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VSR keeps Championship lead with points finishes at Vallelunga

Italian GT Endurance Championship - Round 3, Vallelunga

The penultimate round of Italian GT Endurance Championship was held at Vallelunga this weekend. VSR fielded three Lamborghini Huracans with an unchanged driver line-up. Qualifying took place on Saturday afternoon and after three fifteen minute sessions it was the 19 Lamborghini of Beretta-Liberati-Nemoto that was the fastest of the three cars. Their combined times were good enough for a place on the second row, behind the Ferrari of Barrichello-Fisichella and Antonelli's Mercedes. Basz-Hites-Michelotto secured a place on the third row for the 63 car whilst the team's Pro-Am pair of Cola-Moulin were third quickest in class and lined up on row four.



#19 – Beretta, Liberati, Nemoto (photo by Fotospeedy)

Sunday's two hour race was started by Nemoto, Hites and Moulin who maintained third, fifth and seventh as the lights went green. A Porsche GT Cup in the gravel bought the Safety Car out at the end of lap one for a brief spell and at the restart Moulin was quick to pass Comandini for second in class. The first pit window opened after half an hour and just ten seconds covered the top six cars. Hites was the first of the VSR drivers to stop, pitting from fifth and discounting during his stop half of his crew's thirty-five second success penalty. Basz took over the 63 Lambo and two laps later Nemoto, having just set the fastest lap of the race as he pursued Galbiati, bought in the 19 car for Beretta. They also had a thirty-five second success penalty and as a result both the Pro cars fell down the order. Moulin was the last VSR

driver to pit and with no penalty Cola joined the race just ahead of his team-mates. On lap twenty-nine he and Beretta swapped places and when the first pit window closed he and Cola were running in fourth and fifth with Basz in seventh.



#63 – Basz, Hites, Michelotto (photo by Fotospeedy)

Basz was quick to pass Llarena for sixth early in his stint, leaving the VSR cars racing in formation as the halfway point approached. As the race entered the second hour Beretta found a way past Scholze for third and Basz and Cola swapped positions. Next on Beretta's list was Cabezas and he overtook the Honda for second just before the last pit window opened. Cola was the first of the VSR cars to pit this time and Moulin took over for the final stint, moving into the lead of the Pro-Am class with a slender five second gap over Galbiati in second. Basz stopped next for Michelotto followed by Beretta who handed over to Liberati. Both cars once again lost places after discounting their success handicaps. Liberati exited the pits just ahead of the battle for fourth that was raging between Moulin and Galbiati whilst Michelotto was in seventh. When Galbiati came to grief on lap fifty-nine the Safety Car neutralised the race. Racing resumed with just fifteen minutes left on the clock but with backmarkers in amongst the leaders Liberati was already seven seconds behind the leading Ferrari by the first corner. It was a gap he couldn't reduce and late in the race he let himself be overtaken by Pijl. Liberati took the flag in fourth with Michelotto just behind him in fifth, a strategy call that allowed the two cars to head to the final round with just fifteen seconds success penalty. A late race drive through penalty for Moulin pushed the Pro-Am car down to third in class.



#66 – Cola, Moulin (photo by Fotospeedy)

The final round of the Italian GT Endurance Championship will be at Monza in three weeks time. The two VSR Pro cars lie first and second in the overall standings, separated by just one point whilst Cola-Moulin are joint leaders of the Pro-Am Championship.

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