

PRESS RELEASE: 11th July 2021

Beretta and Schandorff take Championship lead after victory in Hungary

International GT Open, Round 3

Hungary hosted the third round of the 2021 International GT Open Championship this weekend and VSR fielded an unchanged driver line-up with Baptiste Moulin and Yuki Nemoto at the wheel of the number 19 Lamborghini and Michele Beretta and Frederik Schandorff in the 63 car. The Hungaroring was a new circuit for all but one of the VSR drivers and a wet opening free practice session on Friday morning followed by a damp but drying track for the second session made learning the circuit tricky.



#63 – Michele Beretta & Frederik Schandorff

Schandorff and Nemoto took the VSR Lamborghinis out for qualifying on Saturday morning and in a competitive session Schandorff beat Championship leader Soucek to a spot on the front row by just 0.065 seconds. Nemoto qualified fourth fastest to line-up directly behind his team-mate. At the start the Japanese driver got the jump on Soucek and the VSR cars quickly settled into second and third as up ahead Spinelli streaked away. After twenty minutes of racing the Mercedes driver had pulled out a twelve second gap over the four car battle for second headed by Schandorff and covered by just three seconds. On lap sixteen the pit window opened and Soucek pitted immediately to give the Championship leading Porsche

to Barker. A lap later Schandorff entered pit-lane and after discounting a ten second success handicap from the previous race Beretta took over the VSR Lamborghini. In clear air for the first time Nemoto pushed hard and when he pitted six laps later Moulin took over the car and exited just behind Beretta. Spinelli stopped at the same time and gave the leading car to Giraudi who was slow away after clashing with a GT Cup car in pit-lane. The VSR drivers were quick to take advantage of the incident and passed the Italian on his out-lap to move into first and second. With twenty minutes left Barker took third from Giraudi and set about chasing down the VSR cars running in formation ten seconds further up the road. Some uncooperative back markers hampered Beretta in the final stages of the race and allowed Barker to close the gap to less than three seconds but the race was in the bag for Beretta and he took the chequered flag just ahead of Moulin. VSR's third one-two finish of the season moved Beretta and Schandorff to the top of the Championship standings, four points ahead of Soucek and nine points ahead of their team-mates Moulin and Nemoto.



#19 –Baptiste Moulin & Yuki Nemoto

Sunday's race saw Beretta line up on row three directly behind Barker's Porsche whilst Moulin took a place on row six. The Belgian was quick to make up two places at the start but further progress was made difficult by the notoriously hard-to-overtake nature of the twisty Hungaroring track. Further up the road Beretta was in a similar fix, faster than the Ferrari in front of him but unable to find a way past. On lap eleven, as the skies darkened and the wind picked up, the leaders started lapping the GT Cup cars and three laps later the pit window opened. Moulin stopped to discount his car's ten second success handicap and Nemoto took over the 19 Lamborghini. A lap later Beretta pitted and, after remaining in pit lane for an extra twenty seconds due to Saturday's victory, Schandorff rejoined the race just ahead of a charging Spinelli. The pit window closed on lap twenty-one and almost immediately rain

began to fall at the back of the circuit. The Safety Car was called out when Jedlinski spun into the barrier and most of the field took the opportunity to pit for wet tyres. Of the leaders only Schandorff, Spinelli and Millroy stayed out on slicks, a risky call that in the end paid off. When racing resumed again there were just nine minutes left and the rain had abated enough to make slicks a viable choice. Schandorff and Spinelli dived for position as behind them the drivers on wets struggled for pace. Schandorff took the chequered flag in second place but a penalty for a pit-stop infringement dropped him down to third. Nemoto finished in tenth place meaning the VSR Lamborghini crews left Hungary first and third in the Championship. Beretta and Schandorff hold a slender six point lead over Soucek's Porsche with Moulin and Nemoto in third a further twelve points back.

The International GT Open Championship continues at Imola in a fortnight's time.

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