



Cazzaniga and D'Amico take win as double podium catapults Liang and Ortiz into Championship lead

16th July, 2017 – Italian Super GT Cup, Mugello

Finnish drivers Tuomas Tujula and Aaro Vainio headed into round four of the Italian Super GT Championship with a slim five point lead in the standings and a hefty twenty-five second handicap to discount in race one. Their Mugello weekend got off to a good start when Tujula qualified second in class, missing out on pole by just three tenths of a second. Right behind him were the other two VSR Lamborghinis driven by Ortiz and D'Amico whose best laps were within two thousandths of a second of each other.



Vainio and Tujula starred in qualifying taking one pole and one 2nd place (photo credit – Fotospeedy)

For the first time since the 2015 season all the classes of the Italian GT Championship raced together, adding to the drama and excitement of the race weekend. The combined grid made an impressive sight as the lights went green and the thirty-two cars thundered into San Donato. Tujula briefly took the lead of the Super GT Cup class before being re-passed by pole-sitter Desideri, losing another two places in the scuffle. It fell to Ortiz to attack Desideri and the Brazilian needed

only two laps to pass the Italian and take the class lead. Two laps later Tujula took third from team-mate D'Amico and set about chasing down the battling duo of Ortiz and Desideri, passing Benucci in the Ferrari GT3 in the process. As the pit window approached Ortiz pulled out a two second gap over Desideri who had his mirrors full of Tujula's VSR Lamborghini. D'Amico, two places further back and running 4th in class, was defending his place from the challenges of Kasai. On lap eleven the pit window opened and D'Amico dived straight in to handover to Cazzaniga. Vainio followed on lap twelve and took his twenty-five second handicap as Tujula jumped in the car. Ortiz stayed out for one more tour before pulling in from the lead and giving his car to Liang. At the same moment the Safety Car came out for a problem with a mid-field GT3 and by the time the correct race order was re-established there were less than ten minutes left to run. Liang led the class with Cazzaniga third and Vainio seventh. Cazzaniga wasted no time passing Necchi for 2nd and then closed on team-mate Liang. With GT3 cars and lapped GT4 cars between them it soon became a spectacular three way dice for the class lead with Basz joining the two VSR cars. On the penultimate lap Cazzaniga fought his way to the front while Basz snuck past Liang moments before the flag fell demoting the Chinese driver to third. A final charge from Vainio saw the Finn gain four places in as many laps to finish 4th, reducing his car's handicap and ensuring he and Tujula remained top of the standings by a single point from Liang and Ortiz, themselves one point clear of race winners Cazzaniga and D'Amico.



Cazzaniga and D'Amico won Saturday's race (photo credit - Fotospeedy)

Qualifying for race two saw Vainio dominate, taking pole by two tenths of a second from Antonelli drivers Basz and Necchi. Cazzaniga and Liang qualified their VSR Huracans in 5th and 6th. Vainio kept the class lead at the start while Liang gained a place moving into 4th. After only four laps the safety car was called out to recover Ishikawa's Ferrari and the field bunched up again. The track went green just before the pit window opened and Liang was the first VSR driver to stop, passing his

Lamborghini to Ortiz. A lap later Cazzaniga came in to swap with D'Amico making Vainio the last VSR driver to head into the pits. Tujula took the wheel and came out just in front of Ortiz having had a handicap of five seconds more than the Brazilian. The two ran together until the final fifteen minutes of the race when Ortiz moved to pass Tujula. The two tangled and as Ortiz took the place Tujula lost time, slipping back to 7th in class. He showed his pace by closing in on D'Amico in 6th as the race drew to a close. The second podium finish of the weekend for Ortiz and Liang moved them to the top of the Driver Standings with a nine point advantage over Desideri, ten points over Tujula and Vainio and eleven points over Cazzaniga and D'Amico.



Two podium finishes mean Liang and Ortiz lead the Championship (photo credit – Fotospeedy)

The Italian Championship now takes a break for the summer and will reconvene in September at Imola. The VSR Lamborghini's will be back in action in a fortnight for the Spa round of the European Lamborghini Super Trofeo Championship.

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