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Oggetto: FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP - R7 ADRIA - RACE REPORT



Starting at sunset, headlights blazing, brakes glowing, the FIA GT Championship put on a fine race at the Adria International Raceway. The seventh round of the 2007 season proved to be close and exciting, with a lights-to-flag win for Jetalliance, closely followed by Scuderia Playteam and Aston Martin Racing BMS, while GT2 saw AF Corse's Ferrari 430 GT2 win despite starting from the back of the grid. After 2006's high attrition race, this year saw 23 out of the 26 cars reach the finish line.

SECOND WIN FOR JETALLIANCE

An evening race at the short and twisting Adria International Raceway provided an extremely close two hours of competition, culminating in victory for Austrian team Jetalliance, and their nr 33 Aston Martin DBR9 of Karl Wendlinger and Ryan Sharp. This was the second win of the season for the duo, who were also victorious in Monza. "I'm very happy with our result; I'd like to thank the team and Michelin for such a good car. We didn't have any problems at all during the race," Wendlinger commented. Apart from a couple of laps after their second pit stop, they led from start to finish, having claimed pole position. They took the chequered flag just 3.5 seconds ahead of the nr 11 Scuderia Playteam Sarafree Maserati MC 12 of Bertolini and Piccini after an exciting battle in the closing stages, with Babini and Davies finishing third in the Aston Martin Racing BMS DBR9, eight seconds behind the leaders. Bertolini dedicated his podium to "a great man of my city and the world, Luciano Pavarotti," while his team-mate Piccini commented. "We made a choice to have consistent tyres for the race and to sacrifice the time a bit in qualifying. This choice paid off, as we showed our car was very consistent and we did a great job to recover from eighth to second." As for the third-placed BMS Aston Martin, both drivers thanked the team for their hard work rebuilding the car which was totally destroyed at Spa. "It was very interesting to drive at night," added Davies. "It was a good spectacle for the spectators and the television. I enjoyed it – it was something new to have a sprint race going into the evening, and the floodlighting was good."



Fourth went to the Vitaphone Racing Team Maserati MC 12 of Christian Montanari and Miguel Ramos, with the nr 5 Carsport Holland Corvette C5-R finishing fifth, only two seconds behind the Maserati, the two cars fighting constantly throughout the last stint. This was Mike Hezemans' 100th FIA GT race, but Montanari, in his first GT season, was able to keep the Corvette behind him. The Reiter Lamborghini Murciélago of Kox and Menten was sixth after a consistent race. With all four Aston Martin cars in the top eight, it definitely proved to be a good circuit for the DBR9: the second BMS car, driven by Toccacelo and Monfardini, was seventh, while Lucas Lichtner-Hoyer and Robert Lechner were eighth. The nr 4 PK Carsport Holland Corvette C5, whose drivers Kumpen and Longin faced a marathon between Adria and the 24 Hours of Zolder, were running strongly for much of the race. However, struggling without power steering for the last hour, two spins towards the end of the two hours relegated the car to tenth, behind the All-Inkl Lamborghini, which had started from the pit lane after gear-box problems. Bouchut, in the nr 7, was also heading straight off to Zolder to compete in the 24 Hours. Unlike 2006, there were few retirements: the nr 12 Scuderia Playteam Sarafree Maserati stopped with gear-box problems, while the nr 101 also stopped at the side of the pit lane, with possible transmission failure.

ADRIA RESULT CLOSES UP THE GT1 POINTS – BIAGI STILL LEADS



Championship leader Thomas Biagi failed to score any points in Adria, after a first-lap incident damaged the suspension of the nr 1 Vitaphone Maserati, resulting in a long pit stop. The car was classified 21st, eight laps behind the leader. However, the Italian driver still retains the lead of the Championship. Second in Adria, Bertolini and Piccini also moved up to second in the classification, three points behind Biagi. Spa winners Deletraz and Hezemans, fifth in Adria despite 70 kg penalty weight, are third overall, and will lose 30 kg for

the next round in Brno. After their second win, Wendlinger and Sharp are now joint fourth, ten points behind Biagi and one point ahead of the second Vitaphone crew of Montanari and Sharp. The top nine drivers are all within 11 points of each other, promising a close fight for the remaining three races before the 2007 titles are attributed. In the Teams classification, Vitaphone Racing Team still has a commanding lead, 31 points ahead of Scuderia Playteam Sarafree, with

Carsport Holland in third.

ONE-TWO FOR AF CORSE MOTOROLA

AF Corse Motorola put in a fine race to claim another one-two in the GT2 class with their Ferrari 430 GT2 cars. Dirk Müller and Toni Vilander claimed their fourth win of the season, despite starting from the back of the grid after losing their qualifying times. "We are all very happy, Toni, myself, the team," Müller said. "After my pole position yesterday I was really thrilled, and really happy. But three hours later when we got the message that we were going to start from the back, that wasn't really the best news we could hope for. But anyway, we got back to the front in the end, but it was a really tough race. The whole team did a really fantastic job. We might have got another 10 points this weekend, but it is still quite close and we still have to fight, but I think that it's good for the championship and good for the spectators."



Their team-mates Bruni and Ortelli were second. "It was a very good race for the team," Bruni explained. "It was a fantastic race at night, and also a very fun race to be in. It went well, and a one-two for AF Corse Motorola was just what we were looking for."

Third place went to the BMS Scuderia Italia Porsche 997 GT3 RSR of Emmanuel Collard and Matteo Malucelli, the Spa winners retaining second place in the GT2 Drivers classification, between the two AF Corse Motorola pairs. "This race wasn't great for us, but we were finally third, which is a really good result for BMS, Porsche and Pirelli," Collard commented. "It is really good for the championship. We're still fighting, and I know it's going to be really tough. We'll just try to do our best."

Fourth place originally went to the Scuderia Ecosse Ferrari 430 GT2 of Mullen and Turner. However, the team was excluded due to irregularities with their second pit stop, which was made outside their designated pit area. This exclusion promoted the nr 74 Ebimotors Porsche of Pompidou and Zani, which also started at the back, to fourth, with Edwards and Matchitski fifth in the Tech9 Motorsport Porsche. Despite qualifying on the front row, the Edil Cris Racing Team cars had a difficult race and finished sixth and seventh in GT2, with Scuderia Ecosse taking the final point for Sugden and Bell in the nr 63 Ferrari 430 GT2.

STILL CLOSE IN GT2 DRIVERS CLASSIFICATION



With their fourth win of the season, AF Corse Motorola drivers Dirk Müller and Toni Vilander now have a six-point lead over their nearest rivals, BMS Scuderia Italia's Emmanuel Collard and Matteo Malucelli. With Bruni and Ortelli in joint third, AF Corse Motorola also has a commanding lead in the Teams classification, where they lead BMS Scuderia Italia by 50 points. As there are only a total of 54 points remaining to be allocated, the Italian team looks nearly certain to retain the title they won in 2006. However, the battle for the second place is

close, with only one and a half points separating BMS from third-placed Racing Team Edil Cris, with Scuderia Ecosse a further eight points behind.

CITATION CUP VICTORY TO JMB RACING

For the second race in a row, JMB Racing's nr 16 Maserati MC 12 was victorious in the Citation Cup race-within-a-race in the GT1 category. Alain Ferté and Ben Aucott were victorious in the Citation Cup, their nr 16 Maserati MC 12 finishing in 13th place overall. Aucott is now in the sole lead of the Citation Cup, followed by Cloet, who finished second in the SRT Corvette C5R with his team-mate Amaduzzi. "The race was really good," Aucott commented. "Everything worked really well. Thanks to my team-mate I have retained the lead in the Citation Cup, and I have also learned quite a lot from him. The team have been fantastic all weekend." Kutemann and Moser were third in the nr 15 JMB Maserati, after a long pit stop. The nr 21 Kessel Racing Ferrari 575 M Maranello was forced to retire with gear-box problems.



The next round takes place in two weeks time, in Brno, during a meeting including the fourth round of the FIA GT3 European Championship. The race will revert to its usual Sunday afternoon slot.

Race facts, quotes and photos can be found on www.fiagt.com