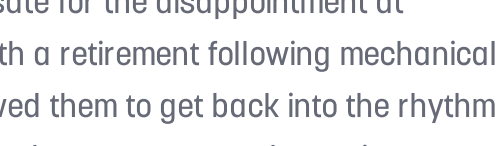
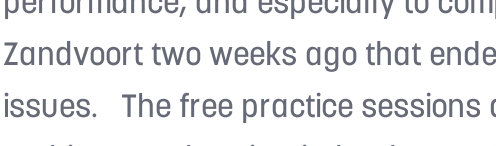


GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE (Sprint) - MISANO - Silver class win and overall podium!

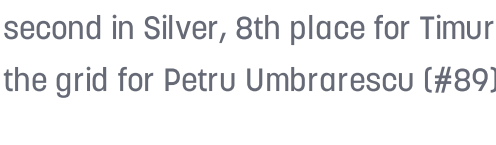
04-07-2021

#News

Ideally placed in the calendar, the round at Misano, situated on the Adriatic coast, already gives you that holiday feeling. But for the protagonists of the Sprint Cup, there won't be any time for lazing in the sun, because it's at exactly this kind of event that the title and the season can be decided. In the AKKA-ASP clan, this Italian excursion concluded with the second Silver victory this year for Jim Pla and Konstantin Tereschenko in the #87, and the second step of the overall podium for the duo of Raffaele Marciello - Timur Boguslavskiy (#88). The second Mercedes-AMG GT3 entered in Pro, the #89 of Jules Gounon and Petru Umbrurescu, also did not fall short, as they made it into the points in Race 2 (7th). In the overall classification of the Sprint championship, the Italo-Russian paring of Marciello and Boguslavskiy is sitting in provisional second place, and Team AKKA-ASP in third. While waiting for the next Sprint event, on the 28th and 29th of August at the Brands Hatch circuit, they're heading to Belgium for THE endurance race of the year, the 24 Hours of Spa, from the 29th of July to the 1st of August.



AKKA-ASP really knows the Emilie-Romagne layout well, Raffaele Marciello especially. The Italian driver, along with his Russian teammate, Timur Boguslavskiy, who won last year, were counting on repeating that performance, and especially to compensate for the disappointment at Zandvoort two weeks ago that ended with a retirement following mechanical issues. The free practice sessions allowed them to get back into the rhythm at this 4'226 km circuit that has no fewer than 16 corners, alternating between quick and slow passages and technical sections, including a famous triple straight. Team AKKA-ASP had a strong run, taking 7th, 8th and 9th positions, led by Jim Pla (#87), Raffaele Marciello (#88) and Jules Gounon (#89). When it came to the pre-qualifying session, no fewer than 30 GT3 took to the track. The #88 Mercedes-AMG of Lello Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy settled into the Top 5, the #87 of Jim Pla and Konstantin Tereschenko was 9th (2nd Silver), and Jules Gounon and Petru Umbrurescu finished in the top 15 in the #89.

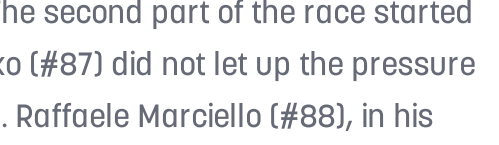
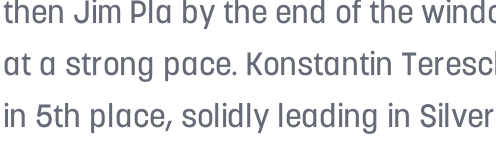


On Saturday morning, the first Qualifying session, which would determine the starting grid for Race 1, got off to a flying start. After 10 minutes, Jim Pla (#87) temporarily got pole, then the pace increased. Interrupted by a red flag with 18s to go, the session ended with a 6th place for Jim Pla (#87), second in Silver, 8th place for Timur Boguslavskiy (#88), and 12th row on the grid for Petru Umbrurescu (#89), P23.

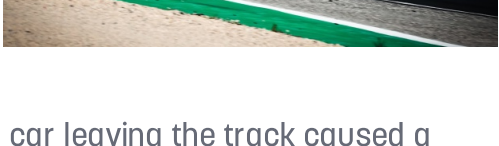
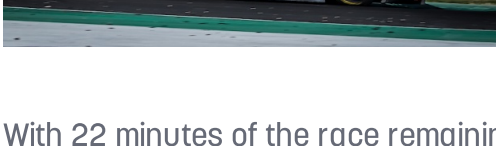


Race 1 - A clear victory in Silver Cup!

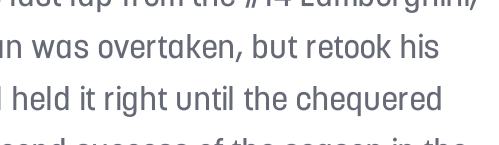
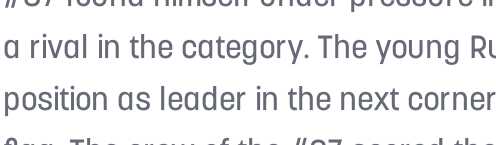
The sky was blue and the sun shining brightly above the Marco Simoncelli circuit for the first race of the weekend and it's almost as warm on the track as under the helmets... When the lights went green, they were already sprinting. The first turn was taken rather 'wide' for some, including Timur Boguslavskiy (#88), who managed to avoid contact, and held onto his starting position, P8. Jim Pla (#87), rearing to go, lost no time in going on the offensive and found himself in the Top 5 and leading the Silver category. In the pack, Petru Umbrurescu (#89) let the hotheads fight it out. Knowing that the race was not decided on just one lap, the Romanian stayed on his guard.



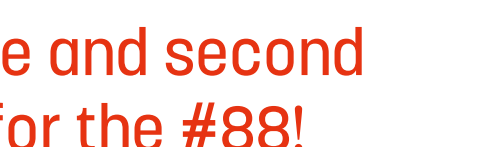
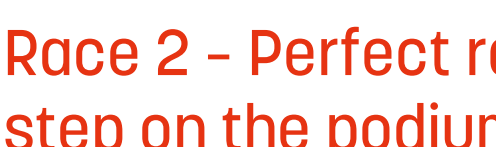
Only three minutes after the start, the first Full Course Yellow was called, followed by the safety car. Ten minutes later, the green flag freed the pack. As the gaps started to widen at the front, Jim Pla (#87) continued his attacks to take 4th place, while Timur Boguslavskiy (#88) also created some nice opportunities. When the driver change window opened, Petru Umbrurescu was the first to regain the pits, leaving Jules Gounon to slide into the #89 Mercedes-AMG. He was followed by Timur Boguslavskiy, and then Jim Pla by the end of the window. The second part of the race started at a strong pace. Konstantin Tereschenko (#87) did not let up the pressure in 5th place, solidly leading in Silver Cup. Raffaele Marciello (#88), in his element, climbed the ranks (P8), as did Jules Gounon (#89), who made a leap of eight places (P14).



With 22 minutes of the race remaining, a car leaving the track caused a second FCY, followed by a safety car. The gaps were reduced to nothing. The restart, with 15 minutes left, started the last phase of the race. Konstantin Tereschenko (#87) fell back one place, P6, and found himself just ahead of Lello Marciello (#88), who wasted no time in overtaking him, but not without some resistance on the part of his teammate. At the heart of a fighting peloton, Jules Gounon (#89) did not let up on his efforts. The Frenchman finally crossed the finish line in P13, and would inherit 12th place after a declassification. Right until the end, Raffaele Marciello (#88) fought to get into the Top 5, but was facing strong opposition from the #38 McLaren ahead of him, who didn't back down.



After the finish, the #38 received a penalty, and the #88 ended up being classified 5th. Konstantin Tereschenko (#87) had a bit of a scare in the last lap. Leading the Silver category since the start of the race, the driver of the #87 found himself under pressure in the last lap from the #14 Lamborghini, a rival in the category. The young Russian was overtaken, but retook his position as leader in the next corner and held it right until the chequered flag. The crew of the #87 scored their second success of the season in the category (after Race 2 in Magny-Cours).

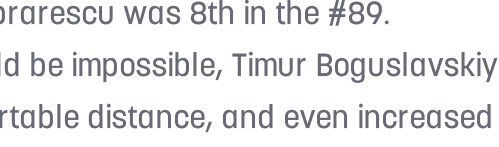
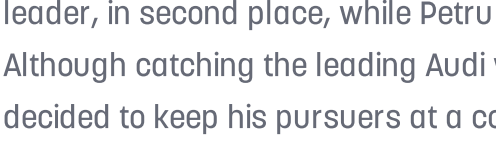


Race 2 - Perfect race and second step on the podium for the #88!

The second race of the weekend began under a relatively overcast sky. Among the 29 cars lined up on the grid, the three AKKA-ASP cars have a card up their sleeve. Leaving from the 3rd row (P5), Raffaele Marciello, winner at this track in 2018, 2019 and 2020, managed his start well and kept his position while exiting the first corner. By avoiding a collision, Jules Gounon (#89) took a rather wide path and fell from 8th to 11th place, while Konstantin Tereschenko (#87) found himself in the middle of a fight in the peloton, 8th place Silver (P20). The pace of the race stabilised and everyone defended their position dearly. But after 18 minutes, contact between the #99 and the #87 of Konstantin Tereschenko forced the Russian driver to head to the pits. The verdict was clear - the front suspension was damaged and retiring was inevitable. The incident went under investigation, and, to add salt to the wound, Konstantin received a drive-through penalty, being considered to be the cause of the collision. But the car was already retired, so the drive through was converted into two points for "bad conduct". As a refresher, if a driver gets three points of bad conduct, the penalty is a drop of 5 positions in the following race starting grid...



When the driver change window was open, the places were fixed - the #88 was in the top 5, and the #89, 11th. The strategy and rapidity of the mechanics for the pit stop would pay off for the AKKA-ASP clan. Timur Boguslavskiy, now at the wheel of the #88, found himself in the wake of the leader, in second place, while Petru Umbrurescu was 8th in the #89. Although catching the leading Audi would be impossible, Timur Boguslavskiy decided to keep his pursuers at a comfortable distance, and even increased his advantage right up to the chequered flag. At the end of an elegant and clear race, the second step of the podium was claimed by the crew of the #88. In the #89, Petru Umbrurescu did not give in to the assaults of his adversaries and crossed the line in the 7th place, after 38 laps of impeccable racing.



In the overall Sprint Championship classification for drivers, Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy are sitting in the provisional second place with 46,5 points, whereas Team AKKA-ASP is third. In the provisional overall classification of the GT World Challenge Europe (Sprint + Endurance), Raffaele Marciello is still in the running, in second place, just as Team AKKA-ASP. Next meeting will be the 28th and 29th of August at the Brands Hatch circuit in England. But before that, they're off to the Belgian Ardennes for the most legendary of GT Endurance races, the 24 Hours of Spa (29th of July to 1st of August).

