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SRT Motorsports - ALMS Race Recap - Petit Le Mans - Road America

SRT Motorsports Dominates Early But Mishaps Spoil Finish; The No. 91 SRT Viper GTS-R Class of Field First Half of Petit Le Mans

October 19, 2013, Braselton, Ga. - Through the first half of Saturday's Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta, the No. 91 SRT Viper GTS-R was the class of the field, leading 107 of the first 185 laps in the GT Class. Drivers Dominik Farnbacher, Mark Goossens and Ryan Dalziel all led laps during their stint behind the wheel in the 10-hour or 1,000-mile event.

The race at the 2.54-mile circuit marked the end of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) era. Next year, ALMS and Grand-Am will combine to form the Tudor United SportsCar Championship.

Intermittent rain throughout the first half of the event left teams in a quandary over tire selection – slicks or wets (rain). The SRT Motorsports team servicing the 91 were continually ahead of the competition with its tire selection and timely pit stops which kept the Viper at the front of the field while the No. 93 Pennzoil Ultra SRT Viper GTS-R team (Tommy Kendall, Kuno Wittmer and Jonathan Bomarito) was on a bit of a different strategy, looking to take advantage of a miscalculation by the competition.

Unfortunately, even in an endurance race, the slightest mishap has a major impact on the finish. That was the case for both SRT Motorsports entries Saturday. After flawless performances the first 500 miles, off-course incidents early in the second half of the event proved costly for both cars, taking them out of contention for the victory. Despite the setback, both teams battled to the checkered flag with the No. 93 finishing fifth and the No. 91 ending up seventh.

"After a 12-year absence, it is a great privilege to be racing at this level. I am proud of SRT Motorsports' resolve and ability to dig deep, virtually eliminating the performance gap within one year. In this past American Le Mans Series season, we've grown together as a team and improved the speed and handling of both cars along the way, which resulted in three pole positions, five podium finishes and an exciting win at Road America," said Ralph Gilles, President and CEO – SRT Brand and Motorsports, Chrysler Group LLC. "On behalf of the SRT brand and Chrysler Group, I want to thank our drivers and the Riley Technologies crew for their hard work, efforts and dedication that allowed the No. 91 and No. 93 SRT Viper GTS-Rs to shine in our first full season back on the track."

Starting second in the GT Class was only a minor hurdle for the No. 91. Farnbacher had the machine in the lead by the time the field completed the first circuit. He held the top spot for 39 laps before surrendering the lead for a scheduled pit stop for fuel, tires and a driver change. Goossens wasted little time driving back to the front, building up a comfortable advantage before giving way to Dalziel. The No. 91 had a 26-second cushion at the four-hour mark.

"I'm really proud of our drivers and both crews, the entire SRT Motorsports team," said SRT Motorsports Racing Manager Gary Johnson. "Our issues were on-track problems. Sometimes you have good luck in racing and other times you don't. I think we showed that the cars were very, very fast."

The No. 93 was the first SRT Motorsports entry to be dealt a setback. Running fifth, contact with a Prototype on Lap 164 sent the 93 briefly off course. Add in a 60-second penalty for avoidable contact and the Viper was two laps down to the GT leader.

"It's a frustrating day because I think we had two cars and either one of them could have won today, two cars on the podium," said Bomarito. "We're going to come back really, really strong next year. I'm already looking forward to Daytona to start the year. My hat's off to everybody at Riley and SRT for the opportunity and all their hard work."

"The race today didn't play out the way we wanted it to play out," said Wittmer. "We had a great qualifying run. We got the cars off to a really great start. We had fast cars right down to the end of the race. It was a great team effort."

Misfortune for the No. 91 came on Lap 185. Running second, contact with the No. 551 (Prototype) sent Dalziel off course and into the retaining wall in Turn 10. The team made repairs and the 91 returned to competition but two laps behind the leader. The No. 551 was penalized for avoidable contact.

"The 91 car was the one to beat this race," said Farnbacher. "If you look at lap times, we had the strongest car. The 93 and 91 turned the quickest lap times of the race. Looking back, it was not a good result for us."

"We had great strategy calls, great pit work and great runs the entire time," said Goossens. "I think we can go a long way with this program next year."

Despite the setback, there was no quit in SRT Motorsports. The group, drivers and team alike, raced as if they were battling for the lead all the way to the checkered flag. Unfortunately they didn't receive any help along the way with timely cautions. Both cars were still running competitive laps at the end, even quicker than the GT leaders over the final eight laps.

"We tried some strategy to get some laps back under yellow and it wasn't our day for luck with the yellows," said Bill Riley, Vice President and Chief Engineer, Riley Technologies. "We couldn't catch a break on the yellows. It's just a shame because the car was quick and the team did well on both cars. I don't think our finishing result shows how good the cars were, not taking anything away from the guys who won because they won, period."

Race Results / GT Class

American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patron

Petit Le Mans

Road Atlanta / Braselton, Ga.

Saturday, Oct. 19, 2013

1. No. 17 Porsche 911 GT3 RSR (Henzler, Sellers and Tandy)
2. No. 56 BMW Z4 GTE (Muller, Edwards and Auberlen)
3. No. 62 Ferrari F458 Italia (Beretta, Malucelli and Liddell)
4. No. 55 BMW Z4 GTE (Alzen, Martin and Muller)
5. No. 93 SRT Viper GTS-R (Wittmer, Bomarito, Kendall)
6. No. 3 Chevrolet Corvette C6 ZR1 (Magnussen, Garcia and Taylor)
7. No. 91 SRT Viper GTS-R (Farnbacher, Goossens and Dalziel)
8. No. 06 Porsche 911 GT3 RSR (Braun, Long and Christensen)
9. No. 23 Ferrari F458 Italia (Sweedler, Keen and Mowlem)
10. No. 4 Chevrolet Corvette C6 ZR1 (Milner, Gavin and Westbrook)
11. No. 48 Porsche 911 GT3 RSR (Miller, Holzer and Collard)

SRT Motorsports – Running Order Each Hour

- Hour 1 – No. 91 – 3rd
No. 93 – 6th
- Hour 2 – No. 91 – 2nd
No. 93 – 8th
- Hour 3 – No. 91 – 2nd
No. 93 – 7th
- Hour 4 – No. 91 – 1st
No. 93 – 6th
- Hour 5 – No. 91 – 8th*
No. 93 – 9th**
- Hour 6 – No. 91 – 8th
No. 93 – 9th
- Hour 7 – No. 93 – 7th
No. 91 – 8th
- Hour 8 – No. 93 – 7th
No. 91 – 8th
- Hour 9 – No. 93 – 6th

No. 91 – 8th
Hour 10 – No. 93 – 5th
No. 91 – 7th

* Running fifth, the No. 93 SRT Viper GTS-R was involved in Incident with a Prototype in Turn 10 near the halfway mark of the 10-hour or 1,000-mile race. The No. 93 was assessed a 60-second penalty for avoidable contact.

** Running second, the No 91 SRT Viper GTS-R was damaged in contact with wall after incident with No. 551 Prototype in Turn 10 on lap 185. The No. 551 penalized for avoidable contact.

Season In Review

| Race | 91 Finish | 93 Finish |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| Sebring | 5 | 10 |
| Long Beach | 3 | 8 |
| Laguna Seca | 5 | 11 |
| Le Mans | 8 | 9 |
| Lime Rock | 11 | 5 |
| Mosport | 2 | 3 |
| Road America | 1 | 6 |
| Baltimore | 5 | 6 |
| Austin | 5 | 2 |
| VIR | 7 | 9 |
| Road Atlanta | 7 | 5 |

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