Lamborghini Super Trofeo Europe: Michelotto and Stadsbader earn victory in Spa opener

VS Racing pairing move into the points lead to secure second victory of the 2023 season in Belgium

*Sant’Agata Bolognese/Spa-Francorchamps, 30 June 2023* – Mattia Michelotto and Gilles Stadsbader (VS Racing) overcame a late-race safety car restart to claim their second victory of the 2023 Lamborghini Super Trofeo Europe season in the opening encounter at Spa-Francorchamps.

Having led from pole position and either side of the mandatory pit window, the #6 Lamborghini Huracán Super Trofeo EVO2 led home the charging Leipert Motorsport entry of Brendon Leitch, who leapt ahead of the #12 Boutsen VDS machine of Thomas Laurent and Adam Eteki at the flag following the latter’s converted drivethrough penalty. Iron Lynx’s Ugo de Wilde and Rodrigo Testa de Sousa completed the podium in third, while Michelotto bagged himself the Hankook Fastest Lap Award to cap off a near-perfect race.

Michelotto held onto his lead as the field was released for the rolling start, despite a lunge from the Pro-Am polesitter Frederik Schandorff who didn’t pay off on the entry to La Source. The #81 Target Racing car then went side by side with Laurent on the approach to Eau Rouge; the former ran wide again before settling into third place at the end of the lap. Behind, the VS Racing Pro-Am challenger of Loris Spinelli made progress and passed Schandorff before dispatching Laurent for second. Meanwhile, Michelotto’s impressive pace during the opening stint ensured the #6 stretched its lead to over six seconds by the time he handed over to teammate Stadsbader at the mandatory pit-stop. Stadsbader, competing on home soil this weekend, then kept his nose ahead of the chasing pack as Laurent’s team-mate Eteki began to eat into the deficit. Spinelli swapped with Andrzej Lewandowski, but all three frontrunners were soon hit with time penalties for pit-stop infringements. Lewandowski and Eteki received drivethrough penalties, while Stadsbader had 1.2s added to his final race time. The safety car was then deployed in the closing stages due to an incident for the #14 Oregon Team Huracán of Enrico Bettera on the exit of the Fagnes/Piff Paff chicane, with around seven minutes of the race remaining. With the field bunched up for the final three laps, Stadsbader held his nerve despite a spirited attack on the run towards Eau Rouge from Eteki to maintain the lead. Leitch, who was the first of the leading Pro cars to make his pit-stop, was nicely poised in third place to slipstream Eteki down the Kemmel Straight and into Les Combes. The pair went side by side, but Eteki kept second. Leitch then had to defend heavily from Testa de Sousa and Amaury Bonduel (#28 BDR Competition) exiting Speaker’s Corner but did just enough to finish third on the road, which was upgraded to second. Race two polesitter Cedric Wauters (23 TotaalPlan Racing) finished fourth on his Super Trofeo debut, with the #33 Rebelleo Motorsport car of Abbie Eaton and Daan Arrow completing the top five.

In Pro-Am, the order was turned on its head in the final stages following Lewandowski and Spinelli’s drivethrough, leaving the Iron Lynx duo of Yelmer Buurman and Nigel Schoonderwoerd victorious in 10th overall. Early leaders Schandorff and Alex Au dropped positions after the pit-stops but stayed away from any penalties to claim second place. For Lewandowski and Spinelli, fourth place was the best they could hope for, ending up one place behind the Arkadia Racing #13 car of rallycross convert Edgar Maloigne and Stephan Guerin who took a deserved podium for Arkadia Racing. Further down the order, there was late drama for...
the #66 Micánek Motorsport entry of Bronislav Formánek and Karol Basz, who suffered contact from the #92 Scuderia Villorba Corse Huracán of Michael Blanchelain at Double Gauche on the final lap.

Leipert Motorsport’s Gabriel Rindone clinched his second victory of the season in an up-and-down Am race. The class was led early on by newcomers Melvin Moh and Han Songting (also of Leipert Motorsport), with the latter maintaining their advantage until the pit window opened. Rindone then assumed the lead after the stops and was never headed thereafter.

It was a similar tale of unpredictability in the Lamborghini Cup class, as Bonaldi Motorsport’s Paolo Biglieri and Petar Matić took the win ahead of BDR Competition’s Jose Alfredo Hernadez Ortega. Brutal Fish Racing’s Charlie Martin led the early stages of the race from quadruple champion Gerard van der Horst, but the #54 dropped back due to a drivethrough penalty, finishing seventh in class at the end. Van der Horst was promoted to third, with the father-and-son duo of Luciano and Donovan Privitelio recovered from a spin to take fourth.

Gilles Stadlbader (#6 VS Racing) said: "I am so happy to win at home, in Belgium and in front of all my friends, family and sponsors. It’s more than I could even dream of, it’s an amazing feeling. Mattia drove a great race from the start and then I had to manage things in my stint, which was difficult especially at the safety car restart where I made a slight mistake. I had quite a lot of nerves at the restart because we also had the penalty of one second as well, but thankfully we held on for the win."

Mattia Michelotto (1st Pro), VSR: "I started well, and in the early stages I tried to gain a bit of an advantage. During my stint I managed the situation quite well. Gilles later did a good job, and in the last two laps, after the safety car, he pushed really hard to make up for the time lost due to the penalty."

The second race will take place tomorrow morning at 10:35 and will be streamed live on the Lamborghini Squadra Corse YouTube channel and Facebook page.

Photos and videos: media.lamborghini.com

Information on Automobili Lamborghini: www.lamborghini.com
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