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Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Teams Regulator Racing and CRP Racing Combine for Three Mercedes-AMG GT3 Victories at Barber Motorsports Park to Take SRO America Season Championship Battles to Next Month's Finale in Indianapolis

Press Information

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Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Teams Regulator Racing and CRP Racing Secure Three Mercedes-AMG GT3 Race Wins in SRO America Competition at Barber Motorsports Park to Bolster Season-Championship Chances

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama – Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 teams Regulator Racing and CRP Racing combined for victories in three of the four Fanatec GT World Challenge America and GT America races contested this weekend at Barber Motorsports Park. Jeff Burton and Philip Ellis co-drove the No. 91 Regulator Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 to their second Fanatec GT World Challenge America Pro-Am class race win Sunday to tighten the championship race between the top three contenders heading into next month's season-ending race weekend at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. In GT America, Jason Daskalos reclaimed the overall championship lead with a weekend sweep of both 40-minute sprint races in the No. 27 CRP Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3.

Burton and Ellis used their trademark reverse driver strategy in both the Saturday and Sunday 90-minute GT World Challenge America feature races. Team professional driver Ellis starts each weekend's first race and then steps in as the closer for the second round, competing against primarily Silver and Bronze Am drivers both days. Regulator's Am driver, Burton in turn has improved his skills battling in his race stints against mainly professional drivers.

The strategy twist produced a fourth-place finish in Saturday's first race, but on Sunday the performance of both the No. 91 team and drivers and a timely caution set the stage for a late charge to victory.

Burton started on Sunday and stayed on pace on the lead lap throughout his 40-minute opening stint. Ellis took over for the final 50-minute run to finish but soon realized catching competitors was one thing but passing them on the tight and twisty Barber Road course was another.

The Regulator team got the break they needed when a late caution period closed-up the field and put Ellis in the lead train of cars in 11th place overall. The race restarted with 20 minutes to go, and Ellis immediately began carving his way through the field.

In the performance of the race, Ellis passed seven cars – including two Pro-class competitors – in less than five minutes. The last of the seven passes was for the Pro-Am lead and fourth place overall, but Ellis kept going, crossing the finish line third overall and more than 11 seconds clear of the second-place Pro-Am finisher.

The win was Regulator's fifth visit to victory lane of the season and third-straight podium on an SRO America weekend following its breakout series win in July at VIRgina International Raceway (VIR) and a third place showing in August at Road America.

With only the double-points Indianapolis 8 Hour race ahead, Burton, Ellis and the No. 91 team have closed the gap on the two championship leaders for a three-team shootout for the GT World Challenge America Pro-Am championships at the Brickyard.

Daskalos reclaimed the GT America points lead with his second weekend sweep of the year following his double-win weekend last April at the Grand Prix of Long Beach. This weekend's victory lockout was particularly impressive considering Daskalos and the CRP Racing team started the race weekend off the pace but pulled off some post-qualifying improvements.

Daskalos started Saturday's first race in fifth place after a challenging qualifying session but immediately showed improvement at the drop of the green flag. He passed both of his main championship challengers, including a near-miss contact incident with one battling for the lead on the last lap just two corners from the finish.

Taking to the outside in the next to last turn, Daskalos held his line as the race leader slightly bobbled and drifted into the No. 27. Daskalos maintained control and moved into the lead despite the hit and took the victory after leading for only the final few hundred yards of the race.

Starting from the pole on Sunday, Daskalos took control from the start and managed the race to the finish. He successfully shook off any challenges on a pair of caution flag restarts and held off a championship rival's late charge for an 0.163 of a second margin of victory.

As a result, Daskalos and CRP extended the points they reclaimed Saturday to 241 tallies, 18 points clear of the nearest challenger with only the pair of season-ending 40-minute sprints in Indianapolis remaining on the schedule.

The top Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4 team at Barber was the resilient No. 43 P1 Groupe with RENNtech Mercedes-AMG GT4 and co-drivers Alex Vogel and Matt Bell. The team won its first Pirelli GT4 America race at VIR in July with a come-from-behind run to victory and nearly duplicated the Pro-Am class performance Sunday.

Like VIR, the Barber weekend up until Sunday's second 60-minute race was challenging with a string of issues and working-in a new chassis that took away on-track time. Vogel had minimal laps on Friday and Saturday and took the green flag from the very back of the overall GT4 field, just as he did at VIR, on Sunday.

The team's run to the front started when Vogel skillfully avoided a multi-car accident on the first race lap that involved more than 10 cars. Vogel steered through the melee and then employed some tire-saving strategy on the debris-riddled track during the lengthy caution period that was a huge help to closing driver Bell in the run to the checkered flag.

Vogel advanced to the top 20 before pitting in a well-timed and quickly executed stop by the RENNtech team under caution. When the race finally returned to green-flag conditions, Bell had the No. 43 in seventh place overall and fourth in Pro-Am.

Bell was soon battling in the top five overall and for a Pro-Am podium finish. He was glued to the back of the second-place Pro-Am car for several laps before finally slipping by to take the position with less than three minutes remaining. Bell set his sights on the Pro-Am leader, but the clock ran out before he could mount a charge, and he took the checkered flag second in class and fourth overall. Vogel and Bell combined to improve 24 race positions to secure the class runner-up honor.

Next up for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams in SRO America competition is the season-ending Indianapolis 8 Hour weekend at IMS, October 3 – 6. The final and championship-deciding races in GT World Challenge, GT America and Pirelli GT4 will all take place that weekend.

Jeff Burton, Driver – No. 91 Regulator Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3: “I drove well enough to keep it really close on Sunday. Along with Saturday, these were probably my two best drives of the year. I’m breaking bad habits and making some adjustments to drive like Philip drives, and if you try to drive like Philip Ellis, you’re going to go fast! So that has really helped me. We did get lucky with the yellow flag, but we did execute well both Saturday and Sunday and now go to Indianapolis to race for the championship. For me, that was a goal from the beginning of the year. I don’t want to race if I’m going to lose.”

Philip Ellis, Driver – No. 91 Regulator Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3: “It was a great weekend. It was Jeff’s best weekend by far this year. Even with that, the difference we had in pace with the other cars with the current rules was a challenge. Maybe we could have been lucky with grabbing another P4 or a third without the safety car. It’s tough to overtake on this track. You have to set up competitors in the corners, so it consumes a lot more time to pass here than it does on other tracks. The first two or three cars I passed before the safety car came out took so much time. We just got a little bit lucky with our strategy when the safety car came out. It is great to get our second win and now on to Indianapolis where we will have a chance at the championship.”

Jason Daskalos, Driver – No. 27 CRP Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3:

“This was crucial this weekend. We were on the back foot, qualifying sixth and then starting fifth Saturday after another entry withdrew, but we just missed it in qualifying. Nick Short and the CRP Racing team made a bunch of changes for Saturday’s race, and they were all the right ones. The car was outstanding from start to finish. It was great, clean racing with my main championship rival Johnny O’Connell. He’s so amazing to race with and we both kept it clean. On the last lap, the leader just caught the inside curb and launched into me, and I was just glad we were able to keep it under control and get to the finish. To come from fifth to win at Barber is impressive, for me and the team. No one does that at Barber! At Barber, you just can’t pass, but we found a way Saturday and started from the pole on Sunday. We are thrilled as a team. To get two victories out of this weekend is great. You really can’t ask for more.”

Matt Bell, Driver – No. 43 P1 Groupe by RENNtech Motorsports

Mercedes-AMG GT4: “The RENNtech and P1 Groupe guys had a ton of work to do to get this car back into racing shape. The chassis was done in from an incident at Road America on lap one in race one, and they did non-stop work the last weeks to get the new chassis under this car and everything swapped over. So, there were just a few small things that had to be tweaked, but it did limit us on time. I haven’t been to Barber in 10 years, and Alex has never been here, so it was an uphill battle in that regard too. Race two Sunday just worked out for us. The strategy was perfect, the guys did a great job setting the car up compared to where we were Saturday, and that was probably our best pit stop this year. I knew Turn 13 and Turn 14 was where I had to make a move, so I feigned a pass into 13, forced kind of an overshoot, and then I crossed over and took the place. Would have loved to have been in first place, but it was really a dream situation, and I can’t say enough about Alex. He has had like no solid run of laps at Road America or Barber but was a master at keeping out of trouble on Sunday and giving me a great car. He kept the tires better than everybody else, and we got after it in the second stint.”

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