

Press Information, 30/09/2018

R-Motorsport Goes Unrewarded After Strong Run in Blancpain Finale at Barcelona

- #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3 – Qualified P24 – Finished – P19 (92 Laps)
- #76 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3 – Qualified P3 – Finished – DNF (81 laps)

R-Motorsport's #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3 of Dominik Baumann, Marvin Kirchhöfer and Maxime Martin finished 19th in the Blancpain Endurance Cup season finale at Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya from 24th on the grid, after late drama cost both the team's cars strong finishing positions.

In Qualifying before the race, the #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3 initially set the best combined average of the two, with a 1:45.687, thanks to the efforts of Dominik Baumann, Marvin Kirchhöfer and Maxime Martin, good enough for 14th on the grid. The #76 meanwhile, ended up dropping to 41st overall with an average of 1:48.246. Both Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3s showed raw pace, good enough for top 10 places, but were unfortunate to have fast laps deleted due to yellow flags being shown during Marvin Kirchhöfer's and Jake Dennis' best tours of the circuit.

After the session though, there was a major shakeup in the grid order, with more times being deleted and reinstated. The #76 was promoted to third on the grid with an updated time of 1:44.560, and the #62 was demoted to 24th despite keeping its 1:45.687 combined average.

Nicki Thiim started the race in the #76, and took advantage of the second-row grid position, taking second place on the opening lap of the race. From there, the Dane had to focus his attention on the train of cars behind rather than the leader, with the track temperature so high, making his tyres degrade quickly.

Throughout the first hour, Thiim defended second place, eventually falling down to third briefly, before snatching the place back just before pitting as the hour ended. Further down the order meanwhile, the #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3 had risen from 24th to 19th by the first round of pit stops, thanks to some opportunistic moves by Baumann in traffic.

Jake Dennis then climbed aboard the #76 for the second stint, and Kirchhöfer took over the reins of the #62. While Dennis re-joined the race second overall, Kirchhöfer on the other hand, had fallen to 20th when the field was back in sync.

Throughout the second hour, Dennis held second, and in a similar fashion to Thiim, put on a masterclass in defensive driving to ensure that Matthieu Vaxiviere had a chance to seal a podium in the final hour.



A Full-Course Yellow and a Safety Car period during Hour 2 meanwhile, aided Kirchhöfer's drive through the pack in the #62, the German rising as high as 10th before Maxime Martin's turn behind the wheel for the final dash to the flag.

With the end of the race in sight, Vaxiviere emerged from the pits in the #76 fourth with an hour to go, while Martin found himself 15th in the sister car, due to another Full-Course Yellow (which turned into a Safety Car) coming at the wrong time for the team.

Much of the team's hard work would be undone soon after, as further bad luck struck both cars. Vaxiviere – battling for a podium with 40 minutes remaining – was pushed off the track by a rival car, dropping the Frenchman and the #76 crew to eighth. The car was then retired by the team a handful of laps later due to damage sustained in the collision.

The #62 also suffered misfortune; the car was handed a drive-through penalty after Martin had fought his way up to ninth by the final minutes of the race. This dropped the #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3 to 19th at the finish.

The result came as a disappointment, but it did little to dampen the team's spirits after such a successful debut season in Blancpain Endurance Cup competition. During 2018, the team scored three consecutive pole positions, including Pole for the Total 24 Hours of Spa, and earned a memorable win at Silverstone.

Dr. Florian Kamelger, R-Motorsport Team Principal: “Both cars had a very strong race until the respective incidents. What happened to the #76 car everyone could see. And the #62 car had a really strong run from P24 into the top 10, until it was handed a penalty. This season the team has had a very good run in Blancpain Endurance, we created noise around R-Motorsport, with a strong and reliable line-up, and we've had a really professional working team. The overall view on the season is very positive from my side. We can't be unsatisfied with three pole-positions in a row, which is a record in the Blancpain Endurance Cup, and having won a race in our first season is exceptional for a new team. Our overall resume is very strong so early in our programme. We are looking forward to next season, where we will come back even stronger”

Maxime Martin, Driver #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3: “The car was ok, it was an ok stint. The pace wasn't too bad, which was good. But getting a penalty for a FCY is a shame. It doesn't change a lot because the season was good and I'm looking forward to next year already.”

Dominik Baumann, Driver #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3: “I did the start in our car, we started 24th and it was a clean stint, nothing really happened. I handed over the car 19th. We struggled with performance in the last sector with the slow corners, and then the top speed wasn't there either. It made it hard to overtake other cars. So I just brought it back to the pits as best I could.”



Marvin Kirchhöfer, Driver #62 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3: “Points were the target. My stint was hard, the temperatures were hot, which made it hard with the balance of the car, I really enjoyed my stint though, there was some really close racing.”

Matthieu Vaxiviere, Driver #76 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3: “My stint was really good, but we really could do nothing with the car except try and stay in front of the other cars. When the Audi pushed me off the circuit, a lot of debris got stuck in the brakes, so we retired the car, which is a real shame. We were on course for a podium, so it’s unfortunate we had to retire just before the end of the race.”

Jake Dennis, Driver #76 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3: “Nicki handed me the car in P2 which was good. It looked difficult in his stint to keep up the pace, and it was. But I managed to hold on to second in my stint. We did the job we could, I got the max out of it. It was just a bit difficult managing the heat. It was a clean stint without too much drama. Getting hit was a real shame as that affected our finishing position.”

Nicki Thiim, Driver #76 Aston Martin Vantage V12 GT3: “The start was good, I just went for it, it worked out fine getting past the Audi. I didn’t expect the tyre degradation to be so big, which meant we struggled for pace after a few laps. Other than that, it was quite good. It was all about holding on to the position up front, it was a shame we couldn’t end the season with a good result.”

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