



Fanatec GT World - Endurance (Paul Ricard) - From pole to victory with panache!

04-06-2023

#News

Often referred to as the general rehearsal of the 24 Hours of Spa, the 1000km of the Paul Ricard Circuit, the second round of the Fanatec GT World Endurance Cup, kept their promises in terms of suspense. Having started from pole and first past the chequered flag, Jules Gounon, Timur Boguslavskiy and Raffaele Marciello (#88) provided a high end spectacle in a race with many twists and turns. Despite excellent performances, as of the first laps, a rather large exit to avoid a contact forced the #87 Mercedes-AMG GT3 to head to the pits to change tyres. Determined to get back in the running, from last place, Lorenzo Ferrari, Maximilian Götz and Thomas Drouet never let up and crossed the finish thirteenth (P10 Pro). In Bronze Cup, in the #89, Adalberto, Bruno and Rodrigo Baptista have taken the measure of a long distance race. Holding in the Top 14 of the class, the Brazilian trio had to give up just over an hour from the end of the race (damaged splitter). In the general classification of the Endurance Cup, the crew of the #88 is now second, as is the Team. Next step, "The" race of the year, the 24 Hours of Spa (29th June - 2nd July), which was won by Akkodis ASP Team in 2022.



No fewer than 57 cars were entered for this endurance event, the longest in the Fanatec GT World after the 24 Hours of Spa. Popular with the championship's protagonists, these 1000km is a life-size test to prepare for the classic Belgian endurance race.

In the Akkodis ASP Team clan, three cars were on track. In Pro Cup, Raffaele Marciello, Jules Gounon and Timur Boguslavskiy were in the #88, while Maximilian Götz, Thomas Drouet and Lorenzo Ferrari shared the #87. In the Bronze Cup, there was a new crew in the #89. After having taken part in the FIA Motorsport Games in 2022, the father-son duo of Adalberto and Bruno Baptista was joined by their nephew/cousin, Rodrigo.



Conclusive test sessions and pole!

Free practice got off to a great start with Raffaele Marciello (#88) taking the second best time, and Maximilian Götz (#87) seventh, while the Baptista trio (#89) finished 28th.

In the pre-qualifying, these good first impressions were confirmed with Jules Gounon taking the best time with 1m53.783s. Lorenzo Ferrari finished the session P7, while the #89 was P16 in Bronze Cup.

The next morning, the tension was high for the qualifying session. With 57 cars on track, managing the traffic would be paramount in order to get a clear lap. It was the same principle as usual - the average of the three drivers would set the grid. Raffaele Marciello was the first out in the #88 and set the best time in Q1. Timur Boguslavskiy went next (P11) and Jules Gounon finished in style with an incredible time of 1:52.982 (the only one under the 1:53). He remains the recordholder of the best lap time set at this track in the Series, set in 2019, with 1m52.671s. Akkodis ASP Team took pole.

The three sessions were just as intense for Lorenzo Ferrari, Thomas Drouet and Maximilian Götz, who finished P7 (P6 PRO).

For Rodrigo, Adalberto and Bruno Baptista, they finished in the Top 10 of the Bronze Cup and would start on the 21st row of the grid.



RACE: from pole to an incredible victory!

A victory is built lap by lap, and that's what the crew of the #88 endeavoured to do over the 15 corners and 5'791m of the Paul Ricard Circuit, from the green light until the chequered flag.

Having started from pole, Jules Gounon (#88) perfectly managed his start, but the safety-car was already on track before the end of the first lap. Lorenzo Ferrari (#87), having started P7, headed back to the pits after leaving the track (to avoid a contact) in order to change the tyres that had been heavily degraded on the rumble strips used as gravel traps. He restarted last. Adalberto Baptista (#89) was P38.

After 10' under safety-car, Jules Gounon strove to put space between him and his pursuers, while Lorenzo Ferrari attempted to climb back up the field.

The starting drivers went into double-stints. Jules Gounon left the pits in P2. Lorenzo Ferrari (#87) set an incredible pace, having found himself, involuntarily, at a staggered strategy thanks to his early pitstop. Adalberto Baptista (#89), running in the last third of the field, was running in the Top 15 of the Bronze Cup.

As it got dark over the track, it was time for the driver change. Timur Boguslavskiy found himself quickly under pressure but resisted the assaults from very aggressive drivers. Fiercely combative and efficient in his short stint, he ran at a consistent pace and passed the #88 over to Raffaele Marciello in P4 (one of Timur's best stints in Endurance).

In the #87, Maximilian Götz took the wheel. Very determined, he continued the climb that was begun by his teammate and entered the Top 20 by the end of his first stint, but got a drive through for overtaking under yellows. The work had to be redone, but Maximilian did not let up and managed to regain a few places.

At the wheel of the #89, Bruno Baptista was in charge. The Brazilian clawed back a few places overall (P37) and in the Bronze Cup (P13), where no one was doing anyone any favours.



The last third of the race was decisive. In the #88, Raffaele Marciello started a real party. A string of daring overtakes, always at a very high pace, saw Lello move from P4 to P1 in less than a dozen laps. There was a little less than an hour left of racing. Right until the finish line, he did not let up on the pace, and finished with a 10s lead, beating the event's distance record. A great spectacle and a magnificent victory, the first in Endurance Cup for Timur Boguslavskiy and the fifth for Jules Gounon.

Thomas Drouet was racing the #87 for the final two hours. Just as his teammates, the Frenchman did not let up on the pace and continued attacking to climb up the field. A few good moves, tenacity and talent, and the #87 crossed the chequered flag P13 (P10 Pro Cup), after having been P55 and taken a penalty. Well done!

Unfortunately, the #89 of the Brazilian trio did not cross the finish line. After Rodrigo slid into the cockpit for the last two stints, after a little less than an hour, a problem with the splitter forced the driver to head to the pits, and did not leave them again.



After a difficult start of the season in Monza, Akkodis ASP Team are back on the right heading with this stunning victory. The crew of the #88 are now P2 in the overall classification of the Endurance Cup, as is the team.

The objective now is to defend the victory won in 2022 at the 24 Hours of Spa. For this 75th edition of the race, 72 teams will be on the starting grid. It will be THE endurance highlight of the season.

