



Au and Nemoto win in Japan

23rd June 2019 – Lamborghini Super Trofeo Asia, Suzuka

Alex Au and Yuki Nemoto took overall and class victory at Suzuka on Saturday in the Lamborghini Super Trofeo Asia. A podium in Sunday's race leaves Au leading the Pro-Am Championship.



After a two month break the Lamborghini Super Trofeo Asia Championship continued with a double-header round at Suzuka this weekend. Alex Au was partnered by Japan's Yuki Nemoto in the team's Pro-Am entry whilst Malaysian Kumar Prabakaran raced alone in the LB Cup class.

Au took the wheel of the number 66 Lamborghini for the qualifying session that set the grid for Saturday's race and the driver from Hong Kong set the fifth fastest time overall and was third in class. Prabakaran lined up on row nine.



After scoring a class podium in the Blancpain GT World Challenge Asia Au, who competes in both Championships, jumped straight into the VSR Lamborghini Super Trofeo Huracan for race one. A messy opening lap saw him forced to take to the grass to avoid a spinner. He slipped to seventh before the safety car was called out for accidents by Murrioni and then Chan. When racing went green again there were six minutes left until the pit window opened. A drive-through penalty for jumping the start for Ochiai pushed Au up to sixth overall, third in class, and on lap nine he pitted and Nemoto took over for the rest of the race. Two laps later Prabakaran pitted from fifth in the LB Cup place but a penalty for speeding in the pit-lane meant he would progress no further up the field. The Pro-Am leaders, Muscat and Leitch, pitted towards the end of the window and when they exited they were just in front of Nemoto whose impressive lap times had allowed him to make up considerable ground. He quickly overtook them both to take the class lead and two laps later scythed past Kasai for second overall. Four seconds further down the road was race leader Van der Drift, setting very rapid times. In the last fifteen minutes of the race Nemoto closed to within two and a half seconds of the New Zealander and pulled out seventeen seconds to Kasai in third. Pro-Am victory for Au and Nemoto later became overall victory when the winning car was disqualified for a technical infringement.



Nemoto qualified on the front row for Sunday's race and Prabakaran lined up on row nine. At the start Nemoto slotted in behind pole sitter Yazid whilst Prabakaran made up two places on the opening lap. He then became involved in a close battle with Lau before a drive-through penalty compromised his race. Nemoto kept to within a second of race leader Yazid and eeked out a three second gap to Van der Drift in third place. The pit window opened on lap ten and half-way through the ten minute slot Prabakaran pitted for his obligatory stop. One lap later the race leader pitted and Ochiai took over the number 38 car. Nemoto, pushing hard with free track ahead of him, entered the pits one lap later and when Au took over the VSR Huracan he came out ahead. A safety car period then closed up the field and racing resumed with nine minutes left. Au and Ochiai led the field with a brace of Pro drivers behind them. It took Chen one and a half laps to find a way past first Ochiai and then Au. The other Pro drivers quickly followed suit and Au took the chequered flag sixth overall and third in class. Prabakaran finished seventh in LB Cup.

A win and a podium in Suzuka means Au now leads the Pro-Am standings by a slender four point margin as we head to Fuji Speedway for round three in a fortnight's time.

Photos by Fotospeedy

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