

Fanatec GT World - Sprint (Zandvoort) - Vice-champions Title!

15-10-2023

#News

Alongside the North Sea, in the seaside resort of Zandvoort (Netherlands), the curtain has fallen on the 2023 season of the Sprint Cup. The tension was palpable the whole weekend, between hope, satisfaction, and finally, disappointment. When they arrived at the final round, Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy (#88) were leading with 83 points (6.5 points ahead of their competitors) after having taken a victory at each of the four contested rounds. Finishing fourth in Saturday's race, the final clash on Sunday stopped short in the first lap. After a brilliant start by Timur Boguslavskiy, the Akkodis ASP Team driver was hit, headed off into a spin, and was hit again. Back at the pits, the damage was too much to head back out on track. It was a big disappointment for the team who had to make do with the Sprint vice champion titles for the drivers, but they can console themselves with the Endurance title, and especially the Overall title (Endurance and Sprint) which confirms the level of performance and consistency of the team and its drivers. The 2023 season is over, here's to 2024!

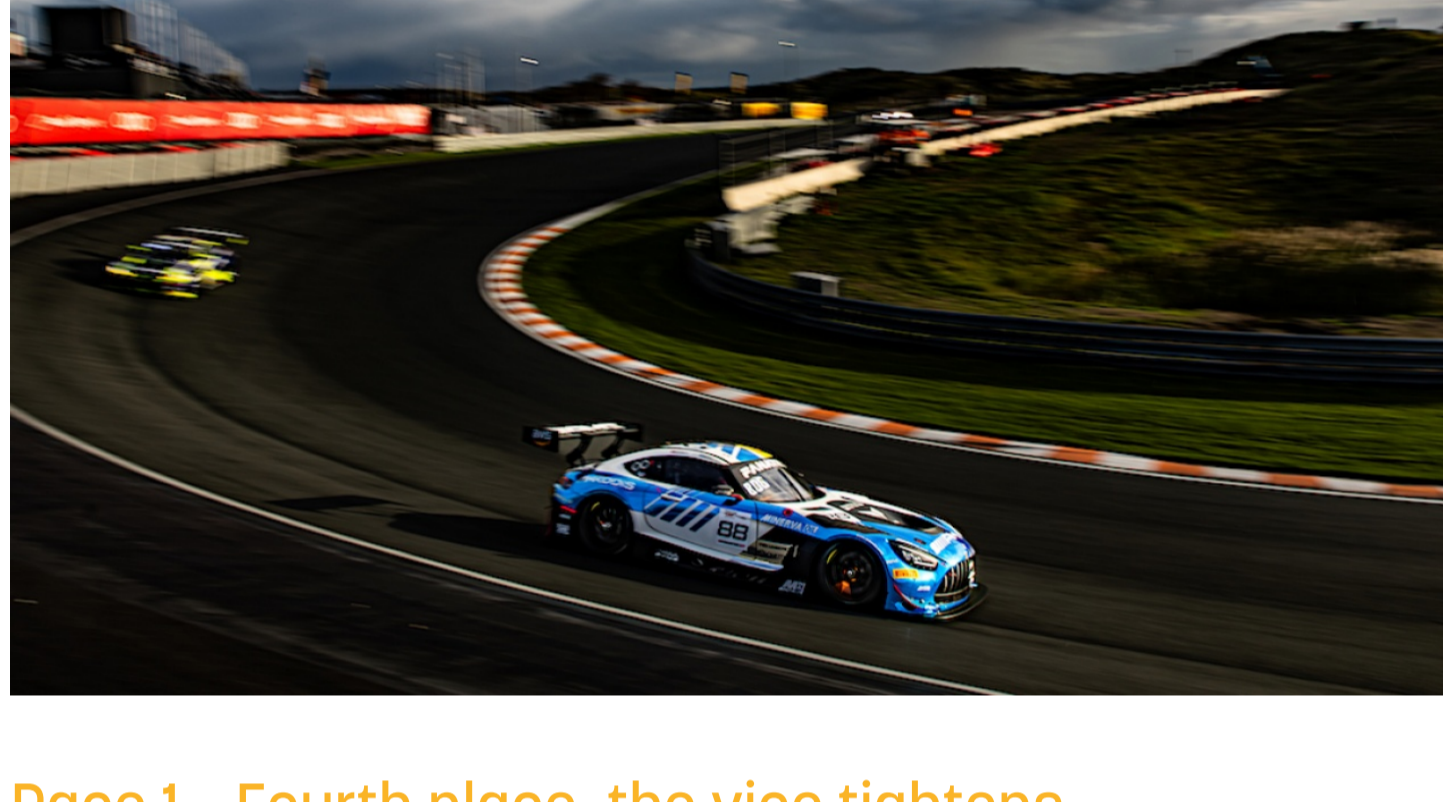


In Zandvoort, the weather is often a key factor. Between clouds, rain, and sunshine, the sky is never still. The competitors in the finale could attest to that.

Free practice session

As of the free practice sessions, the weather got in the way. The session was interrupted several times due to the weather conditions that resulted in cars going off track, the final one 90 seconds before the end. In this hard working session, Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy finished P11. During the pre-qualifying sessions, Raffaele Marciello made no bones about it and was the fastest driver for most of the 80 minutes of the session. Towards the end, he was beaten by the #60, but rebutted immediately with a lap time of 1:43.625, more than four tenths ahead of his rival. The first qualifying session could be summed up as a big fight between the #88 Akkodis ASP Team and the #40, second in the Sprint Cup overall classification. At the end of the session, Ricardo Feller (#40) took pole position while Lello classified third, 0.449s behind.

La première séance de qualification se résume à une grosse bagarre entre la #88 Akkodis ASP Team et la #40, deuxième au classement général de la Sprint Cup. En fin de séance, Ricardo Feller (#40) décroche la pole alors que Lello se qualifie troisième, à 0,449 s.



Race 1 - Fourth place, the vice tightens

The weather was mixed at Zandvoort for the before-last race. With some heavy rainfall shortly before the start, the conditions were delicate. Some parts of the 4.307km of the layout were still damp while others were dry.

Third on the grid, Raffaele Marciello took a breath-taking start and found himself P2. Under pressure of the #69, he resisted and focused immediately on the leader, his rival, in the #40. Closing in on the Audi, but on a part of the track that was still damp, the Mercedes-AMG GT3 lost traction and slid into the gravel bed. Lello managed to get out of it, but was back on track in P14. As the laps went by, he climbed up to P9, just before the pit window opened to change drivers. Lello stayed on track as long as possible to gain some time off the competition.

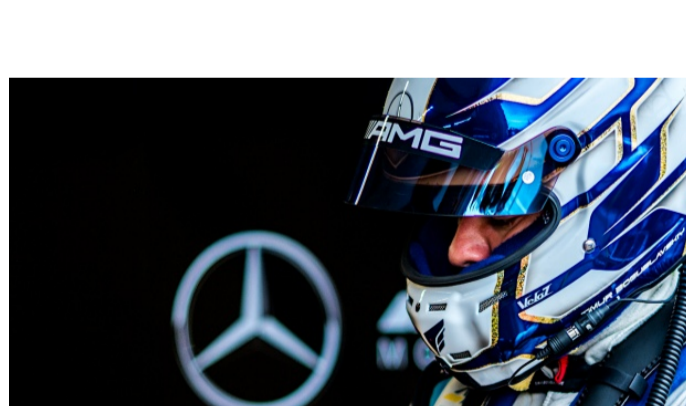


After the driver change, Timur Boguslavskiy was fourth. A wonderful return after Raffaele Marciello's great climb and an exceptional Akkodis ASP Team pitstop. Shortly after the pit window closed, there was a Full Course Yellow, and a safety car. At the restart, Timur Boguslavskiy was overtaken by the #44 Porsche and the #46 BMW. But a few laps later, the #88 was P4 once more.

The #40 crossed the line as winners and took the lead of the championship (by 2.5 points). Timur Boguslavskiy finished fourth at an excellent pace, a good omen for the next day, where with Raffaele Marciello, they would try to fight for the crown.

The second qualifying session on Sunday morning started on a damp track, but the conditions were favourable enough to get onto slicks by half-time.

At the end of a superb session at an incredible and determined pace, Timur Boguslavskiy (#88) beat his championship rival Mattia Drudi (#40). They finished in eighth and ninth on the grid respectively. With the #40 only having a 2.5 point lead, everything was possible.



Race 2 - A bad lap

The weather conditions of the last race of the season were once more mixed. Wind, cold (10°C), a few spots of sun, and a track, like the day before, damp and dry in places.

After two formation laps, the cars were released. Timur Boguslavskiy had a great start and kept the advantage on his rival. But a little further down, it all changed.

Timur found himself in a relatively compact pack with the #99 Audi, the sister car of the #40. The #99 was running quite offensively, and though it wasn't running the same category as the #88, touched Timur a few times in the first lap, in the 2nd and 3rd corners, and then launched into a kamikaze manoeuvre in turn 11 by braking very late. The #88 was hit and went spinning and found itself immobilised in the middle of the track, facing the wrong way, and then another car collided into it. Timur got going again and headed back to the pits as best he could. The Mercedes-AMG was too damaged to hope to leave again. The championship was over and the title evaporated with a bitter taste. It could have been a passionate duel to the end.

Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy, already crowned in Endurance and with the Overall title, as is the Akkodis ASP Team, are now 2023 Sprint Cup vice-champions. Akkodis ASP Team is on the third step of the podium.

This round was the 2023 Fanatec GT World finale. So, now we wait for the next season...

