Race Report: 1st November, 2026

2026 Italian GT Endurance Championship, Round 4 – Mugello

Chaotic Mugello finale leaves Liberati-Michelotto-Zanon Endurance Vice Champions

** Points finish for the sister car of Bowen-Cook-Salmenautio **

Fifty-one cars took part in the final of the Italian GT Endurance Championship, thirty-nine of which were GT3 machines. The VSR 66 Pro entry of Liberati, Michelotto and Zanon arrived at Mugello lying second in the Championship but with a thirteen-point deficit to runaway Championship leaders Albag and Ferrari and a slender seven-point advantage of Balzan and Medler in third.



#63 – Alex Bowen, Hugo Cook and Jesse Salmenautio (photo by Fotospeedy)

After incident free practice sessions on Friday and Saturday morning red flags marred four of the six qualifying sessions on Saturday afternoon. For Sunday's three hour race the two VSR Lambos lined up on the sixth and twelfth rows. After two days of beautiful autumnal weather, rain started to fall two hours before the start of the race. Zanon took the green flag in the 66 from row six and Bowen undertook the opening stint of the 63 car.



#66 – Edoardo Liberati, Mattia Michelotto and Ignazio Zanon (photo by Fotospeedy)

The race started behind the Safety Car as heavy rain continued to fall and went green after ten minutes. Zanon quickly moved past Villadsen to break into the top ten as Bowen picked off places lap by lap and to run fifteenth when the Safety Car came out again, this time to retrieve Fontana from the gravel at turn nine. Racing resumed just before the first driver change window which took place under a Full Course Yellow while Renmans car was collected after a heavy impact. As soon as the window opened Bowen pitted for Salmenautio having recuperated eleven places in his short first stint. Zanon pitted two laps later and Michelotto jumped into the 66. A Safety Car period followed the Full Course Yellow and then the race restarted with Michelotto ninth and Salmenautio tenth. Leaders Levi and Cressoni immediately skated into the gravel at the restart as Michelotto shot up to fourth on the first green lap. A lap later and he passed Luchetti for third as Salmenautio moved into seventh. Another Full Course Yellow, this time for Messina in the tyre barrier, halted their progress just before the second driver change window. Michelotto pitted straightaway for Liberati and then Cook took over from Salmenautio. The Safety Car once more followed the Full Course Yellow. At the restart Alatalo passed Liberati as the pair fought to lap Buttarelli. Liberati retook the position but the recalcitrant backmarker allowed Donno in the lead to pull out a five second gap. After just a handful of racing laps the Safety Car was once more out on track to collect several cars beached in the gravel. Racing resumed just before the third driver change window and Cook was the first to pit, bringing in the 63 for Salmenautio's second stint. Just before the one hundred minute point scoring mark disaster hit the Championship leaders when Ferrari was helped into the gravel by Luchetti. Just before the window closed Liberati pitted for Zanon who rejoined in second just behind Pollini in the lead.

As Zanon struggled with the wet conditions Balzan passed him for second before the 66 was forced to take a drive through penalty for speeding in the pit lane. Zanon rejoined in eighth, over a minute behind the leaders with eighty minutes left of the race. The fourth pit window was delayed as the Safety Car came on track for a Porsche stuck in the gravel. The track went green with one hour renaining and the penultimate driver change window opened as soon as the cars crossed the line. Zanon boxed immediately for Liberati but not before being pushed off track by Cuhadaroglu. On his out lap Liberati survived a moment in the gravel as Salmenautio pitted for Bowen. With the penultimate stops out of the way Bowen ran just inside the points and Liberati was down in fifteenth. With fifteen minutes to go the Safety Car was once more out on track as the rain again increased. Green flag racing resumed just before the final driver change window opened. Liberati boxed for Michelotto and Bowen pitted two laps later so Cook could jump in for the run to the flag. With twenty-five minutes left Michelotto and Cook were both in the points and making progress until the Safety Car came out again. Racing resumed with eighteen minutes left on the clock and there was immediate chaos amongst the leaders with Segu and Cressoni eliminating each other. Cook moved into fifth with Michelotto behind him in seventh. A final Safety Car period ended with time for just one more lap. At the restart Michelotto passed Pavlovic for sixth and then Cook swapped places with the sister car. They two VSR Lambos took the chequered flag in fifth and sixth. After a successful protest from VSR the race winning Ferrari was demoted to third for a restart infringement and the Championship finished with Liberati, Michelotto and Zanon on equal points with Balzan and Medler. The title went to the Ferrari crew who had one third place finish compared to one fifth place for the 66 car.

2026 Italian GT Endurance Championship
Misano: 9-10 May
Monza: 20-21 June
Imola: 5-6 September
Mugello: 30 October – 1 November

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