

**PRESS RELEASE:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 2024

*Macau FIA GT World Cup – 71st Macau Grand Prix, 14-17 November 2024*

### **SJM VSR Theodore Racing Lamborghini finishes seventh at Macau**

SJM VSR Theodore Racing entered a pair of Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo II cars in the 71<sup>st</sup> running of the iconic Macau Grand Prix. Matteo Cairoli was behind the wheel of the 19 Lamborghini and the number 63 was in the hands of multiple Macau winner Edoardo Mortara. After a near-miss with Typhoon Toraji overnight the famous Guia circuit was wet for the first half hour practice session. Despite two red flags for cars spinning at the Melco hairpin the drivers managed eleven timed laps and it was Mortara who set the pace, lapping in 2'33.309, nearly a second quicker than everyone else in the tricky conditions. A red flag ten minutes into the second session followed by rain rendered laptimes irrelevant and the teams reconvened on Friday for qualifying.



For the first time the circuit was fully dry but the session was not without drama as an early red flag bought all the cars back to pit-lane before any times had been set. The drivers then had twenty minutes of clean running during which most pitted for new slicks. Mortara was all set to jump into the top six when yellows in the final sector caused him to slow. He set about repeating his fastest sectors only for the session to be red flagged when Engstler crashed heavily. With less than four minutes left on the clock the session did not restart and Mortara lined up on row six for Saturday's race. Cairoli, hampered by a puncture in the final ten minutes, took a place on the ninth row. With overtaking virtually impossible on the narrow street circuit, and the harsh Balance of Performance for the weekend leaving the

Lamborghini's down on power, both drivers acknowledged that the qualifying result would compromise the rest of the event.



Hot and sunny weather greeted the reduced field of twenty-two as they lined up on the grid for Saturday's qualifying race. Mortara used all his Macau knowledge to force his way past Feller and break into the top ten at the start but after that his race was one of defence as he worked to keep the Audi behind him. With no incidents and no over-takes during the twelve-lap race the classification at the chequered flag saw Mortara tenth and Cairoli eighteenth.



On Sunday morning the teams woke to unexpected heavy rain that left the Guia circuit treacherously wet and full of standing water as the start of the main race approached. The sixteen lap race got underway on time but behind the Safety Car which stayed out for the first five laps. The drivers were released on lap six and a lap later it was game over for Cairoli, running into the escape road at turn three. On lap nine Vanthoor was helped into the barriers by Engel, and Mortara moved up to ninth. He was consistently the fastest man on track in sector two, where the power restrictions of the event's Balance of Performance were less of a penalty, but could do nothing about passing the cars in front of him who were backed up behind Van Der Linde running in fifth. On the penultimate lap leaders Fuoco and Marciello clashed and Mortara gained two more places to take the flag in seventh.

**Teddy Yip (Theodore Racing):** It was brilliant to have Theodore racing's first full programme in the GT World Cup, especially with a manufacture like Lamborghini, the support of our long-term partner SJM and two Lamborghini factory drivers representing us – one of which is a legend in Macau. It was not the result we wanted but we raced against fierce competition. I look forward to trying again next year.

*Photos by Kako Photography*

END