



ASTON MARTIN

RACING LINE

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CLASS OF ITS OWN; THE RED-BULL BACKED RACEALLIANCE ASTON MARTIN DBR9 ON ITS WAY TO VICTORY AT MUGELLO

RACE STRATEGY KEY TO FIRST WIN FOR RACEALLIANCE

Karl Wendlinger and Philipp Peter won the seventh round of the FIA GT Championship at Mugello, Italy, on September 17 to record the Austrian RaceAlliance team's first international race win, and Aston Martin's first FIA GT Championship victory this season.

The race started in torrential rain but steadily dried over the three-hour, 500km race. A downpour just minutes before the start of the race left the track flooded as the lights turned green, and Wendlinger opted for a conservative approach to the opening stages, running fifth overall in his Aston Martin DBR9. He progressed to third as the Aston Martin Racing BMS DBR9 of Fabrizio Gollin and Miguel Ramos retired on the fifth lap, and the second Aston Martin Racing BMS car of Fabio Babini pitted early. The BMS team switched to intermediate tyres

after 40 minutes of racing, but the circuit was still too wet and Christian Pescatori was unable to keep pace with the leaders.

The Maserati team also opted for intermediate tyres when they pitted 20 minutes later and, as the track dried towards the end of the middle hour, they closed on Peter, who had opted for full wet tyres. Wendlinger took over the car for the final hour, and switched to dry-weather, slick tyres. He put in a series of fast laps to re-establish his lead, and was able to ease off as the rain hit again on the final lap to take the flag by 4.7 seconds.

The Phoenix Racing team looked on course to take fourth position before Piccini collided with the Saleen and eased off over the final four laps to finish sixth overall and remain in contention for the drivers' title.

IN BRIEF...



AMR WILL LEAVE DRIVER LINE-UP UNCHANGED

Aston Martin Racing will not add to its driver line up for the penultimate round of the American Le Mans Series, the 1,000-mile Petit Le Mans on September 30. GT1 teams normally recruit a third driver to each car, but the Aston Martin team has made improvements to the cooling systems and will therefore leave the driving line-up unchanged. Tomas Eng and Darren Turner will share the number 007 Aston Martin DBR9, while Pedro Lamy and Stephane Sarrazin will share number 009. "The DBR9 is now much more comfortable to drive with the improvements we have made to driver cooling so I am confident that this is the right approach for the team," says Team Principal George Howard-Chappell. "This is a no-compromise approach which will give us great continuity and each driver more track time." Eng is currently second in the drivers' championship, level on points with Corvette drivers Ron Fellows and Johnny O'Connell.

Aston Martin announced that British designer Amanda Wakeley will act as an ambassador for the manufacturer globally, and will design an "Amanda Wakeley for Aston Martin" clothing collection launching next year. The collection will be distributed via the Amanda Wakeley website and also through the Aston Martin Collection and dealer partners worldwide. "As a British fashion designer who sells around the world it is incredibly exciting to be working with Aston Martin, an iconic British brand with such global recognition," said Wakeley.



BRITISH FASHION DESIGNER AMANDA WAKELEY



THE FRANCO GROPPITONI SEILER BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA ASTON MARTIN DBR9 TAKLES TERRIBLE CONDITIONS AT MUGELLO

BMS SCUDERIA



ASTON MARTIN BMS DRIVERS GOLLIN, PESCATORI, BABINI

Christian Pescatori is a multiple champion in sports car racing and this year is driving for Aston Martin Racing BMS, which currently lies second in the FIA GT teams' Championship.

The team has recorded two podium positions and Pescatori has scored points in each race this season bar the fifth round at Paul Ricard. However, the team has decided to concentrate on development of the Pirelli tyre for the remaining races of the 2006 season in preparation for next year.

"We need time to develop a tyre to suit the car, and we need to do a lot of mileage in testing," said Pescatori at Mugello. "For the last few years, we have come to the circuits with a good base set-up but this season everything is new and that makes it very difficult. We are making big changes to the set-up of the car over the weekend.

"When the base is good, you need only to make small changes to the car for particular temperatures, or even for particular drivers. It is important for us now to concentrate on next year, because we want to come back to the championship and to win races."

DELETRAZ AND PICCINI STAY IN HUNT FOR DRIVERS' TITLE AS BMS FALLS FOUL OF RAIN

Jean-Denis Deletraz and Andrea Piccini have kept in touch with the leaders in the FIA GT drivers' Championship after finishing sixth in the seventh round of the series in Mugello, Italy, on September 17.

The pair battled with an injector problem which affected their Phoenix Racing Aston Martin DBR9 at top speed in fifth and sixth gears on the Italian track.

That put the DBR9 within striking distance of the Zakspeed Saleen in the closing stages of the race, and Czech driver Jarek Janis passed and conceded two vital positions before the chequered flag.

With the three points won at Mugello, Deletraz and Piccini now lie ten points off the Maserati drivers Andrea Bertolini and Michael Bartels, who finished second to the Austrian RaceAlliance team in Italy.

The two Aston Martin Racing BMS DBR9s raced nose-to-tail for the first four laps, Fabrizio Gollin and Fabio Babini trading places before Gollin was caught out by the track conditions and slid off the road.

Babini was struggling with his wet tyres, and pitted after 41 minutes to hand to Pescatori. The track was still too wet for the intermediate tyres, and Pescatori continued to slide down the order. Babini took over the car for the final stint and set fastest laps of the race to claim fifth overall at the chequered flag.



ASTON MARTIN BMS TAKES THE START AT MUGELLO



ANDREA PICCINI STRAPS IN JEAN-DENIS DELETRAZ AT MUGELLO

ZANI AND MUGELLI TAKE ASTON MARTIN GT3 CUP AT MUGELLO



MUGELLI AND ZANI OVERCAME THE TREACHEROUS CONDITIONS TO WIN THE ASTON MARTIN GT3 CUP IN THEIR DBRS9

A dramatic final two races rounded off the inaugural FIA GT3 Championship at Mugello, Italy, on September 16/17. Massimiliano Mugelli and Marcello Zani took a double victory in their BMS Scuderia Italia Aston Martin DBRS9 to win the Aston Martin Drivers' Cup ahead of Barwell Motorsport drivers Leo Machitski and Jonathan Cocker. The BMS Scuderia Italia pair went into the final two races 11 points adrift of their Barwell rivals, but held their nerve to score two wins to secure the title.

In treacherous conditions, the opening round of the weekend on Saturday evening caught out many competitors. Machitski started the race from third position overall, and held on for as long as possible, eventually handing to Cocker after 11 laps while running sixth overall ahead of Zani and Mugelli. Cocker was caught out by the weather early on during his stint and spun into the gravel. Despite following the direction of the marshals when re-joining the track, the car was judged to have cut out part of the lap, and was therefore excluded.

In the second race, Barwell's Michael Bentwood put in a strong opening stint to close on the fifth placed Zani/Mugelli car, but the car retired six laps from the end with Tom Alexander at the wheel. All eyes were on Cocker who had shadowed Bentwood, but a collision with a Porsche damaged a wheel, and the British driver finished third in the class.

FRANCO GROPPI



BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA DRIVER FRANCO GROPPI

WHAT DOES ASTON MARTIN MEAN TO YOU?

It is a great brand, a fast car and it is beautiful, but I am an Italian, so it is not so important to me!

WHAT WAS YOUR BEST EVER RACE?

The last round of the Le Mans Series in Istanbul in 2005. It was wet, and I was driving really well in first position with a two-lap gap to second place. It didn't end well, though, because we had a car problem.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE CIRCUIT?

Spa. It is a circuit which has very high speed corners and I love the fastest sections of the track, through Eau Rouge, Raidillon and of course Blanchimont.

HOW DO YOU RELAX AWAY FROM RACING?

My first occupation is as a photographer and I work for some newspapers and magazines both in the studio and reportage.

WHERE IS YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE IN THE WORLD?

Everywhere that I go to with the right person, the one that I love.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST AMBITION?

I am 42 years old, I have had a career in engineering in a factory, I am a photographer and I drive racing cars. My ambition is to have the best life that I can!



COCKER AND MACHITSKI NARROWLY MISSED THE INAUGURAL TITLE

BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA AND BARWELL TAKE GT3 TITLE FIGHT TO FINAL ROUND

The FIA GT3 Championship has been judged a resounding success following the final round at Mugello, Italy, at the weekend. Aston Martin, Porsche, Ferrari, Maserati, Ascari, Dodge and Corvette battled for honours throughout the five-round, 10 race season.

No fewer than 17 drivers have driven the Aston Martin DBRS9s from BMS Scuderia Italia and Barwell Motorsport in the FIA GT3 Championship this year.

BMS Scuderia Italia finished the season fourth in the overall teams' standings, pending an appeal by a rival team following the eighth and ninth races in Dijon, on September 3.

Franco Groppi and Toni Seiler were the highest placed Aston Martin drivers in the overall standings in their BMS DBRS9. They were pipped to fourth place by British Porsche driver Phil Keen who scored two wins in Mugello. Barwell's Jonathan Cocker and Leo Machitski finished 14th in the standings to round off a fantastic debut season from both teams.



FRANCO GROPPI AND TONI SEILER PLACED HIGHEST OVERALL



TIFF NEEDELL AND TOM ALEXANDER AT OSCHERSLEBEN



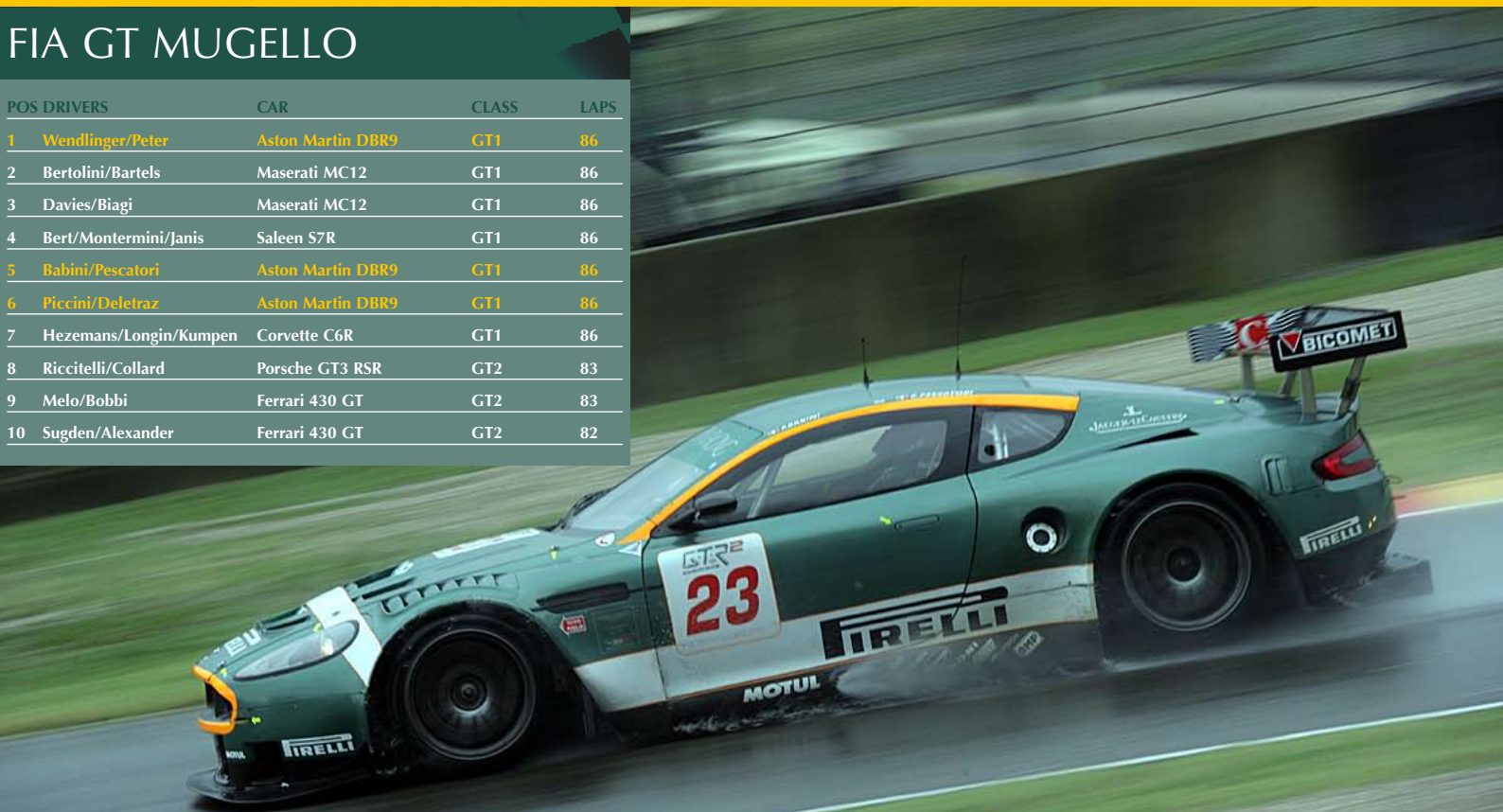
GROPPI, SEILER, STANCHERIS AND ALESSI RACED IN SPA 24 HOURS

RESULTS



FIA GT MUGELLO

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	CLASS	LAPS
1	Wendlinger/Peter	Aston Martin DBR9	GT1	86
2	Bertolini/Bartels	Maserati MC12	GT1	86
3	Davies/Biagi	Maserati MC12	GT1	86
4	Bert/Montermini/Janis	Saleen S7R	GT1	86
5	Babini/Pescatori	Aston Martin DBR9	GT1	86
6	Piccini/Deletraz	Aston Martin DBR9	GT1	86
7	Hezemans/Longin/Kumpen	Corvette C6R	GT1	86
8	Riccitelli/Collard	Porsche GT3 RSR	GT2	83
9	Melo/Bobbi	Ferrari 430 GT	GT2	83
10	Sugden/Alexander	Ferrari 430 GT	GT2	82



For further information, please contact:

Janette Green, Director Brand Communications, jgree159@astonmartin.com

Sarah Durose, Motorsport Business Manager, sdurose@astonmartin.com

Barbara Prince, Corporate Affairs Manager, bprince1@astonmartin.com

Matthew Clarke, Product Press Officer, mclark89@astonmartin.com

Kevin Watters, Corporate Press Officer, kwatter2@astonmartin.com



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www.astonmartin.com
www.astonmartinracing.com