

06/06/2011 BABINI AND LEIMER'S UK TITLE CHARGE



The Italian duo of Fabio Babini and Matteo Zucchi claimed two victories in the Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo at Silverstone, UK, on 5 June 2011 to extend Babini's lead in the Pro Drivers' Standings. Meanwhile, Swiss driver Cédric Leimer secured his second consecutive solo win claim the lead in the Pro-Am Drivers' Standings.

C. Leimer knocked reigning Pro-Am Drivers' Champion Eugenio Amos off the top of the Pro-Am Drivers' Standings following victory in round four and two further podium finishes. The Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse pilot claimed 27 points this weekend to put him four points ahead of Autocarozzeria Imperiale S.R.L. driver Zucchi. Reiter's Nico Pronk is now third on 41 points, while Amos has fallen to fourth after missing the Silverstone event.

2009 Pro Drivers' Champion Babini continues to top the 2011 Pro Drivers' Standings, extending his lead to 18 points from Dutchman Peter Kox, his closest rival. Series debutant Lee Cunningham, driving with Bonaldi Motorsport this weekend, claimed 16 points to put him third in the standings.

Racing in the #1 Automobili Lamborghini VIP entry was American Le Mans Series driver and 2011 12 Hours of Sebring runner-up Marino Franchitti and Autosport journalist Ben Anderson. The pair's best finish was fourth in round five, and were again running at the front of the field in the final race before a technical issue forced them to retire.

EVO Middle East Editor Bassam Kronfli also made his Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo debut this weekend, finishing as high as sixth, and just missing out on a podium in round six when a puncture meant he had to pit while running in third.

Celebrating this weekend was Maurizio Piatesi, who made his Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo debut this weekend. The Italian, who was running in the #3 Bonaldi Motorsport Super Trofeo with Cunningham, won the award for this weekend's 'Best Rookie' with fifth, seventh and eighth-places finishes. Meanwhile, the Special Award, presented to the driver displaying passion, performance and politeness both on and off the track, was given to Dutchman Pronk, who enjoyed both his first and second visit to the series' podium.

"I feel fantastic. I'd never tried this car and I'd never driven at Silverstone," said Piatesi. "I've got a very good team and this gave me the motivation to improve in the car. In the last race, I went better and better and I think this is the right way to go about it. I'd love to come back!"

The weekend also marked the UK debut of Lamborghini's new flagship model, the Aventador LP 700-4. Racing fans and Lamborghini enthusiasts were able to get a close look at the V12 model, which was on display throughout the weekend at the Super Trofeo Village.

Qualifying

The weekend started perfectly for Babini and Zucchi in the #22, with the former lapping the newly revised circuit in 2:08.056 to clinch pole position. Gravity-Charouz Racing also had a strong session with the #88 and #77 Super Trofeo race cars securing second and third grid spots respectively. Jarek Janiš set a fastest lap time of 2:08.996 to put the #77 on the front row, while Gerhard Tweraser set a time of 2:09.072 in the #88.

Round four

The pole-sitters' impressive form continued in round four: Zucchi stormed to the first corner at the start to maintain the lead. From sixth, C. Leimer had a strong start to challenge Zucchi for position early on. Behind the wheel of the #63 Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse Super Trofeo, C. Leimer led for a brief time while the #22 went into the pits to hand over to Babini.

Back on track, Babini regained the lead and charged towards the chequered flag. However, with just two laps remaining, Babini began to slow due to a miscalculation of fuel required. C. Leimer passed to take his second consecutive victory of the season.

Reiter team-mates Peter Kox and Nico Pronk clinched second from fourth on the grid. After a solid opening stint from Pronk, Kox began his charge, knocking seconds off the gap between himself and the #63 to cross the line just two seconds behind C. Leimer. Pro-Am driver Roberto Seveso finished third after an impressive drive from 11th.

"I was very lucky!" said C. Leimer. "To pass Babini, who is so fast, is normally impossible for me. I started sixth so thought that finishing third would be really good, but to finish first is wonderful."

Round five

Babini and Zucchi had better success in round five when they secured their first victory of 2011, having worked their way through from a tenth-place start. Polesitter C. Leimer maintained his position at the start to pull-away from the field, leaving Autosport guest journalist and Automobili Lamborghini VIP driver Anderson to fight for position with Zucchi in the #22 and Filip Sladecka in the #99 Gravity-Charouz Racing entry.

As they rounded the corner onto the pit straight, Anderson and Sladecka made contact while jostling for second. Sladecka spun placing him back down the order. Anderson maintained position but received a drive-through penalty.

Now piloting the #22, Babini charged after race leader C. Leimer, closing down his 2.970 advantage to take the lead. The Italian began to pull away from the #63, taking the chequered flag, with C. Leimer crossing the finish line close behind.

Having fallen back to 11th in the early stages, Pronk's team-mate Kox stormed through the order to finish third in the #76 Reiter entry, while Franchitti in the #1 entry secured fourth.

"It's amazing to win!" said Zucchi. "It's a new track for me and I've improved a lot since free practice. It's been a new challenge and to be at the top is very impressive. There are a lot of fast drivers in the series, so it's very important to try and start near the front, and that is where we will be for the next race!"

Round six

The #22 car was on pole for the final round this weekend. Pro-Am driver Zucchi held onto the lead until the Safety Car was deployed for the stranded #76 Reiter Super Trofeo race car that had retired in a dangerous position trackside. An eager C. Leimer in the #63 overtook under Safety Car conditions to take the lead, but was soon passed by Automobili Lamborghini VIP guest driver Franchitti as well as Zucchi and Tweraser when the race resumed. C.

Leimer was later issued with a drive-through penalty for his illegal manoeuvre.

Franchitti's team-mate Anderson made it back out on track in the #1 Super Trofeo race car ahead of Babini, who was now in the #22 Super Trofeo. However, the Brit ran wide under the pressure of both Babini and Tweraser, allowing both cars through.

Babini lapped the track steadily in the Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L. as a hard-charging Tweraser pushed hard to close the gap. The talented Austrian posted some quick lap times in the closing minutes to reel in Zucchi's lead, but it wasn't enough and Zucchi managed to reach the finish line first for his second victory of the weekend with Tweraser claiming second place.

"It's my first podium, I'm very happy and I hope I can do this again more this season," said Tweraser. "I think the performance of the car is really good and when I don't make mistakes, I think it will be possible to be on the podium in all three races!"

Automobili Lamborghini VIP guest and EVO Middle East Editor Kronfli was running in third, but suffered a puncture on the penultimate lap, forcing him to limp back to the pits. C. Leimer, who had recovered from his drive-through penalty, crossed the finish line third for his third podium finish of the weekend.

The Bonaldi Motorsport pairing of respected Italian gentleman driver Gianni Giudici and Lamborghini test-driver Mario Fasanetto worked their way through the field from ninth to claim a fourth-place finish, their best result of the weekend.

A electrical issue with the #1 of Franchitti and Anderson meant that it had to be called into the pits in the closing laps, resulting in the duo being denied a much deserved podium place.

The 2011 Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo season resumes at Paul Ricard, France, on 15-17 July 2011 alongside the FIA GT1 World Championship.

Qualifying results

1. Babini/Zucchi (#22), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., 2:08.056
2. Št'oviček/Janiš (#88), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 0.940
3. Tweraser (#77), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 1.016
4. Pronk/Kox (#76), Reiter, + 1.114
5. Franchitti/Anderson (#1), Automobili Lamborghini, + 1.469
6. Leimer C. (#63), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 2.444
7. Charouz/Sladecka (#99), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 3.322
8. Ragazzi/Carboni (#80), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 3.349
9. Fasanetto/Giudici (#21), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 3.499
10. Cunningham/Piatesi (#3), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 5.143
11. Seveso (#20), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 5.349
12. Kronfli (#2), Automobili Lamborghini, + 5.898
13. Leimer H./Jenny (#19), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 6.176

Round four results

1. Leimer C. (#63), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, 41:15.696
2. Pronk/Kox (#76), Reiter, + 2.110
3. Seveso (#20), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 22.376
4. Tweraser (#77), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 27.480
5. Franchitti/Anderson (#1), Automobili Lamborghini, + 31.633
6. Leimer H./Jenny (#19), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 1:03.770
7. Ragazzi/Carboni (#80), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 1:22.270
8. Cunningham/Piatesi (#3), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 1:28.298
9. Št'oviček/Janiš (#88), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 1:28.839
10. Babini/Zucchi (#22), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 1 lap
11. Kronfli (#2), Automobili Lamborghini, + 1 lap
12. Charouz/Sladecka (#99), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 6 laps
13. Fasanetto/Giudici (#21), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 10 laps

Round five results

1. Babini/Zucchi (#22), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., 2:09.944
2. Leimer C. (#63), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 2.667
3. Pronk/Kox (#76), Reiter, + 12.736
4. Franchitti/Anderson (#1), Automobili Lamborghini, + 23.710
5. Tweraser (#77), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 39.315
6. Kronfli (#2), Automobili Lamborghini, + 50.894
7. Cunningham/Piatesi (#3), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 1:05.309
8. Fasanetto/Giudici (#21), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 1:10.712
9. Leimer H./Jenny (#19), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 1:45.218
10. Charouz/Sladecka (#99), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 2:42.172
11. Seveso (#20), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 1 lap
12. Št'oviček/Janiš (#88), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 1 lap
13. Ragazzi/Carboni (#80), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 7 laps

Round six results

1. Babini/Zucchi (#22), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., 42:11.480
2. Tweraser (#77), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 1.159
3. Leimer C. (#63), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 19.723
4. Fasanetto/Giudici (#21), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 21.943
5. Cunningham/Piatesi (#3), Bonaldi Motorsport, + 32.447
6. Leimer H./Jenny (#19), Autovitesse Garage R. Affolter Suisse, + 44.471
7. Št'oviček/Janiš (#88), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 1 lap
8. Kronfli (#2), Automobili Lamborghini, + 2 laps
9. Franchitti/Anderson (#1), Automobili Lamborghini, + 3 laps
10. Seveso (#20), Autocarrozzeria Imperiale S.R.L., + 4 laps
11. Charouz/Sladecka (#99), Gravity-Charouz Racing, + 7 laps

Not classified

Pronk/Kox (#76), Reiter

Notes to editors

The 2011 Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo season began in April, featuring the Lamborghini Super Trofeo: a lightweight version of the Gallardo LP 560-4. The Super Trofeo has a reworked chassis and a power output of 419 kW (570 hp) from its V10, 'Iniezione Diretta Stratificata' engine. The race car features Lamborghini's permanent four-wheel drive, making the Super Trofeo the only one-make, all-wheel drive motorsport series.

Lamborghini will again partner with luxury Swiss watchmaker Blancpain, who is the series' title sponsor, creating a perfect partnership between two prestigious and highly-innovative brands.

Pirelli, one of the world's largest tyre manufacturers and sole OEM supplier to Automobili Lamborghini, partners the Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo series. Pirelli, who have a successful motorsport heritage across rally, sports cars and Formula One, will be for the second season a strategic partner to the series. With a history built on high performance tyres, Pirelli is a world leader in both original equipment and the aftermarket, with 24 factories in 12 countries around the world.

For more information visit the Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo website www.lamborghini.com/supertrofeo. For high-resolution images and further media enquires please contact the media team on media.supertrofeo@lamborghini.com

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