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Oggetto: FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2 - SILVERSTONE - RACE REPORT

For the second year in a row, Vitaphone Racing Team claimed the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy. After Bartels and Bertolini in 2006, the nr 1 Maserati MC 12 of Thomas Biagi and Mika Salo claimed the right to have their names inscribed alongside the illustrious drivers of the past century, with a fine performance at Silverstone today. AF Corse Motorola won its second race in a row, with victory going to Müller and Vilander in a Ferrari one-two-three. SRT's Corvette C5R won the inaugural round of the Citation Cup, with Cloet and Kuismanen, while Red Racing was victorious in G2. With 25,000 spectators over the weekend, and weather which remained overcast but dry, the event, which also included the first two races of the FIA GT3 European Championship, the GT4 European Cup and the GT90 Revival Series, provided an action-packed weekend.



BIAGI AND SALO WIN THE TOURIST TROPHY FOR VITAPHONE RACING



Qualifying third, the nr 1 Maserati MC 12 put in a consistent race. It ran in the top three in the first hour before moving into the lead in the second and pulling out a margin when the nr 5 Corvette had a spin. By the chequered flag, the car had built up an advantage of over thirty-seven seconds. This proved useful, as the car was awarded a thirty-second penalty for a yellow flag infringement, meaning that although the winning margin was reduced to 7.465 seconds, Biagi and Salo retained their win. This has propelled Biagi into the lead of

the GT1 Drivers Classification, with a one-point margin over the crews of the nr 4 and nr 5 Corvettes. As the second Vitaphone car crossed the line in sixth position, the reigning Champions have also moved into the lead of the Teams classification, although Maserati is still trailing Corvette in the GT1 Manufacturers Cup.

"I am very happy," Biagi said. "My first goal was to get a good result to wish Michael Bartels to get well soon, and I think we achieved that. Then Salo told me that this was his only race in GT1 this year, and he wanted to win, so I tried to make him happy! Thirdly, it's my birthday tomorrow, so I wanted to give myself a nice present." Salo, replacing Michael Bartels, who was recovering from an operation, was pleased to win the Tourist Trophy: "The team did a fantastic job with the car; my job was to keep on the track and to maintain a good pace - Thomas did all the work. I was looking at the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy - I'm old, but this is very old! It's nice to have our name amongst these big names; there's a load of famous people there."

TWO CORVETTES ON THE PODIUM FOR THE SECOND RACE IN A ROW

The nr 5 Corvette C6 of Mike Hezemans and Jean-Denis Deletraz started from pole and looked extremely strong today. Battling with the nr 1 Maserati and the nr 33 Jetalliance Aston Martin DBR9, the car lost time due to a spin on extremely old tyres, with Deletraz at the wheel. However, the Swiss driver recovered well, and handed over the car to his team-mate in a good third position before dashing off to Spain for the Le Mans Series race.



Hezemans pushed hard in the final stint but could not catch the Vitaphone car. He finished second, moving up into joint second position in the Championship, on the same points as his former team-mates Longin and Kumpfen in the nr 4 PK Carsport car. Kumpfen had taken a gamble on returning their Corvette C5R to its Zhuhai settings, but it paid off, and the duo recovered from a relatively poor seventh in qualifying to finish third. As for Deletraz, he made it two podiums in one day, as his car finished third in Spain. "We made a decision after the first practice to keep three new sets of tyres," Mike Hezemans explained. "So Jean-Denis only drove on very old tyres from Zhuhai, so maybe it was a bit too risky, maybe that is why he spun. But we finished second, we are second in the Championship on points, and there is a long way to go!"

BIG IMPROVEMENT FOR JETALLIANCE; BOTH PLAYTEAM CARS IN THE POINTS



The nr 33 Jetalliance Aston Martin was one of the stars of the race, with Karl Wendlinger taking the lead at the start. Despite tyre problems which made the handling difficult, and a trip through the gravel for Sharp while overtaking a GT2 car, the car finished fourth – a huge

improvement after their Zhuhai problems. Fifth place went to Scuderia Playteam Sarafree's nr 11 Maserati MC 12 of Bertolini and Piccini. The car had to serve a drive-through penalty for a yellow-flag offence in Zhuhai; without that, a podium finish could have been possible. After neither Playteam Maserati finished in China, both cars came home in the points today, with the nr 12 car in eighth position. Jamie Davies and Fabio Babini finished seventh in the Aston Martin Racing BMS DBR9, with the second car 12th.

After its fine win in Zhuhai, All-Inkl.com Racing finished just out of the points today, with Marc Basseng and Stefan Mücke ninth. Mücke, who also made the trip to Spain, finished on the podium there after his dash from Silverstone. Barwell Motorsport closed off the top ten after a hard-fought race-long four-car battle for eighth place.

MÜLLER AND VILANDER MAKE IT TWO IN A ROW FOR AF CORSE MOTOROLA

Opting for a strategy that favoured race performance over qualifying speed, Dirk Müller and his team-mate Toni Vilander, claimed a splendid victory in Silverstone today. AF Corse Motorola therefore made it two out of two for the 2007 season, repeating its 2006 Silverstone victory. The two drivers have therefore pulled out a good lead in the drivers classification, while the team leads its classification by 12 points. A double might have been possible today, but unfortunately the nr 51 car, shared this weekend by Gianmaria Bruni and 2006 GT2 Champion Jaime Melo, ended its race in the gravel after an incident with a slower car. "I am happy to score another podium on a race-track I had never been to before," Toni Vilander said. "With the new rules I can only manage ten to twenty laps before the race. So it's not so easy to put yourself in race conditions. We chose a strategy that would be more competitive in the race and it worked really well. I am happy to build up my GT experience; the FIA GT Championship is a completely new experience for me apart from two occasions last year. I don't mind the extra penalty weight – as long as it keeps coming, it's a good sign!"



BRILLIANT START FOR RACING TEAM EDIL CRIS



Racing Team Edil Cris had already made a good impression on its FIA GT debut in Adria last year, crossing the line third and inheriting second. Today, the team started the 2007 in excellent style, their two Ferrari 430 GT2 cars finishing in second and third places, to make a Ferrari one-two-three. FIA GT regular Paolo Ruberti was second with French driver Damien Passini, while rapid young Italians Michele Rugolo and Matteo Cressoni were third. "We hoped to get a good result, after finishing second in Adria last year," Ruberti commented. "

We tried to be first, but it was really difficult. The level is very high in GT2 – we are not a lot of cars, but all of them are of a good level. We tried to do our best."

Both the nr 97 BMS Scuderia Italia and the nr 99 Tech9 Motorsport Porsches ran strongly, and it looked as if a podium finish could be possible for both cars. However, a collision between the cars during overtaking in the closing stages dropped the nr 99 car back to sixth, while the nr 97 car recovered to finish fourth.

NIGEL MANSELL IN THE POINTS

1992 Formula One World Champion Nigel Mansell claimed a points finish on his first FIA GT Championship race, despite handling problems with both Scuderia Ecosse cars. The nr 62 car of Kirkaldy and Mullen finished fifth, with the nr 63 of Mansell and Niarchos seventh. "I've really enjoyed my experience with the team; they are a great bunch of lads and I'm just disappointed for them that their usual pace wasn't there," Mansell said afterwards. "We had the pace but the tyres went away so quickly today. This was the first time I have ever had to share my car and it was good to share with Chris (Niarchos) who is a great guy. I would have liked for us to be more competitive but the team know what needs to be done. I'm pleased I've sampled the series; there were some fabulous drivers out there today, and some bullies too! I've had a great workout and everyone is now asking me what happens next. Well, who knows?! I want to say thank you to Stewart (Roden) as I've had a fantastic weekend with him and his team."



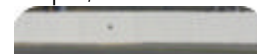
Scuderia Ecosse is second in the Teams Championship, two points ahead of Racing Team Edil Cris.

SRT WINS INAUGURAL CITATION CUP; RED RACING WINS G2



The Citation Cup for non-professional drivers, which was launched at Silverstone, saw victory go to the nr 18 SRT Corvette C5, driven by Tom Cloet and Perti Kuismanen. The drivers were delighted with their victory; "I am very happy. It's my first time in an FIA GT race, and I couldn't do better!", Cloet said. Second went to Ben Aucott and Joe Macari in the JMB Racing Maserati MC 12, with their team-mates Kutemann and Waaijenberg third. Citation Cup drivers Stepec and Carcon, in the Red Racing Chrysler Viper, were classified

sixth in the Cup, but also won the G2 category. "This was the first time that Thierry and



myself had come to Silverstone, and our first race in FIA GT, so this result is a great reward," Carcon commented. "Everything went well : I really like the circuit, and the people we met. To race alongside people like Nigel Mansell is really amazing. I really like the idea of the Citation Cup, as it gives you the opportunity to race alongside professional drivers, in a prestigious Championship."

NEXT RACE

The next round of the FIA GT Championship takes place in just two weeks time, in Bucharest. With an amazing street circuit, designed by Formula One circuit designer Hermann Tilke, around the Romanian parliamentary buildings, huge crowds are expected and an exciting weekend should be on the cards !

For more information, quotes, photos, race rundown, please visit www.fiagt.com