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## **Successful Mugello weekend keeps GT3 and GT Cup title hopes alive**

*Italian GT Sprint Championship, Round 3 – Mugello*

The penultimate round of the Italian GT Sprint Championship took place at Mugello this weekend. VSR entered three Lamborghini Huracan GT3s and two Lamborghini Super Trofeo cars. Unchanged driver line-ups for the three GT3 cars, all running in the Pro class, saw Llarena and Moulin behind the wheel of the number 19 car, Cazzaniga and Petrov in the 60 and Liberati and Michelotto sharing the 63. Llarena now races under the Italian flag in order to defend his Italian family heritage which has its roots in Como in Lombardia. The two Super Trofeo cars were driven by series regular Zanon in the 206 Am class car and Stadsbader and Randazzo in the 163 car entered in Pro-Am. Stadsbader rejoined the Championship after winning both races in the opening round at Misano.



#19 – Mateo Llarena / Baptiste Moulin (photo by Fotospeedy)

After two half-hour free practice sessions on Friday qualifying took place on Saturday morning. First out in the GT3 cars were Llarena, Petrov and Michelotto. In a close session Michelotto took the pole, beating Nurmi's Ferrari to the top spot by less than one tenth of a second. Llarena earned a place on the third row with Petrov just behind him. At the start Michelotto held the

lead and Klingmann slotted into second with the BMW. Llarena and Petrov got caught up behind Denes and ran just outside of the top five until a brief Safety Car period congealed the race. The pit window opened on lap eleven and was immediately delayed whilst a two-car crash was cleared up but not before the 60 car had ducked in to pit-lane for Cazzaniga to take over – an action for which the team was later penalised. On lap fifteen the track went green, Llarena passed Denes and then pitted for Moulin. Michelotto stayed out until the pit window was closing and after discounting a nine second success handicap Liberati entered the race just as the Safety Car was called back on track for a crash from D’Auria. The race restarted for the final time with just two laps left. Cazzaniga was out front and took the flag first but the car’s penalty knocked him out of the points. The win went to the BMW followed home by Liberati and Moulin in second and third.



#60 – Riccardo Cazzaniga / Artem Petrov (photo by Fotospeedy)

In qualifying for the first GT Cup race Zanon was third quickest in Am and lined up on row four with Randazzo one row back despite damage to his Huracan picked up at the start of the session. At the start Randazzo was hit and spun around and slipped to the back of the pack. By the time the race was paused for a Safety Car on lap eight he had recovered back to fourteenth. When the track went green a spin from Zanon at the final corner saw him fall down the order too. He worked hard through his second stint and recovered to finish fifth in class. Stadsbader took over the 163 car after discounting a fifteen second success penalty and after a mega-charge had hauled his Lambo up to second place overall by the time the chequered flag fell.



#63 – Edoardo Liberati / Mattia Michelotto (photo by Fotospeedy)

The grid for the second GT3 race saw Liberati quickest of the VSR drivers, taking a front row start alongside Agostini. Cazzaniga, who suffered a puncture on his flying lap, secured a place on row three with Moulin one row further back. Everyone held position at the start and with no overtakes or incidents the field became gradually more strung out as the race progressed. When the pit window opened Agostini had an eight second gap to Liberati in second who was hampered by a slow puncture. Moulin was the first of the VSR Lambos to pit, discounting a nine second success penalty before Llarena could take over for the run to the flag. Next to box was Liberati whose twelve second success penalty was augmented by the need to change the 63's deflating tyre. Cazzaniga pitted on lap seventeen and Petrov jumped into the 60 car just as the pit window closed. Michelotto, running in fourth, passed Nurmi for third just as the Safety Car came out when leader Toledo skated into the gravel. The field closed up and there were thirteen minutes of racing left when the race went green. A magnificent restart from Michelotto saw him hold off Nurmi and then pass White to take the lead of the race. He then pulled out a two second gap to the rest of the field which he maintained until the chequered flag fell, taking the 63 car's first victory of the season. Behind him the championship leader Klingmann had muscled his way past Petrov before slicing past the Ferraris to eventually finish second. Petrov and Llarena took the flag in sixth and seventh places.



#163 – Piero Randazzo / Gilles Stadsbader (photo by Fotospeedy)

The final race of the weekend belonged to the GT Cup cars and Stadsbader started from the second row and Zanon from row six. Segu forced his way past Stadsbader at the start and two laps later Marcielli pushed him down to fifth. The Belgian youngster was quick to recover, passing Marcielli around the outside on lap six. Five laps later he pulled off an audacious pass on Cecotto to retake third. Zanon had moved up to tenth overall and was harrying De Marchi for ninth when the pit window opened. Zanon stopped first and discounted eight seconds of handicap whilst Stadsbader stayed out until the end of the window before stopping, discounting his fifteen seconds, and handing the 163 to Randazzo. As the race entered the final twenty minutes Randazzo was running in fourth and Zanon in eleventh, third in Am. A Safety Car period closed the field up and racing resumed for just one lap. Despite some chaos caused by lapped cars Randazzo took the flag in fourth and Zanon in eighth, taking another podium finishing second in Am.



#206 – Ignazio Zanon (photo by Fotospeedy)

The Mugello results leave Liberati and Michelotto a handful of points behind Championship leaders Klingmann and Spengler with one round left to go. In the GT Cup Stadsbader sits one point behind Colavita in the Pro-Am standings and Zanon is placed third in Am with a mathematical chance of moving higher.

The Italian GT Sprint Championship concludes with a final double header round at Imola in October.

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