Lamborghini picks up first Le Mans Cup and ADAC GT Masters wins of the season

Kujala/Rindone hand Leipert Motorsport victory at Paul Ricard, as Mapelli/Hites triumph for GRT

Sant’Agata Bolognese, 16 July 2023 – Lamborghini recorded its first Michelin Le Mans Cup of the year – and first since 2020 – courtesy of Leipert Motorsport’s Gabriel Rindone and Patrick Kujala at Paul Ricard, while Grasser Racing Team opened its ADAC GT Masters account in race two at the Nürburgring.

The weekend in the south of France began in promising fashion as all three Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO2s showed strong pace in free practice. After topping FP2 on Friday, the #63 Iron Lynx Huracán of Hiroshi Hamaguchi and Vincent Abril took pole position by a mere 0.081s, with the #19 Leipert Motorsport car of Rindone and Kujala placing third on the grid. The second Leipert machine of Brendon Leitch and Gerhard Watzinger qualified ninth.

A multi-car incident at the start of the one hour 50-minute race meant that the polesitting #63 of Hamaguchi dropped to third behind the #19 Leipert car and the leading Aston Martin early on, but both Huracàns remained firmly in the fight thereafter.

The race was interrupted several times by full course yellow periods, which contributed to the stop-start nature, but which equally kept both the #19 and #63 in close contact with the leading #10 Aston. With Abril at the wheel, the #63 then had to serve a one-second stop-go penalty for being under the minimum pit-stop time, which dropped the Iron Lynx entry to fourth. That became third as an inspired Abril chased down and past the #86 Porsche to reclaim third at the finish, giving Iron Lynx its first podium with Lamborghini in the process.

Meanwhile, at the front of the field, there was drama as the #10 Aston Martin slowed to a standstill behind a late FCY period. The #19, with Kujala driving, was rewarded for keeping the pressure on the #10 throughout his stint with a slightly fortuitous lead of the race. The Finnish driver then built a lead of over three seconds in the final eight minutes to take Leipert Motorsport’s first-ever victory in the Michelin Le Mans Cup and Lamborghini’s first since FFF Racing Team’s double success at Le Mans in 2020. The #70 of Leitch/Watzinger ended up fifth at the flag.

Speaking after the race, Kujala said: “First of all, thanks to the team and to Lamborghini Squadra Corse, they have done an amazing job this weekend and I would say that luck was on our side. But at the same time, if we didn’t keep pushing, then the Aston Martin even if he had the problem would have still been in the lead. So, never give up, you never know what can happen and today was the perfect example.”

Mapelli and Hites take commanding ADAC GT Masters victory at the Nürburgring

Grasser Racing Team’s Marco Mapelli and Benjamin Hites produced a lights-to-flag drive in the second ADAC GT Masters race of the weekend.
Morning qualifying at the Nürburgring proved to be an historic session for Lamborghini, which secured its 50th pole position in the ADAC GT Masters. Mapelli topped a typically close GT Masters session and his time of 1m25.231s was just 0.01s quicker than the second-placed car.

The Lamborghini Factory Driver then held position at the start of the race, fending off the attack from the BMW of Ben Green. Mapelli then maintained his lead until the mandatory driver-change pit-stop before handing over to Hites, who continued to head the field in the #63 Huracán. The Chilean driver, fresh of the back of a Silver Cup triumph in the Spa 24 Hours with GRT, came home just over two seconds clear to take the victory.

The guest entry Paul Motorsport Lamborghini of Maximilian Paul and Simon Connor Primm finished seventh in the second race, after picking up a well-deserved third place finish in Saturday’s opening encounter.

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