

## IMAGOLIVE

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**Oggetto:** FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP - ROUND 4 - OSCHERSLEBEN



Austrian team Jetalliance claimed its first one-two at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben today, when 32,000 spectators over the weekend saw the team close out the front row of the grid on Saturday, before confirming the performance of their two Aston Martin DBR9 cars by crossing the line in first and second in Sunday's two-hour race. Deletraz and Fässler, in the Phoenix Racing Corvette, finished third, ahead of the two Vitaphone Maserati MC 12s, allowing Bartels and Bertolini to pull out a two-point lead in the Drivers classification.

In GT2, AF Corse put in another dominant performance. Despite carrying the maximum penalty weight, Bruni and Vilander took their third win of the season, their Ferrari 430 GT2 crossing the line ahead of their teammates Biagi and Montanari. Third position went to CR Scuderia, with their Ferrari driven by Rob Bell and Andrew Kirkaldy.

The FIA GT Championship will be back in Oschersleben next year, when it will celebrate its tenth year of racing at the German circuit.

### DOUBLE WIN FOR JETALLIANCE

Karl Wendlinger and Ryan Sharp are no strangers to the top step of the FIA GT podium, the duo having claimed three victories last year, and a further win in the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy at Silverstone in May. However, this victory was very special for the Austrian team, as it was their first one-two, in both qualifying and then the race. Alex Müller took the lead at the start, when Bouchut got ahead of pole-setter Wendlinger. Müller proceeded to lead until his pit stop, when Sharp took the commands of the race, pulling out a healthy lead. The second round of pit stops had just started when the safety car was called out to allow for some debris to be collected. This closed up the field for a frantic dash for the last 12 laps. The top seven were then within ten seconds. Müller overtook the nr 6 Corvette for second, and the two cars continued to take a fine one-two. This was not only Wendlinger's 14<sup>th</sup> FIA GT win, but team owner Lukas Lichtner-Hoyer's first FIA GT podium – after just four years of competitive racing. "This first podium is a dream come true for me," Lichtner-Hoyer said. "We started this team three years ago, and I've only been in Motorsport for four years. Standing next to these three professional drivers is a dream. We've been getting close to victory in the last few races already, but we were lacking the luck. Today we had it. It's a dream."



### VITAPHONE KEEPS THE LEAD



The Oschersleben results have kept the GT1 classifications extremely close. Swiss duo Deletraz and Fässler put in a fine performance today to claim their second consecutive podium, followed by the Vitaphone Racing Team Maserati MC12 cars. Negroa and Ramos drove well to recover from their five-place grid penalty from Adria to finish fourth. Bertolini and Bartels lost out under the safety car, followed by a spin while trying to overtake Fässler for third, meaning that the nr 1 car finished fifth. However, the four points scored means that the 2006 Champions are now in

sole command of the GT1 Drivers classification, with a two point lead over Wendlinger/Sharp, Bouchut/Maassen and Hezemans/Gollin, all of whom have 22 points. In the Teams points, Vitaphone leads by four points ahead of Phoenix Racing and six ahead of Jetalliance – an extremely close battle between three teams each with two cars able to claim podiums and wins.

Adria winners Gollin and Hezemans were unlucky to finish sixth today after a late race spin; their speed was obvious, as witnessed by Hezemans' fastest race lap, set on lap 32. Monza winners Bouchut and Maassen, in the SRT Corvette, were seventh despite two drive-through penalties, while Larbre Competition took the final point for Franchi and Vosse, in the Saleen S7R.

### **AF CORSE DO THE DOUBLE – AGAIN !**

Bruni and Vilander are definitely the crew to beat in the GT2 category of the FIA GT Championship. From four races, the AF Corse duo have notched up three wins and a second place, giving them an 11 point win over their nearest rivals and team-mates, Biagi and Montanari. The nr 50 Ferrari 430 GT2 led from pole; only the pit stops allowed other cars to briefly take the lead. As the car was already carrying the maximum penalty weight of 50 kg, this win takes them up to the 'superweight' category of 75 kg. However, as the next round is Spa, where no penalty weight is carried, they will have a reprieve – but the weight could be quite painful on the Bucharest city track. "The car handled really well and we had an aggressive strategy for the race" Vilander commented. "It worked well to get us our third win of the year. Gimmi is also in top form and did a wonderful qualifying."



The crew of the nr 51 car, Biagi and Montanari, claimed their second successive second place, but have so far been unable to catch their team-mates. However, this result maintains Biagi's excellent record in Oschersleben, with five podium finishes out of five races, including three wins. As for third place, CR Scuderia were delighted to put some of their recent bad luck behind them and celebrate their first podium since Silverstone. "This is a brilliant result for the team," said Niarchos. "I think we got rid of a few cobwebs and demons today. Rob and Andrew got a well-deserved third place, Tim set the fastest GT2 lap and my middle stint was the best I have driven for a couple of years. I think this is a great platform to take us into Spa. We are going straight there now for the test on Tuesday and are all greatly looking forward to the 24 hour race in a few week's time."

The nr 61 Prospeed Competition Porsche was fourth, ahead of the nr 78 BMS Scuderia Italia Ferrari of Camathias and Rigon. Advanced Engineering Pecom Racing Team was sixth with Russo and Perez-Companc, while Kessel Racing claimed its best finish to date with 7<sup>th</sup>. Ruberti and Malucelli took the final point in the nr 77 BMS car.

In terms of the points, the crew of the nr 77 BMS car are the nearest rivals to the AF Corse crews, but they are still ten points adrift. Bell and Kirkaldy are fourth, one point ahead of Collard and Westbrook. The GT2 points remain provisional pending the Prospeed appeal against their exclusion from the Adria round.

In the Teams classification, AF Corse has a 25 point lead over BMS Scuderia Italia, with CR Scuderia third, one point ahead of Prospeed Competition.

### **NEXT STOP : SPA**

Preparations are already underway for the summer highlight of the Total 24 Hours of Spa, with a number of teams and drivers heading for the Belgian circuit on Tuesday July 8<sup>th</sup> for the traditional day of testing. With double points on offer during the epic 24-hour race, which will take place on August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, a good performance in Spa is a key element in any team's Championship plans. A number of teams are still to announce their line-up for Spa – watch the website for the latest news !

For driver quotes, race facts and photos, please see [www.fiaqt.com](http://www.fiaqt.com)

