

## IMAGOLIVE

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**Oggetto:** FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP - ROUND 4 MONZA - RACE RESULT

After chilly Silverstone and wet Bucharest, the sun shone on Monza for the fourth round of the FIA GT Championship. A close and exciting race, with the top four cars separated by twelve seconds with twelve minutes remaining, saw Jetalliance's Aston Martin DBR9 take its first win of the season. Wendlinger and Sharp won ahead of the Vitaphone Maserati of Montanari and Ramos, with the Carsport Corvette C6 of Deletraz and Hezemans third. AF Corse Motorola continues to dominate GT2 with a fine one-two for its Ferrari 430 GT2 cars, although this time victory went to the team's second car of Ortelli and Bruni.



### FIRST WIN FOR JETALLIANCE



Karl Wendlinger and Ryan Sharp completed an excellent weekend, which included fastest time in first free practice and pole, by giving Austrian team Jetalliance its first FIA GT win, after a fine race at the Autodromo Nazionale di Monza. This was not only the fourth different winner of the season, and the third different winning make, but the first win of 2007 for the Aston Martin DBR9. The car dominated the race, only dropping back briefly after a slight mistake from Sharp, who spun while challenging for the lead after the first pit stop. "It was

perfect; the car was handling very well until the end of the race," Karl said. "Our boss is very happy, and us too. Jetalliance is a very well organised racing team; we have a very good atmosphere in the team and this probably the main reason for our success."

Jetalliance finished ahead of the Vitaphone Racing Team Maserati MC 12 of Christian Montanari and Miguel Ramos, who claimed their second podium in a row. They recovered from a long pit stop when they had difficulty restarting the engine. "We pushed hard because I really wanted to take the podium. It's really important for me, for Miguel, for the team, for Michelin. I'm very happy because this is a very nice present for my birthday," Montanari said. Third went to the Carsport Holland Corvette C6R of Deletraz and Hezemans, meaning three different makes on the podium. The Corvette made a tremendous start, putting Hezemans in the lead after the first corner, but they were later unable to keep up with the Aston and Maserati cars. "I think that we're in a really good position for the future," Deletraz commented. "We're really close to the top, which is an important place to be in before Spa. Everyone knows that Spa is the most important race of the season."

Thomas Biagi and Michael Bartels finished fourth in the nr 1 Vitaphone Maserati MC 12. In the closing stages of the race, Biagi was closing on Wendlinger and challenging for the lead, but went wide two laps before the end, losing two places. However, his points allowed him to retake the lead in the classification.

Fifth went to the PK Carsport Corvette C5 of Kumpen and Longin. The team had previously said that this would be their most difficult track, due to their lack of top speed. This position, maintaining them in second place in the Championship, met their expectations and kept them in contention. Aston Martin Racing BMS finished sixth with Babini and Davies in the nr 23 DBR9; the second car of Monfardini and Toccacelo was 12<sup>th</sup>, and has a suspended grid penalty of five places due to cutting a chicane.

Jetalliance's happiness was completed by the first points finish for the nr 36 car of Lechner and Lichtner-Hoyer. "We achieved precisely what we intended to do," Lechner said. "Luki and I both performed strongly today. Now I'm very proud of having been able to contribute two points for the team championship, and they shouldn't be the last ones."

The last point went to Bucharest winners Scuderia Playteam Sarafree, with the nr 11 car of Bertolini and Piccini. The drivers lost ten grid places after an engine change, and recovered to finish eighth.

The Lamborghini Murciélago cars had a difficult weekend, both starting from the back of the grid. They made rapid progress, but the nr 7 car had difficulties and was one of the only two retirements. The nr 8 had clutch issues and lost time after an excursion in the gravel, finishing tenth.

### BIAGI REGAINS NARROW GT1 CHAMPIONSHIP LEAD

Fourth place today for Biagi and Bartels not only strengthened Vitaphone's Teams lead, but gave Biagi back the lead in the Drivers Classification. However, points are extremely close, with the top 11 drivers separated by just three points ! Biagi, on 21 points, has a one -point lead over second-placed Kumpen/Longin and Wendlinger/Sharp. A further point behind are Vitaphone duo Montanari and Ramos. A further four drivers are on 18 points : Bouchut and Mücke, Deletraz and Hezemans.

In the Teams classification, Vitaphone have an 18 -point lead over new second-placed team, Jetalliance. PK Carsport are third, a further two points behind, with All-Inkl.Com and Team Carsport Holland joint fourth.

#### FOURTH CONSECUTIVE WIN FOR AF CORSE MOTOROLA

After three consecutive wins for Dirk Müller and Toni Vilander, AF Corse conserved its winning ways this weekend, but this time victory went to the nr 51 Ferrari 430 GT2 of Stéphane Ortelli and Gianmaria Bruni. Unlucky in both Silverstone and Bucharest, this might have been double GT champion Ortelli's 15th win in the FIA GT Championship, but it was Bruni's first victory with a roof over his head ! "It was really important that after Bucharest we didn't put a foot wrong," Ortelli said. "I just want to congratulate and dedicate this win to my team mate Gianmaria."



They were followed by their team-mates Müller and Vilander, despite carrying 78 kg penalty weight, who have conserved their Championship lead. "We were also a bit lucky during the race, we could get all the slip streams and got away with the weight penalty with being slower on the straights, this helped a lot. But with the Michelin tyres, we were like a rocket. The team gave Toni and me a very good car, everything went perfect, no problems at all. A 1-2 finish for AF Corse is perfect," Dirk Müller said.

Ortelli and Bruni are now lying second. Third place went to Racing Team Edil Cris, with the nr 52 Ferrari of Paolo Ruberti and Damien Pasini. "It's great to finish on the podium for the team's home race," Ruberti commented. "We did a good start, got the first position in the first stint, then we lost a little bit of grip with the car. I think our best possible position was this one."

Fourth place went to the nr 74 Ebimotors Porsche of Zani and Busnelli, with the second Racing Team Edil Cris car fifth. Edwards and Machitski finished sixth for Tech9 Motorsport after a strong start. Despite engine problems, Enge and Mullen finished seventh for Scuderia Ecosse, while newcomers Prospeed Competition scored points on their FIA GT debut in eighth.

In the points, AF Corse Motorola has an extremely healthy lead in the Teams classification, with more than twice as many points as second-placed Racing Team Edil Cris. Scuderia Ecosse are third. Müller and Vilander have a 20-point lead over their team-mates Bruni and Ortelli, with Scuderia Ecosse's Tim Mullen third.

#### CLOET STRENGTHENS CITATION CUP LEAD AFTER WIN WITH CASADEI

After three rounds of the Citation Cup, Belgian driver Tom Cloet has claimed three consecutive wins – with three different co-drivers. After Pertti Kuismanen in Silverstone and Gilles Vannelet in Bucharest, he was joined in the nr 18 SRT Corvette by Italian driver Mauro Casadei. Although the car had been trailing behind the Ferrari cars in qualifying and in the early stages of the race, SRT had some luck when the leading car made a mistake. "We might still have been able to make up the difference on the track, but this time luck was on our side," Cloet said. " We have clinched the third victory in a row, and have obviously strengthened our position in the championship. Aucott and Macari were second once again and are breathing down our neck. But that makes it all the more exciting..."



Second place in the Citation Cup went to Macari and Aucott in the nr 16 JMB Maserati MC 12, with newcomers PSI third with their Corvette C5, in the hands of Gilles Vannelet and Klaus Engelhorn. Fourth went to Kutemann and Waaijenberg, ahead of Red Racing's Chrysler Viper of Stepec and Carcone.

#### G2 GOES TO RED RACING

The sole G2 car this weekend, Red Racing's Chrysler Viper, finished in 25<sup>th</sup> position, allowing Thierry Stepec and Sebastien Carcone to win the G2 category. "It was very hot inside the car," Stepec said. "The good part of today was that we had beautiful weather. To drive with all these people, that we normally watch on TV, but now we have the right to drive with them, it's an honour, an honour to sit up here with all these good drivers. So far, being first in Monza, it's a dream come true. Things didn't go smoothly at all. It was terrible, we had a problem with the clutch, we didn't have 6<sup>th</sup> gear after

half of the race, so we tried to do the best we could, push the car to the end. That was our aim, and I think we did it very well. "

#### **CLOSING UP THE GT1 MANUFACTURERS CUP**

The GT1 Manufacturers Cup is extremely close and interesting this season. Corvette scored the most points in Zhuhai, Maserati dominated in both Silverstone and Bucharest, while Aston Martin took a narrow lead in Monza. This means that currently Maserati leads by nine points ahead of Corvette, with Aston Martin a further 12 points behind and Lamborghini a strong fourth. With up to four cars scoring points at each race, and a large GT1 grid, the competition can only grow closer.

Ferrari, however, has a very strong lead in the GT2 classification, with 101 points ahead of Porsche on 46.

The next round takes place in Oschersleben, Germany, in two weeks time. Before then, many of the cars will take part in a test day at Spa-Francorchamps, in preparation for the Total 24 Hours of Spa, round 6 of the 2007 Championship.

For more information, comments, quotes and race facts, please see [www.fiagt.com](http://www.fiagt.com)

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