leap up the order.

The young Dutchman was running 4th, in the sole Exim Bank Team China Corvette, but as the race settled he was quickly under pressure from Darren Turner and also Dominik Schwager in the luckless #37 All-Inkl.com, which had miraculously managed to complete the opening lap without incident.

Turner wasted no time behind the bright red Corvette, diving through at turn one and setting off after the leading trio. Schwager, too, was in a hurry, drawing alongside Catsburg under braking for turns 11 and 12 then sweeping around the outside of the #11 car in turn 13. Maxime Martin's Marc VDS Ford GT followed the Lamborghini through, but it wasn't



over yet. Schwager ran wide in the tighter turn 14 and Martin was alongside, hoping to make it two passes in two corners. The three of them were neck and neck through the final few corners but Schwager retained 5th.

There was only one significant change during the pit window, and it was for the lead. Krumm pitted one lap earlier than teammate Dumbreck, handing over to Luhr who immediately slammed in a quick lap on fresh tyres. The #22 car was in a lap later - the JRM pit crew furiously running around the car juggling wheels and pneumatic guns - and as Westbrook took the reins and screeched out the pitlane it became clear that Luhr had done enough to snatch the lead.

Westbrook, though, had other ideas. The Brit stuck like glue to the rear bumper of his teammate, shadowing him for several laps before burying it

up the inside at turn one and reclaiming a lead which he would not lose again despite Luhr's best efforts. There were suggestions of team orders, but it was obvious the pair of them were racing hard.

A one-two-three finish for Nissan was completed by the #21 Sumo GT-R of Jamie Campbell-Walter and David Brabham, while Turner/Mücke and Schwager/Pastorelli rounded out the top five.

Westbrook was understandably delighted with his maiden GT1 victory and with Nissan's dominance of the qualifying race: "It's one hell of an achievement to have three cars on the podium. After the stops I felt like I had a better car than Lucas in the first few laps. I could see him struggling particularly in the last corner so I thought 'here's my chance'. You can definitely overtake here, so the race tomorrow is wide open."



Photo: Alex Roache

pletely forgetting parc fermé rules and incurring a grid penalty which saw it tumble down the order. The Young Driver duo would be needing some of that Westbrook magic later in the afternoon.

Following JR Motorsport's dominance of Saturday's qualifying race, the front row for Sunday's championship race was an all-black affair, with plenty of potential for some red-faced drivers should any of the Nissans come together at turn one.

Westbrook controlled the pace - a very slow pace - on the run up to the start line, so the pack was like a cork out of a champagne bottled when the lights turned green. The front two rows sprinted away in formation, Westbrook and Luhr battling all the way

through turns 1, 2 and 3 and going wheel-to-wheel into the hairpin at turn 5 followed by a lively but very well-behaved field from third backwards - nobody wanted a repeat of the race one chaos.

The #22 car held position at the front, and Luhr and the rest of the pack settled in to the chase with third-placed Jamie-Campbell Walter fending off Mücke and the two All-Ink.com Murciélagos.

Further down the order an immense three-way battle for 8th was developing between the second Sumo Power GT Nissan of Ricardo Zonta - still suffering the consequences of its race one demise - Marc Hennerici in the #40 Ford GT and a charging Mike Hezemans in the Team China Corvette. Zonta was under pressure, and

“  
THE FRONT  
ROW FOR  
SUNDAY'S  
RACE WAS AN  
ALL BLACK  
AFFAIR



Photo: Alex Roache

through the penultimate corner Hennerici was close enough for a toe down the straight. But the Marc VDS car got a little out of shape through the long final corner, and suddenly the German was on the defensive from Hezemans. Resistance was futile against the grunt of the Corvette's V8 as they crossed the line, and even before the braking area Hezemans had completed the pass.

By the time the pit window opened, the JRM GT-Rs were long gone and Campbell-Walter still had his mirrors full of the Mücke-piloted Young Driver Aston Martin. Once again Luhr pitted first out of the two lead Nissans, and was followed in several moments later by the JC-W/Mücke/Pastorelli train, each of them squirming on the brakes as they shed their speed

for the pitlane limit.

David Brabham jumped in the #21 Sumo Nissan, Turner was in for Mücke in the #8 Aston, and Schwager replaced Pastorelli behind the wheel of the #37 Lamborghini. The Young Driver AMR lollipop was first up, but Turner hesitated, almost stalling. When the clutch bit a split second later he launched out of the pits a mere few feet ahead of Schwager but several car lengths ahead of Brabham - the Sumo GT-R had lost out badly.

Back at the sharp end, the #22 Nissan pitted after a superb opening stint and Dumbreck rejoined still comfortably in the lead - surely a reason for Westbrook to celebrate. But the Brit was looking troubled and, after several intense conversations with engineers it

transpired the car had an overheating gearbox.

And sure enough, Krumm was suddenly all over Dumbreck, sneaking through on the exit of turn 12 where Dumbreck seemed to have no drive. It was only a matter of time before the GT-R expired completely, and the inevitable happened a few laps later at turn 4 - a frustrating way to end a weekend that had started in such promising fashion.

While new leaders Krumm and Luhr were cruising to the chequered flag with a sizeable lead, Brabham in the #21 Sumo Power GT Nissan was making up for lost ground during the pitstops. The Ozzy had made short work of Schwager in the aftermath of the pitstops, and was now hounding former teammate Darren Turner in the



white and orange Aston Martin. The Nissan was ever so slightly quicker, but Turner kept a cool head and was able to bring his and Stefan Mücke's DBR9 home to a very strong second place on what was evidently Nissan GT-R territory.

"I was very conscious of how strong the Nissans had been over the weekend," said Turner afterwards. "Having David (Brabham) behind me was quite daunting at times, but I just thought 'well he's been my teammate before and what would he do in this situation, just stay calm' so I thought

if I stayed calm and make no mistakes there wouldn't be an opening for him to squeeze through."

How right he was. It was nevertheless an excellent effort from Brabham and Campbell-Walter to score their first podium of 2011, but it was an admirably contrite Michael Krumm and Lucas Luhr who took victory and scored maximum points from the weekend.

"Of course I was relieved that I didn't have to battle with a teammate because we don't want to crash into each other," commented Krumm.

"But it was a shame because they [Westbrook and Dumbreck] won yesterday and they deserved to win as much as we did today."

The result elevated race-winners Michael Krumm and Lucas Luhr to joint 2nd in the drivers' championship, level on points as they were with the Young Driver Aston Martin pairing of Darren Turner and Stefan Mücke. Marc Basseng and Markus Winkelhock remained 20 points clear in the lead as the GT1 circus headed to Germany for the fourth round of the championship.



Photo: Alex Roache



# CHAMPIONSHIP RACE

WINNERS

**LUCAS LUHR (GER)**  
**MICHAEL KRUMM (GER)**  
JR MOTORSPORTS NISSAN GT-R



THIRD

**STEFAN MUCKE (DEU)**  
**DARREN TURNER (GBR)**  
YOUNG DRIVER ASTON MARTIN DBR9



THIRD

**JAMIE CAMPBELL-WALTER (GBR)**  
**DAVID BRABHAM (CZE)**  
SUMO POWER NISSAN GT-R



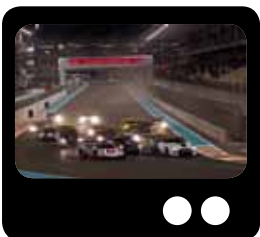
QUALIFYING RACE WINNERS

**RICHARD WESTBROOK (GBR)**  
**PETER DUMBRECK (GER)**  
JR MOTORSPORTS NISSAN GT-R

NEXT ROUND

**Great Britain**

Silverstone, June 5



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All artwork thanks to Andy Blackmore Design

[www.andyblackmoredesign.com](http://www.andyblackmoredesign.com)

# GT1 WORLD GERMANY HEXILLENT

Sachsenring, May 14th - 15th By Jake Yorath

**H**exis Aston Martin took another victory at the Sachsenring, with Andrea Piccini and Christian Hohenadel the beneficiaries of more incredible pitwork from the French squad. Maxime Martin and Fred Makowiecki had looked strong, having won the qualifying race, but retired after suffering damage in yet another

first corner fracas in the Championship event.

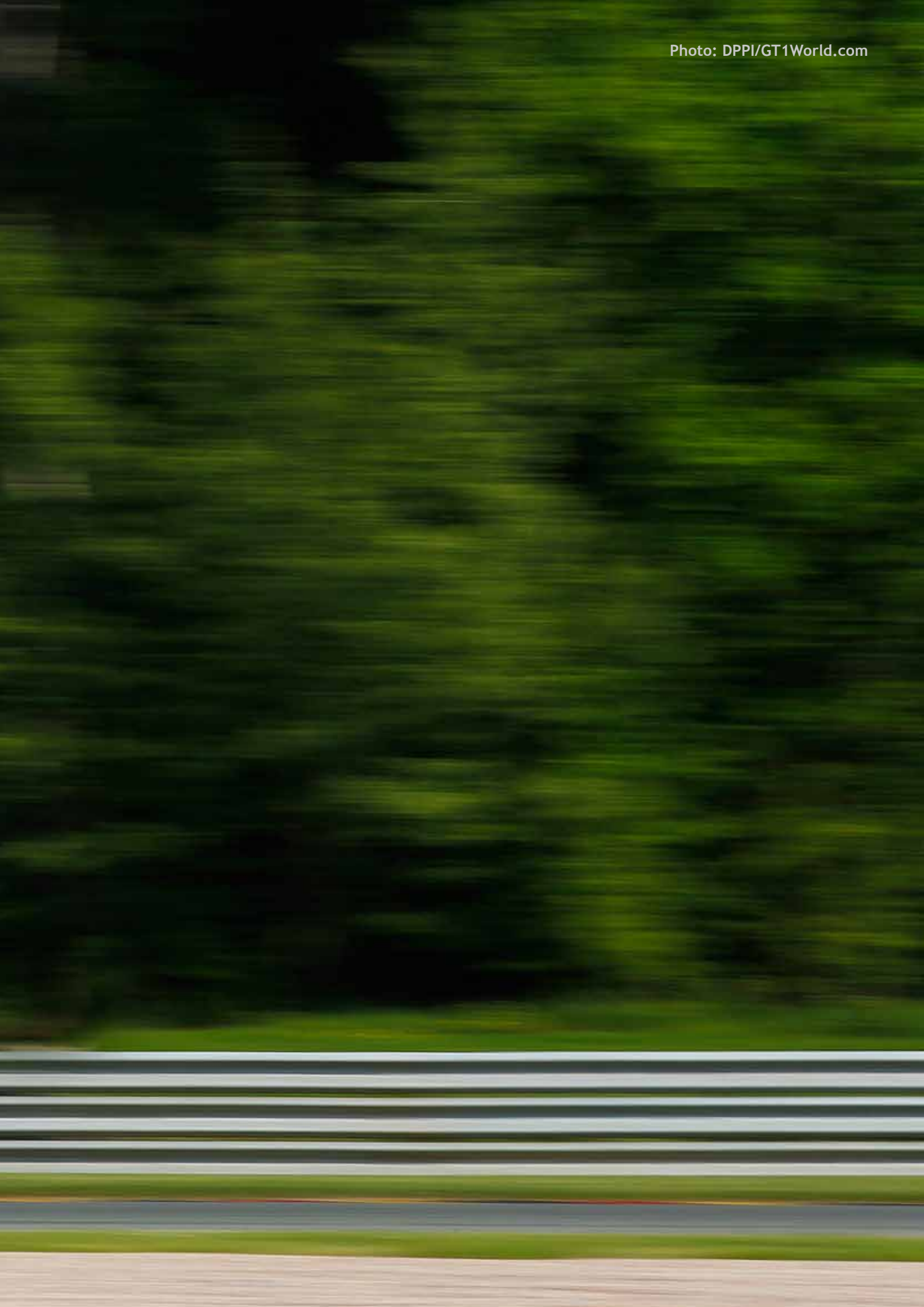
As the cars lined up for the Championship race, the news for Antoine Leclerc and Ford (and Leclerc's team mate Clairay, who would start) continued to be bad, as the Belgian driver was sent five places further back than he would have liked after causing the accident at the first corner in the Qualifying Race.

That meant the unfortunate yellow machine would be dad last on the grid.

He was in good company with veterans Bas Leinders and Mike Hezemans both stranded at the back, having not even seen the track in the first race at all.

At the drop of the flag (or turn of the lights), Martin led the field towards turn one. Immediately he was outraced







## QUALIFYING RACE MORE SUCCESS FOR VDS

**F**red Makowiecki and Maxime Martin stormed from 14th on the grid to take victory in the Qualifying Race at Sachsenring. The Marc VDS Ford GT survived an appeal (they were among several teams who were threatened with action having crossed the white line at pit exit) but was top value for the win.

The victory was in stark contrast to the other Fords in the race, with all three of the other cars colliding at the first turn, with numbers 40 and 9 not making it out of the right hander. That brought a safety car that lasted four laps, before the field were released with Nicky Pastorelli at the head of the field.

Behind him, a heroic pass from Nicky Catsburg on Michael Krumm was swiftly turned into a horror moment for the Dutchman, who ended in the gravel having applied the power a little too hard. Not much later and Krumm had Makowiecki to deal with and the Frenchman swiftly passed both the German and his team mate Richard Westbrook.

Continuing his charge, the French driven Belgian Ford collided with Alex Müller, with the unfortunate German ending up pointing the wrong way and rejoining last.

At the first opportunity, Pastorelli and the two Astons (Piccione for Hexis and Turner for Young Driver) behind all headed for their pitstops.

Yet again, Hexis pull a super stop out of the bag to put Piccione's team mate Dusseldorp well ahead of his challengers. Superb tactics, too, from Sumo Power, who put Nissan man Warren Hughes (in for Ricardo Zonta) ahead of Turner's Aston, now driven by Mücke.

Marc VDS bring Makowiecki in almost last but he's had clear track to stretch the legs of the Ford and Maxime Martin appears alongside Dusseldorp as he exits the pits, holding the lead until the flag. Dusseldorp comes home second, Mücke third and Hughes fourth.

Martin summed up the race rather succinctly: "Fred did an amazing job, an amazing job." Nothing else to say.



Photo: Brecht Decanq



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TO WIN IN  
GERMANY WITH  
ALL MY FRIENDS  
HERE IS JUST  
FANTASTIC

CHRISTIAN  
HOHENADEL



by Stef Dusseldorp in the Hexis Aston, but the Belgian's approach was a robust one and the Aston bounced across the gravel after contact from the Ford. Mücke also made contact with the VDS car. Also running wide was Richard Westbrook in the JRM Nissan.

The crashing wasn't over yet, because at turn two, Tomas Enge and Karl Wendlinger made heavy side by side contact that forced the Austrian into the path of his unfortunate team mate Max Nilsson, and both Swiss Lamborghinis were out on the spot with extremely heavy damage. Vanina Ickx was lucky to escape with nothing worse than a bounce across the gravel in her Ford, but she then connected with the unlucky VDS Ford of Leinders.

Wendlinger's suspension was wrecked after a big rear impact from Nilsson, and Enge, too, was forced out thanks to suspension damage from the broadside contact. Maxime Martin, meanwhile, had

slipped to sixth under the resulting safety car, suffering the early effects of the damage from his first corner contact with Mücke's Young Driver Aston Martin.

As the drizzle came down, the cars were released from the safety car ten minutes into the race with Stefan Mücke leading Christian Hohenadel, with Dominick Schwager's Lamborghini third. Behind them, Hezemans and Leinders both attack Yann Clairay in short order, the bamboozled Frenchman shuffled two places down by the double pass.

At the front, it was all action, with the two Astons door handle to door handle, with GT3 champion Hohenadel looking faster than his more experienced compatriot ahead, but unable to find a way through without heavy contact. It came a lap later at turn one, the younger driver muscling his way through and despite a hefty nudge in return from Mücke, began to pull away and














left the Aston Martin to Dominick Schwager, who passed just a lap later in the same spot.

Maxime Martin, however, was into the pits with a puncture after the turn one incident. The Belgian was to retire, claiming that Mücke hit him before he hit Hohe-nadel, but replays suggest that his version of events is not necessarily correct.

Warren Hughes, meanwhile, began to come under severe pressure from Championship leader Markus Winkelhock in the 37 Lamborghini, with Leinders applying similar levels of pressure to fellow veteran Mike Hezemans in the sole Corvette.

At the first sign of a chance to stop, almost half the field pitted in one go, including the top four while Winkelhock, at his 'home' round, stayed out in an attempt to make hay while the sun was struggling to make it through the German sky. The Lamborghini was fast but not fast enough, while even faster

(again) were the Hexis crew. Dusseldorp came in from 13th and returned in a net fifth place: a superb turnaround from driver and squad.

Heartbreak though, for All-Inkl. As the car returned from the pits, it was still behind Bernoldi (who had taken over from Hughes) but things were about to get even worse for the German team. A sheered nut at the right rear caused a huge moment for Marc Basseng, who produced a save of real quality, but he could only steer the car across the gravel and into retirement. He cut a dejected figure, perched on a marshals' hut to ponder what might have been as he saw more probable points slip away to mechanical woe.

At the last chance, the Nissans of Brabham and Westbrook both pit, but the gap between the two is not inconsiderable. Brabham's team mate Campbell-Walter would rejoin fifth and Westbrook's partner Dumbreck seventh. Ahead of them af-



**THERE WAS MORE INCREDIBLE  
PITWORK FROM FRENCH SQUAD HEXIS**

Photo: Brecht Decancq







ter the stops, Andrea Piccini comfortably led Nicky Pastorelli, the 38 car finally able to last a little in race trim. Darren Turner was third.

For sixth place, Nicky Catsburg really pressured Campbell-Walter's Sumo Power Nissan, while team mate Bernoldi was under severe pressure from Clivio Piccione for Hexis. But the Monegasque driver would be in trouble before long, as his right front deflated as he attacked the final turn. He recovered, but

his chance of points was gone.

That left Bernoldi, Campbell-Walter and Catsburg to run nose to tail until the flag, and though Dumbreck caught the trio, there would be no change from Bernoldi in fourth down to the Scot at the flag, which was taken for the first time in the GT1 World Championship by Andrea Piccini, sharing with Christian Hohenadel for Hexis Aston Martin. The victory moved the pairing ahead of Marc Basseng and Markus Winkelhock into the

lead of the Championship after four rounds. Second were Nicky Pastorelli and Dominik Schwager (at last) and third Darren Turner, whose car survived early contact with team mate Stefan Mücke to claim a podium.

"It's my first win in GT1, I didn't expect it so soon," explained Hohenadel. "To win in Germany with all my friends here is just fantastic."

The next round sees the series visit Britain, with the Tourist Trophy at Silverstone.

# CHAMPIONSHIP RACE

## WINNERS

**CHRISTIAN HOHENADEL (DEU)**  
**ANDREA PICCINI (ITA)**  
HEXIS RACING ASTON MARTIN DBR9



## SECOND

**NICKY PASTORELLI (ITA)**  
**DOMINIK SCHWAGER (DEU)**  
ALL-INKL.COM LAMBORGHINI MURCIELAGO 670R-S



## THIRD

**STEFAN MÜCKE (DEU)**  
**DARREN TURNER (GBR)**  
YOUNG DRIVER ASTON MARTIN DBR9



## QUALIFYING RACE WINNERS

**MAXIME MARTIN (BEL)**  
**FRED MAKOWIECKI (FRA)**  
MARC VDS FORD GT

## DRIVERS' STANDINGS

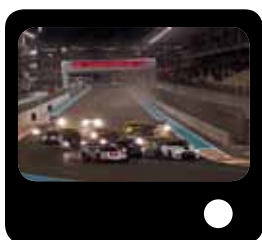
**1st:**  
Piccini/ Hohenadel 61  
**2nd:**  
Basseng/ Winkelhock 57  
**3rd:**  
Mücke/ Turner 56

## TEAMS' STANDINGS

**1st:**  
Hexis AMR 107  
**2nd:**  
All-Inkl.com 90  
**3rd:**  
Young Driver AMR 87

## NEXT ROUND

**Great Britain**  
Silverstone, June 5



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GT3 EUROPE PORTUGAL

# BMW, AUDI SHARE PORTUGUESE BOUNTY

Algarve, Round 1, May 8 By Alex Roache

**T**he 'pinnacle' of GT racing on this planet may be a distinction enjoyed exclusively by the FIA GT1 World Championship, but there's little doubt that in 2011 Stéphane Ratel's headline series will be eyeing its elder sibling, the FIA GT3 European Championship, with a touch of envy. Bigger grids, a vast array of manufacturers and, to top it off, threats by Ratel to can GT1 if entries for 2012 don't improve - all of which seems to point towards FIA GT3 being the favoured child (for the moment at least).

Despite an inelegant conclusion to the 2010 series - which saw the teams' title decided in the court rooms in ProSpeed

Competition's favour - there was no denying that the FIA GT3 European Championship was back with a bang in Portimão as the 28-strong field took to the track at the Autódromo Internacional do Algarve for rounds one and two of 2011.

The usual suspects were out in force: the Porsche 911 GT3s run by ProSpeed; LMP Motorsport's two Aston Martin DBRS9s; four Audi R8 LMSs courtesy of Sainteloc Racing and Zak Brown's United Autosport squad; two teams of two BMW Z4 GT3s; and a single Reiter Engineering Lamborghini Gallardo.

Much of the excitement, however, surrounded the championship's new machines,

the magnificent Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3 - which took its international bow (and a podium) at the Dubai 24hrs earlier this year - and the beautiful, aggressively-styled Ferrari 458 Italia. These models represent the new breed of GT3 car, the one which is set to push the series forward in performance terms - a fact embraced by many of the teams, with four 458s on the grid and no less than seven Mercs.

The traditional combination of professional and gentleman drivers in each team was also sure to spice things up - the former contesting the first qualifying session and the latter getting behind the wheel for the second - and a series of performance balancing meas-





ures (as distinct from ballast) had been put in place after pre-season testing to ensure no one car would dominate. Different minimum weights, ride heights and air restrictors were imposed, leaving one or two teams feeling somewhat hard done by - not least the squads running the Audi R8s LMS and Ford GT.

Sure enough, on the Saturday morning it was the #50 AF Corse Ferrari 458 of Francesco Castellacci and Frederico Leo which took first blood with pole for race one, the nearest Audi (Team WRT #33) in 5th and over a second shy. In qualifying two, however, an embarrassing mishap for the #50 Ferrari saw Leo crash out having set the third quickest time. The car was too badly damaged to compete in that afternoon's race, promoting the #6 Need For Speed Team Schubert BMW of Edward Sandström and Abdulaziz Al Faisal to pole. They would be joined on the front row by Joakim Lambotte

and Gary Hirsch in the #4 Graff Racing SLS.

At the start of race one, the pole-sitting #6 BMW was well and truly mugged on the run to the first corner. As the lights turned green on the enormous GT3 pack Lambotte was already streaking away from Sandström and the third-placed #25 Reiter Lamborghini was alongside, as was Dan Brown in the #51 AF Corse Ferrari.

Strangely, though, a massively overly-cautious Lambotte - who carried a lead of several car lengths into the braking zone for turn one - suddenly came over all defensive, unnecessarily covering the inside line and bunching up the following pack. A quick thinking Enzo Ide in the #33 Audi swept around the outside, passing four cars in one fell swoop and seizing the lead. The #6 BMW was down to 5th.

The frenzied opening laps claimed a number of victims, most of them Audi R8s - the United Autosport car of Mark

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THERE WAS NO  
MISTAKING THE  
EXCITEMENT AS  
THE WORLD'S  
FOREMOST GT  
SERIES ARRIVED  
AT THE CIRCUIT





Photo: Alex Roache



Patterson and Joe Osborne was spun around, and the #16 and #32 Audis came together after an ambitious lunge into turn three from the Sainteloc Racing car. Brit Paul Rees's #20 MTECH Ferrari 458 also succumbed to its injuries after a panel-bashing first few corners, pulling to the side of the track on the run down to the hairpin at turn five.

Then, in one of the more bizarre and frightening incidents in GT racing in recent years, as Rees's car was being towed away the #44 Heico Motorsport

Mercedes of Dominik Baumann managed to spin off under yellow flags and collect the Ferrari, sending marshals fleeing in all directions. The Austrian had been going for an ever-diminishing gap up the inside of one of the DB Motorsport BMWs, and a wheel on the grass had sent him pirouetting out of control as he entered the yellow flag zone. It was a close shave, but thankfully nobody was hurt.

A safety car period ensued and the race was neutralised, with Ide still leading and Lam-

botte, Sandström, Brown and Patrick Hirsch in close company. As they blasted towards the line for the restart, the five of them were well ahead of the rest of the field - the sixth-placed #25 Lamborghini was limping along behind with a puncture, the following pack unsure whether they ought to be passing or not.

But it was all change at the front with Lambotte and Sandström passing Ide, and the Need For Speed BMW simultaneously launching an attack on the Mercedes, slicing through



Photo: Alex Roache

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THE FIA GT3  
EUROPEAN  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
WAS BACK  
WITH A BANG  
IN PORTIMAO

at turn one and pulling out a significant lead.

And then it was time for the pitstops. A mandatory 75-second period when the cars must be stationary is supposed to ensure the racing happens on the track rather than in the pitlane, but after the driver changes occurred the #4 Graff Racing Mercedes - now with Gary Hirsch behind the wheel - had closed up considerably to the lead BMW with Al Faisal, and several other cars had also inexplicably leapfrogged their rivals during the stops. The

race stewards' suspicions were piqued.

In the meantime, the second #7 Need For Speed Z4 of Claudia Hürtgen was on a charge having lost time queuing behind the ailing Reiter Lamborghini on the earlier restart. The German was locked in a scrap with Scot Glynn Geddie in the #51 Ferrari (which would, the following weekend, claim pole at the British GT round at Snetterton), swapping positions several times before the matte black BMW scythed through and set about chasing



the second-placed Graff Racing Mercedes.

She wouldn't have to chase too hard. In the first of a string of penalties dished out by the stewards for undercutting the minimum pitstop time, the #4 SLS had to complete a pitlane drive-through, dropping it out of contention. Reigning champions ProSpeed and the Bell/Brown United Autosports Audi were clobbered with a similar punishment.

The demise of the Lambotte/Hirsch Mercedes promoted the #7 BMW into third, and that's where it finished. Nobody was able to trouble Al Faisal at the front - the Saudi driver brought home the other Need For Speed machine to take victory ahead of the #3 Graff Racing Mercedes of Mike Parisy and Philippe Giaque.

Graff Racing's celebrations, however, were short-lived. A failure to serve a drive-through landed the #3 car a 33-second time penalty, knocking it back to 4th and bumping the Hürtgen/Walter Z4 into second for a Need For Speed 1-2. DB Motorsport's Hoevert Vos and Jeroen den Boer claimed the final podium spot, completing an impressive 1-2-3 for BMW.

Race two on Sunday was a somewhat less frenetic affair, but provided a topsy-turvy result nonetheless. Mike Parisy's pole position provided some consolation to his team after their race one mishaps, and they were joined on the front row by British squad MTECH Motorsport with Matt Griffin in the #21 Ferrari. The fellow 458 of Leo/Castellacci would start 3rd, with GT1 ace Maxime Martin piloting the LMP Motorsport Aston Martin DBRS9 in 4th.

Martin had obviously been

watching Enzo Ide's tactics into turn one in the first race - as the field charged into the first corner the #9 Aston was sweeping around the outside in an ambitious bid for the lead. The Belgian found himself without enough room, however, and was forced to resort to the massive expanse of run-off to maintain his momentum - a little cheeky when the rest of the pack was keeping to the black stuff.

After a tidy first lap with some great, clean jostling for position, the order at the front was largely unchanged - Parisy, Griffin, Martin, Kostka and Leo. Further down the field, Geddie's 458 was locked in combat for 19th with the #33 Audi of Gregory Franchi, the two of the, having to take dramatic avoiding action as Albert von Thurn und Taxis's Reiter Lamborghini spun to a standstill in front of them.

The race one winning Need For Speed BMW was not far up the road having started 18th, and as the race settled down the #6 car was making good progress in the hands of Al Faisal. Twelve laps in, though, and the white and black Z4 was all of a sudden parked in the gravel with its nose caved in. A hundred yards up the road, Gary Hirsch's Graff Racing Mercedes was buried in the Armco.

It seemed too great a coincidence that their incidents were unrelated, but the TV director was struggling for a clear shot of what happened. Several inconclusive angles later and it was all we could do to assume that Al Faisal had launched an over-ambitious move on the #3 SLS, smashing into its side and punting it up the road and into the barriers. An exasperated

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I NEVER  
THOUGHT WE  
WOULD WIN  
HERE. FOR ME  
THIS IS  
UNBELIEVABLE.

ENZO IDE







Sandström took off his helmet in the pits - no action for him today, and no repeat of the previous day's success.

The ensuing safety car period turned the race on its head. It coincided precisely with the opening of the pit window, but only Franchi in the #33 Audi and Thurn und Taxis in the sole Lamborghini Gallardo were in a position to pit immediately. It was a gift from above. With their rivals bunched up behind the safety car they gained an enormous chunk of time, and when the order shook out after the rest of the pack had pitted, the Audi and the Lambo - now piloted by Ide and Meyr-Melnhof respectively - had snatched the top two spots from the Parisy/Giaque Merc and the Griffin/Cameron Ferrari.

On the restart Meyr-Melnhof began his backward slide,

picked off first by the 458 of Castellacci and then by Dominik Baumann in the #44 Mercedes (making amends for his disastrous race one collision with Paul Rees's stationary Ferrari).

But the battle was on at the front. Ide, a mere 'gentleman' driver, had been closed down by Castellacci and was resisting intense pressure from the Ferrari. This was the old versus the new in terms of GT3 machinery, and the Audi was holding up remarkably well in the Belgian's hands. While clearly quicker and stronger on the brakes, the Ferrari 458 was - as it had been for much of the weekend - suffering with low speed traction issues, slithering around on the exit of corners and punishing its tyres.

Castellacci simply couldn't get within striking distance, and Ide brought the Belgian

Audi Club R8 home for a well-deserved yet rather unexpected victory.

"I never thought we would win here," beamed Ide afterwards. "For me, this is unbelievable. I think we had luck with the safety car, but it wasn't this simple with the Ferrari that was so close to me and the tyres were getting very worn, but I managed to stay in front of the Ferrari. Thanks to the team and everybody for this win."

Consistent runs and a solid haul of points by the #7 Need For Speed Team Schubert BMW in both races at Portimão sees Claudia Hürtgen and Csaba Walter leading the FIA GT3 European Championship by a single point from Ide and Franchi as the series heads to Silverstone for rounds 3 and 4 in June, supporting the FIA GT1 World Championship again.

# BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE SERIES VITA4ONE VICTORIOUS

Navvara, Spain, Rounds 2, May 6-7 By *Blancpain Endurance Series*

Thirty cars lined up on the grid for Round 2 of the Blancpain Endurance Series, after a fascinating first round at Monza, hopes were high for another good encounter.

Stephane Ortelli in the nr32 Belgian Audi Club Audi R8 led the cars into the first turn as the race began, with the nr9 AutOrlando Porsche of Gianluca Roda moving ahead of

Jack Gerber in the nr50 AF Corse Ferrari to take second place. The AF Corse Ferrari was also passed by Frank Kechele in the Vita4One Ferrari on the run into Turn 9, with the German closing the gap to challenge the second placed Porsche.

Ortelli continued to lead the race as Kechele challenged Roda, but it took sev-

eral laps before the Vita4One Ferrari moved ahead and started to close the 3 second gap that Ortelli had managed to open up to his rivals. While Kechele was charging forward, Roda's Porsche came under pressure from the two SOFREV ASP Ferrari's of Ludovic Badey in the nr20 458 and Julien Jousse in the nr10 Ferrari.





In the GT4 Class the nr 63 RJN Motorsport Nissan of Alex Buncombe was being reeled in by the two Lotus Evora's of Edoardo Piscopo and Fredy Barth and on lap 11 the Nissan slipped to third place in the GT4 Cup.

The nr24 Blancpain Reiter Lamborghini of Marc A Hayek, which had started at the back

of the grid following a blown engine in qualifying, was making rapid progress up the field but Hayek's charge was brought to a halt when the Lamborghini made an unscheduled pitstop on lap 12. The problem was traced to the battery but after several more trips to the pits the round 1 class winner was

forced to retire.

Back at the front of the field Kechele was able to close the gap to the leading Audi to less than a second. On lap 17 the nr22 Sport Garage Ferrari 430 of Philip Shearer went off at the last corner and was parked at the side of the track. There was a bit of confusion when

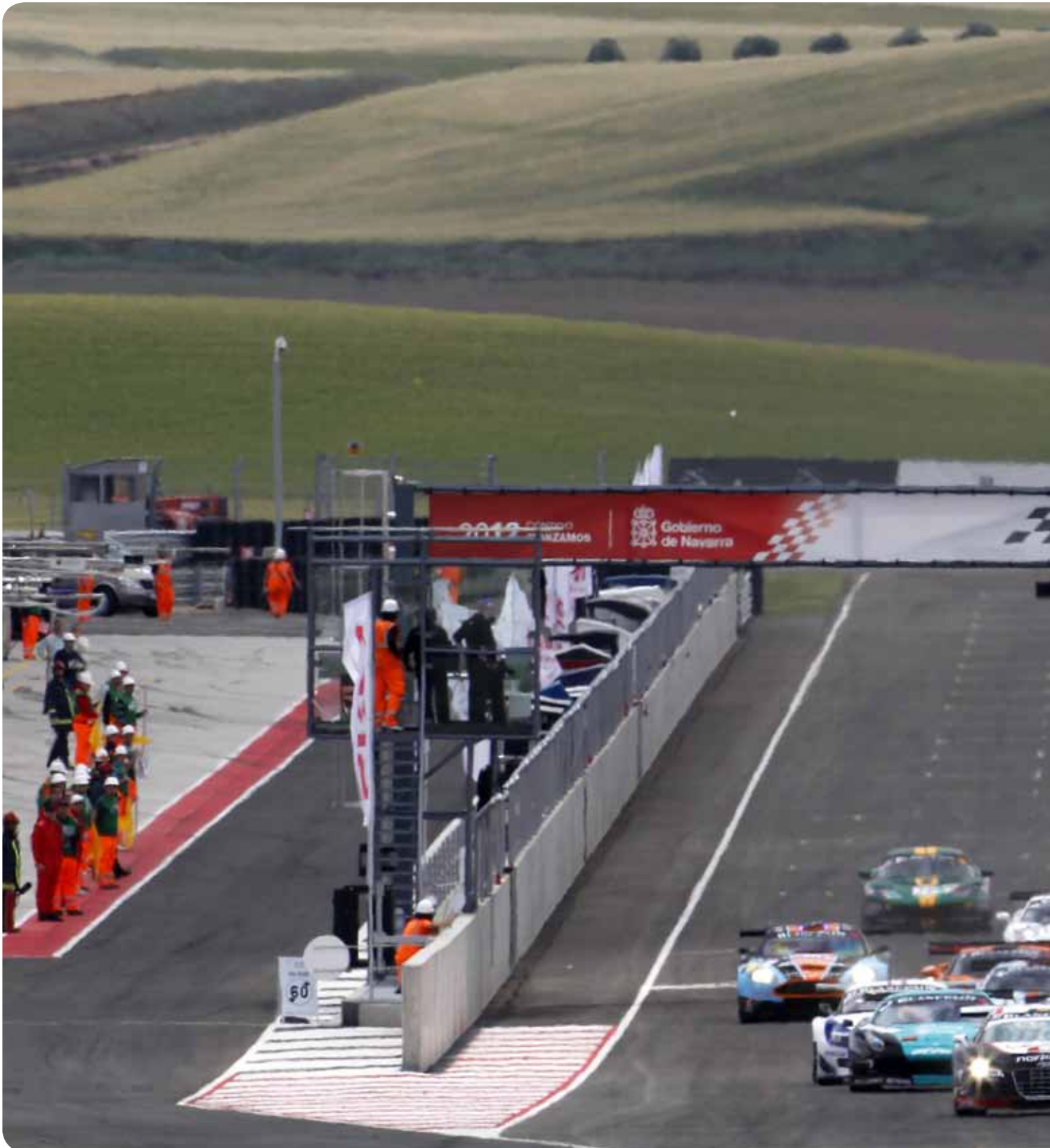


Photo: FFSA

“  
I THINK AT THE MOMENT I AM  
ONE OF THE HAPPIEST MEN  
IN THE WORLD

MICHAEL BARTELS





“  
THIRTY CARS  
LINED UP ON  
THE GRID FOR  
ROUND 2



some drivers said they saw Safety Car boards being shown and Ortelli decided to slow down. Kechele, who made the decision that the Safety Car wasn't deployed, closed right up to the Audi and swept into the lead. Kechele then set about building a 5-second lead to his rivals as the Ferrari continued to run faultlessly.

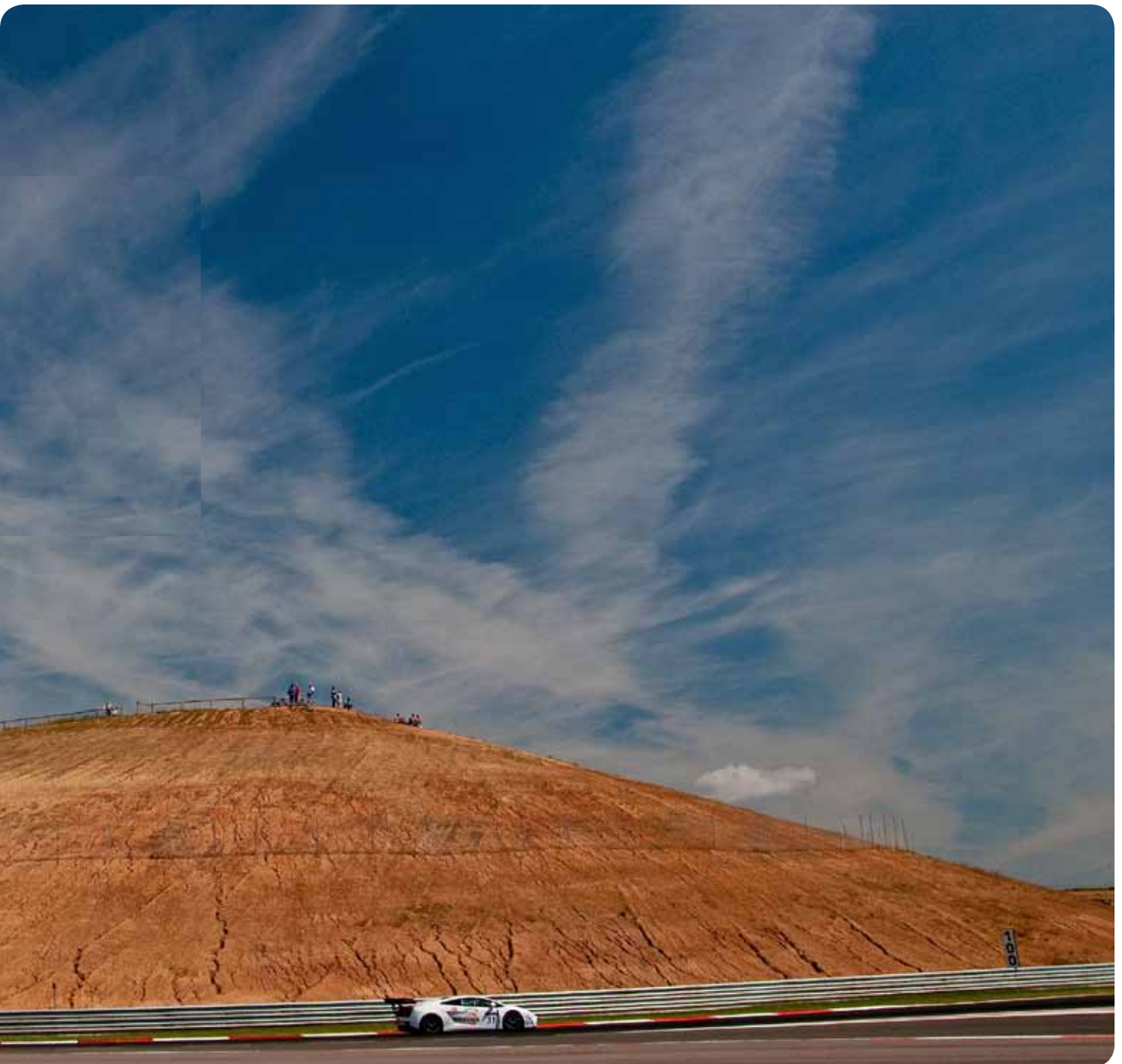
On lap 24 the Safety Car was deployed when the nr50 AF Corse Ferrari 458 of Jack Gerber went off the track at

Turn 15 and hit the barriers, destroying the front end of his car and the track was covered in debris. The pitlane suddenly came alive as teams rushed to take advantage of the situation.

At the restart on lap 29 the nr20 SOFREV Ferrari of Ludovic Badey was leading the race having failed to complete its first stop. Badey continued to lead when the second Safety Car period came into force after the nr73 De Lorenzi Rac-

ing Ginetta G50 of Diego Alessi caught fire. The back of the GT4 Class car was well alight when the Italian pulled over after Turn 14 and made a rapid exit to safety. The lead Ferrari pitted and the lead went to the nr1 Vita4One Ferrari, now with Nico Verdonck at the wheel.

After the marshals had extinguished the fire and dragged the stricken Ginetta behind the barriers racing resumed. Verdonck started to pull ahead of Bert Longin in the nr32 Audi,



Lotus claimed another GT4 class win (top) while the Spanish weather served up a treat







who was being caught by the nr9 AutOrlando Porsche of Raffaele Gianmaria and the nr33 Belgian Audi Club R8 of Marcel Fassler. On lap 40 Longin was passed by the Porsche at the last corner and then three laps later fell victim to Fassler's Audi when the Swiss driver followed two back markers who passed Longin's Audi to un lap themselves.

By lap 51 Verdonck was a comfortable 8 seconds ahead of Gianmaria's Porsche and 15 seconds ahead of the third placed Audi. Longin, now in 4th, was coming under pressure from the SOFREV Ferrari of Patrice Goueslard and decided to pit on lap 59 to hand over to Felipe Albuquerque.

Verdonck pitted on lap 66

just before Gianmaria brought the AutOrlando Porsche for its second and final stop. Verdonck handed over to reigning GT1 World Champion Michael Bartels who regained the track over 15 seconds ahead of the Porsche and looked set to win his first race in a GT3 car. The nr20 Ferrari was still leading the race on the road but still had to make its final stop, but not before Bartels swept past Goueslard to take the lead on lap 72.

As the race entered the final stages only four cars were on the lead lap, the nr1 Vita4One Ferrari, the nr9 AutOrlando Porsche and the two Belgian Audi Club R8s. Paolo Roberti was struggling with the Porsche's gearbox, which didn't

have first gear, allowing Albuquerque in the nr32 Audi to close and pass on the inside of the first corner on lap 92.

Meanwhile disaster struck the nr70 Lotus Italia Evora of Greg Mansell. With a one lap advantage over their nearest rivals the Lotus Italia team looked set to repeat their Monza win but the gearbox had other ideas and failed on lap 89, forcing Mansell into retirement and handing the class win to the Lotus Academy Evora of Lorenz Frey.

As the final laps counted down the Vita4One team got set to celebrate and they did just that as Michael Bartels took the chequered flag to win Round 2 of the Blancpain Endurance Series in Navarra.



## AVON TYRES BRITISH GT CHAMPIONSHIP UNITED IN VICTORY

Snetterton, Round 3, May 15 By *Jake Yorath*

**U**nited Autosports took a fantastic maiden team win in the Avon Tyres British GT Championship at the newly revised Snetterton circuit in Norfolk. The team fought hard in an incident packed race to come home first and notch up Audi's first win in the series too.

Matt Bell and Mike Guasch driving the lead Audi, twice came back from drive through penalties to take the win in truly dramatic fashion. However, with five laps to go it was a different story. Victory looked certain for CRS Racing's father-son duo, Jim and Glynn Geddie, but in the dying minutes of the race the pair were required to stop by Race Control to fix front-end damage to

their car.

Earlier in the weekend, during qualifying, there were a number of surprises. Despite only taking delivery of a borrowed (from AF Corse) Ferrari 458 on Friday, Glynn Geddie was able to take pole position for CRS. "We took a bit of a gamble with the set-up and it worked," explained the Scot. "We made good improvements in the session, which is a positive for the team who have worked so hard today. We only got the car at eight o'clock last night, so to put it on pole is a good reward for them."

Bell was second in the Audi R8 LMS, with ever impressive Dane, Allan Simonsen third for Rosso Verde with their Ferrari 430 Scuderia. Series returnee, Stuart Hall raised eyebrows

with fourth on the grid, on-board the updated Vantage Racing Aston DBRS9. GT4 pole position went to the hard-charging Michael Mallock in the unpredictable, ABG prepared KTM; a strong performance given their lack of track time first time out at Oulton Park.

At the start, it was Hall, in the bright yellow Aston Martin, who got the jump and was leading by the time they exited the Montreal hairpin for the first time. Light drizzle just before the start meant that conditions were tricky and the former Aston Martin factory driver was making the most of it, streaking two seconds clear by the end of the first lap. Guasch was second, and Charlie Bateman third for Scuderia Vittoria, though this would be



Photos: Jake Yorath





a battle with many twists.

Hall gently created a healthy lead thanks partly to the second and third place cars battling with each other for position, that was until Bateman finally found a way past the widest Audi in Europe on the fourth tour. Positions remained the same between the top four for the majority of the first hour.

Elsewhere, on the ninth lap, disaster struck for reigning champions, Trackspeed. After a troublesome first outing at Oulton which saw the two Porsche's involved in a number of incidents with other competitors, this time they hit each other. Exiting onto what was the Rivett straight, David Ashburn in the number one car had a big moment as he put the power down, violently fishtailing left, then right and collecting the unfortunate Gregor Fiskén in the process. Ashburn crawled to the grass verge on the right, Fiskén was left stricken in the track; both cars were destroyed and would take no further part in the race.

"It happens," added a thankfully uninjured Ashburn. "I feel more guilty for knocking my partner out!"

"Those little birds went 'tweet, tweet, tweet' all around me," smiled Fiskén. "It's not knocked any sense into me, so I better come back."

After the safety car, Hall again looked to stretch his gap at the front. With the pit window approaching, the Brit who knew his chances of a win were slim understandably stayed out as late as possible. Behind him was Bateman,

looking ever more at ease in the 458 with every lap.

However, an opportunistic move from Guasch relegated the former Porsche Carrera Cup driver down to third. The pacey American driver headed into the pits at the first opportunity and was joined by a number of other cars from further down the pack too. The early pit strategy worked for the Anglo American team with Matt Bell emerging at the head of the field; this advantage was short lived though, as the team were handed a stop-go penalty because their stop was six seconds too short. That threw the positions somewhat, and a Ferrari 458 1-2-3 was looking likely. Leading the way were the Geddies, ahead of Matt Griffin (Mtech). Third was Michael Lyons (Scuderia Vittoria) and fourth the recovering Bell.

On lap 43, the battle for third came to a climax; Lyons and Bell went side by side, touched, and the contact broke the Ferrari's rear suspension: game over. The fight for the lead was now the focus of the fans who turned out to watch the thrilling race.

At the head of the field, Ferrari development driver, Griffin was closing on Geddies hand over fist. As they began their 46th tour, the pair were neck and neck. Ahead was Tom Black in the Vantage Racing Aston, and as the duelling leaders went to lap Black, the pressure of their arrival broke his concentration. Geddies sneaked past into turn one, and in doing so panicked Black into a spin; Griffin was left with nowhere to go and ploughed into the side of Aston.

The subsequent impact damaged the Ferrari's radiator and Griffin knew his race was run. Elsewhere, another Ferrari had damage. Leader, Geddie's bonnet had worked loose, but with almost 30 seconds in hand over Bell, it looked like the CRS duo had enough in the bag to take the win. But when the Audi driver was called in for a drive through (for a yellow flag infringement), it looked like the Geddies were going to romp home.

However, the front of the 458 was dangerously flapping and looked almost ready to collapse. With five laps to go, the stewards had no choice but to order the CRS team to get the car into the pits to make safe the damage.

Sure enough, the black and orange flag was shown at the race leader and the team had no choice but to pit.

With time of the essence, the car was barely in the pitbox before it was released again with some perfunctory racer tape added, the majority of which had all but fallen off by the time the car reached the end of the pitlane. As Geddie exited pitlane, he was faced with the galling sight of twice penalised Bell powering past into the first turn and on to victory.

"It's the most disappointed I've been with second," be-

moaned the defeated Scot. "To be fair, I'm more disappointed with whoever made the decision to call us into the pits. We got second when it clearly should have been a win, and it's disappointing not to get it when it was right there in front of us."

Winner Bell was taken aback. "Five minutes to go and 40 seconds behind, I was just looking after the car. I was keeping it tidy and then it was a surprise to me when I saw the Ferrari coming out of the pits and I was able to get him into the first corner!"

Sportcar supremo, Allan Simonsen brought the Rosso Verde 430 Scuderia home third, having taken over from co-driver Lester in eighth place. The brothers Jones were fourth in their glorious Mercedes SLS; Bell and Guasch's team-mates, Jay Palmer and John Bintcliffe fifth and Chad Racing sixth with their lurid green 430 Scuderia piloted by Iain Dockerill and Steven Kane.

GT3B was again taken by Aaron Scott and John Dhillon for Mtech, and GT Cup by the Chevron, driven by BTCC legend, Anthony Reid and impressive youngster, Jordan Witt.

GT4 went the way of KTM and, again, it was Marcus Clutton and Peter Belshaw taking the race honours. Despite the KTM receiving heavy restric-

tions post Oulton, the pair yet again beat the Lotus' this time on their front door step. Clutton and Belshaw didn't have it all their own way though. They had to fight back from a penalty (71 seconds!), awarded because Belshaw's stint was too long and surpassed the stated maximum time. Clutton took the penalty and regained the leader after passing Freddy Nordstrom's Lotus to win several laps from home.

"We need to recalibrate our stop watches as we were out too long and that was why we got the penalty," explained Belshaw, "although it made the race quite exciting!"

Nordstrom was second (sharing with Leyton Clarke) and the Ollie Jackson and Jack Drinkall Lotus third. Michael Mallock and Athanasios Ladas were fourth after a nasty and unnecessary incident with Nordstrom near the end. Mallock unlapped himself and was seemingly hit hard on the pit straight by the Lotus, which escaped the attention of the race director and left the KTM with severe suspension damage and a serious oil leak.

The results from Snetterton see Guasch and Bell at the top of the standings, 24 points ahead of the Jones brothers. Belshaw and Clutton head the GT4 class from Nordstrom and Clarke.



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# BRITCAR ENDURANCE SERIES

## TOTAL ECLIPSE AT DONINGTON

Donington, Round 3, April 24 By *Jurek Biegus*

The Eclipse Motorsport Ferrari run by Sean and Micheal McInerney with guest driver Phil Keen notched up it's second victory of the season at the Donington 4 hour race despite a first corner shunt from Calum Lockie's Mosler which left the Ferrari's rear diffuser flapping in the wind.

At the end of the first lap the field was led by pole sitter Javier Morcillo in the Azteca Mosler followed closely by Dick Kvetnansky in his self built Praga R4S, more usually seen in the Dutch Supercar Challenge. Aaron Scott's Viper was third and John Gaw, enjoying a guest drive in the MJC Ferrari in 4th. Fifth, sixth and seventh places were filled by Lockie, McInerney and Bob Berridge in the Strata 21 Mosler, Eclipse Ferrari and Aquilla CR1 respectively.

The Azteca Mosler held the lead for 70 minutes pulling out a gap of over 50 seconds before retiring with a gear-

box problem. The retirement of the Mosler gave the lead to Gaw in the MJC Ferrari a car that 24 hours earlier had retired from qualifying with a terminal engine problem. With only a handful of engines in the world with the same ecu and mapping characteristics it seemed unlikely MJC would be starting the race. However luck was on their side and it just so happened that Dutch Supercar team, Veka Racing, had an identical engine in the back of their truck and after an evening of negotiation it was leased to MJC allowing them to start the race.

Gaw finally pitted after 90 minutes and handed the car over to Witt Gamski however the lead was lost when Gaw was deemed to have entered the pits too quickly and the team was handed a 2 lap penalty. This gave the lead to the Eclipse Ferrari and things got worse for the MJC team when contact at Redgate with Neil

Huggins Backdraft Motorsport Lamborghini saw Gamski on to the grass. After a cautionary pitstop they rejoined the race in 8th place.

The closing stages saw Sean McInerney holding the lead in the Eclipse Ferrari followed by the Strata 21 Mosler of White and Lockie. Aaron Scott's Team GT3 Viper was in third having taken the place from the Race4Slovakia Praga which had an extended stop for oil and brake alignment. McInerney finally took the chequered flag having completed 191 laps and 51.988 seconds in front of Paul White's Mosler. Aaron Scott took overall third and a class 2 victory in the Viper followed by Sedlak in the Praga. Keith Robinson brought the MJC Ferrari home in 5th overall, the teams troubles compounded by missing the final fuel stop window resulting in Robinson having to cruise around the final laps to the finish line.







## ADAC GT MASTERS **AUDIS ON TOP AT SACHSENRING**

Sachsenring, Round 2, May 15 *By Sam Tickell*

The ADAC GT Masters supported the GT1 World Championship at the Sachsenring earlier this month in what turned out to be a crash fest weekend.

Throughout the weekend numerous wrecks occurred, most

notably with a Mercedes SLS rolling. With driver Robert Renauer not wanting to use the explosives of the gullwing doors, he was trapped for a small time. Abt Sportsline scored a 1-2 in race 1 with Luca Ludwig and Christopher Miels finish-

ing ahead of Christer Jons and Jens Klingmann. The Phoenix Audi of Christopher Haase and Andreas Simonson won race 2 teammates Rene Rast and Stefan Landmann. The Abt Audis finished third and fourth creating a 1-2-3-4 for Audi.





## SPEED EURO SERIES NORMA SERVICE RESUMED

Spa Francorchamps, Belgium, Rounds 3 and 4, May 6-7 By *Sam Tickell*

The SPEED Euroseries race weekend at Spa was dominated by a massive crash for Joey Foster. The Brit in his WFR03 got airborne after Eau Rouge and launched over the barrier. He suffered cracked vertebrae but has already started the recuperation process. The WFR team withdrew from the rest

of the weekend.

TFT Racing took both race victories and Norma chassis finished one and two in both races. This, however defies the tightness of the racing with TFT Racing (Franck Lamanna/Ander Vilariño) finished just 0.3 sec ahead of Philippe Haezebrouck and Damien Toulemonde. Pegasus

Racing (Julian Schell/David Caussanel) in their Ligier finished third 22 seconds down.

Jean Rihon and Nick Padmore were the victors in race 2 eight seconds ahead of Hezebrouck and Toulemonde. Dean Stirling and Matthew Draper in the IF Racing Ligier finished third.

## BELCAR MERCEDES ENJOY KUMPEN-Y PROFITS

Zolder, Belgium, Rounds 2, April 9-10 By *Sam Tickell*

Belcar featured at the Zolder track in support of the WTCC.

The two hour race turned into a two horse race with Mercedes SLS Wauters and Kumpen fending off the Por-

sche 997 GT3R of Goossens and Soluet to win by just over seven seconds. Audi R8 LMS then wrapped up the podium with Longin and Maassen fighting off another Audi in

the form on Verbist and Ide. The leading GTO runner was the Derdaele duo in a Porsche 997 Cup car.

We apologise for missing this series in the last issue.

# AUSTRALIAN GT NOT SO STEADY EDDY

Winton, Australia, Round 2, May 20-22 By *Sam Tickell*

Mark Eddy won his first race in his Audi in the opening race of the Australian GT Championship at Round 2 in Winton. The 2008 Champ changed to the Audi R8 LMS last year and was able to run away with race 1 from Klark Quinn and Tony Quinn.

Race two did not go Eddy's way as Daniel Gaunt/Dean Grant won the one hour race. The two-driver option event

was won with some great tactics and passing on track. Grant had started the race on old tyres from the mid pack. When Gaunt received new tyres and a favourable safety car, he fought to the lead and to victory.

"The racing in that last 15 minutes was sensational. To me it showed that format, which is what they use in Europe, with a privateer and a

pro, is what we should do at every round."

The Challenge class was taken by Lindsay Yelland for both races. The rookie driver raced a Ginetta G50HC, which was late to the circuit. A spin in qualifying did nothing to assist his cause either but he worked his way through the pack to score class victories and a top 10 outright in race 2.

## VDEV

# HOWLING SUCCESS FOR WOLF

Le Mans, France, Rounds 1 & 2 May 1st By *Sam Tickell*

The VdeV Championships raced at Le Mans' Bugatti circuit with Wolf finding their first success for the year. Olivier Porta and Damien Delafosse dominated the Prototype race to win by over 40 seconds from Gregory Fargier's Norma.

While the race at the front may not have been thrilling, the Open class - for older cars - produced great racing. The Portuguese De Mello-Breyner brothers and Adrien Havette/Vincent Capillaire both looked good for the win but mechanical issues and an accident meant that Scotsman Bryce Wilson and Massimo Vignali

won in the end.

The Funyo Challenge went the way of Championship leader Marc-Antoine Danelou, who won from Nicolas Cannard. The three short races were dominated by the duo who now have the pack chasing for the title.

The GT race was marred with safety car periods - something that IMSA Performance and their drivers Xavier Pompidou and Gabriel Abergel were able to use to their advantage. The Porsche drivers always had the field in check throughout the event and always pulled away at the restarts. 29 out of the 35

starters made the flag despite safety car interludes.

The Historic Challenge saw a large grid turn up to race on part of the historic circuit that so many of the cars made their names. Jean-Marc Luco led in his Ligier JS3 for two hours before a wheel came off his car and he spun into retirement. Consequently, the Allemang family's Ford Falcon n°62 took the lead until a puncture ended their run for victory. Kriknoff then looked set for the win but Philippe Hottinguer in Porsche n°51 thought otherwise and passed Kriknoff with two laps to go for the win.



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GT4

# LOTUS VICTORIOUS IN HOLLAND

Zandvoort, Holland, Round 1, April 25 By *Sam Tickell*

The GT4 European Cup got underway at the Dutch Zandvoort circuit.

It was a winning start for the Lotus Evora GT4 as Italian Stefano D'Aste took the victory, just a second ahead of Peter van der Kolk and Jeroen Bleekemolen in their Chevro-

let Corvette C6.

D'Aste led from the front and took care of his tyres on what was a very hot track and led to the pit stop cycle. After the stops were completed he remained in front with Bleekemolen fighting his way through the pack, fi-

nally taking second with just three laps to go. Bleekemolen sensed victory as D'Aste's Lotus started to overheat but the Italian was able to hold on.

Dennis Retera and Jan Joris Verheul, in a Aston Martin Vantage GT4 finished third.

GT OPEN

## VITTORIA TAKE ITALIAN VICTORY

Imola, Italy, Rounds 1 & 2, April 30th - May 1st By *Sam Tickell*

The International GT Open got underway at Imola on April 30-May 1. Vittoria Competizioni (Ferrari 430) took the first win of the season with Autorlando Sport (Porsche 911 R) taking the GTS win and fourth overall.

Due to a pre race shower, the race started under wet

conditions but the drivers were well behaved. Marco Frezza took the lead on lap 6 and co-driver José Manuel López would keep it throughout the race.

The second race was taken by Álvaro Barba and Andrea Ceccato, in the Autorlando Sport Porsche 911 RSR. The

pair, who only put their campaign together a couple of weeks before the season, led early and dominated the race. Lorenzo Bontempelli and Stefano Gattuso won GTS win their Ferrari 430. Kessel Racing won the class, despite losing three (!) cars in qualifying to accidents.

VLN

## FERRARI TAKE HISTORIC VLN WIN

Nurburgring, Germany, Rounds 1 & 2, April 30th - May 1st By *Dan Bathie*

The Hankook Farnbacher Team claimed a historic first victory for Ferrari, in the VLN series around the fearsome Nordschleife.

Jamie Melo and Marco Seefried crossed the line in their 458 just eight tenths ahead of the Manthey Porsche 997

RSR of Marc Lieb, Timo Bernhard and Arno Klasen after six hours of racing.

The race order however could have been very different. The Manthey team along with nineteen other cars which included the top ten at the time, had a lap taken

away for ignoring yellow flags, which left the Hankook Ferrari one of the only lead cars not to. Third place went to the BMW of Pedro Lamy, Jörg Müller and Augusto Farfus another which received the lap penalty.



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Larbre (here third) triumphed in Gt Tour

## GT TOUR LARBRE DO THE DOUBLE

Dijon, France, Rounds 3 and 4, May 6-7 By *Sam Tickell*

Patrick Bornhauser and Laurent Groppi dominated proceedings in the FFSA GT at Dijon. The Larbre duo won both races of the weekend. Bornhauser led from the start in race one bettering the wet conditions, handing the car to

Groppi who went onto to win.

Groppi started race two and like in race 1 the Larbre car lead after the driver change - something Bornhauser would not lose. The pair now lie fourth in the Championship race. David Halliday and

Stephane Ortelli closed in on Pasquali Lawrence and Anthony Beltoise after solid runs.

“The car was very good to drive, I and in the traffic with the Viper, it was a real race. In Race 2, he had to manage the tires,” said Groppi.