

TRG Takes Fifth and Sixth at Long Beach

Written by TRG Admin
Tuesday, 19 April 2011 17:49 -

Long Beach, CA (April 19, 2011)- Following a roller coaster day that included everything from taking the lead, to contacting the unforgiving walls of the famous street circuit in downtown Long Beach, TRG took fifth and sixth in the GT-C class during second round of the American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patron.



Starting sixth in the no. 68 South African Airways / South Point Casino / PRNewswire Porsche GT3 Cup , NASCAR star Brendan Gaughan, from nearby Las Vegas, was off to a great start and showing immediate pace in his car. A winner at this year's Rolex 24 at Daytona, Gaughan was turning consistently fast laps among opening stint drivers, and ran among the lead pack throughout his stint. With an early yellow taking place on lap six, the team took a risky strategy call and brought Gaughan in early to make his mandatory tire change, meaning the team would not have the time penalty involved in changing tires later during the race, but also requiring Gaughan and teammate Dion von Moltke to drive with special care, as their tires would need to last for the remaining one-hour and forty-five minutes.

It was a task Gaughan was up for, and he drove consistent lap times, managing his tires the whole way through. As the cars in front of Gaughan all pitted for tires, fuel, and driver changes, Gaughan actually led briefly until the time came to bring the car in for fuel and driver change at one-hour, fifteen minutes in to the stint. Taking the controls of the no. 68, von Moltke, driving under the South African flag, had the daunting task of trying to nurse his used tires home while fending off the hard charging cars behind him who all had fresh rubber. Dion did a masterful job of keeping the car out of harm's way lap after lap and turning times with the leaders. Unfortunately, with only minutes remaining in the race, von Moltke fought hard to hold back a hard charging Craig Stanton in the no. 44 Magnus Racing entry, but as the two raced side-by-side down the Seaside Ave. back straightaway, light contact sent Dion spinning hard in to the outside retaining wall and ending his race. The car made hard contact with the wall as it spun to a stop, sustaining enough damage to not only end the race for the no. 68, but also cause the race to end under a yellow flag as the clean up time exceeded the race cut off. Dion was uninjured in the incident, and the team was credited with fifth position.

For von Moltke, a tough finish was complimented by superb race strategy and heads up driving.

TRG Takes Fifth and Sixth at Long Beach

Written by TRG Admin

Tuesday, 19 April 2011 17:49 -

“We knew it was a risk to run the tire strategy that we did, but it also seemed to work right up until the end,” stated von Moltke. “I have to thank everyone at TRG for their hard work, we had a good car and did everything we could to get a good result. I was fighting Craig hard to keep him behind me and we just touched. It was a racing accident and it happens, we’ll move on.”

For Brendan Gaughan, the competitiveness of the team shouldn’t be overshadowed by an incident.

“This is a race I’ve been really excited about running and I still think it was a success,” stated Gaughan. “We knew we might run the tire strategy that we did with an early yellow, and it seemed to work out really well until the end. We do this sort of thing in NASCAR all the time, I knew my job was simply to manage the tires and keep the car in one piece. Dion drove his heart out, and overall I think we should all be proud.”

For TRG’s no. 66 Racer’s Roast / Fox River Coffee Porsche GT3 Cup, drivers Duncan Ende and Spencer Pumpelly came in to the weekend with victory in mind as they aim for the championship. Starting third, the race unfortunately came to an early compromise as Ende went in to the first turn two-wide with Bret Curtis, where Curtis would eventually push Ende in to the outside retaining wall, taking Curtis completely out and causing Ende to pit with substantial right side damage. Taking over an hour to repair, the team did a magnificent job of repairing a very damaged race car in the tight confines of the Long Beach pit, getting Ende out on track with enough time to get in his minimum number of laps required to score points. The team would be credited with sixth.

For Ende, living in nearby West Los Angeles, it was a frustrating way to end a promising weekend, but a great testament to the crew.

“We had big hopes for this weekend and I think we could have had a great result,” stated Ende. “I was outside of Bret going in to turn one, and he simply didn’t give me enough room as the wall tightened in on us. It was frustrating to be taken out so early, but at the same time, the guys did an amazing job of getting the car repaired enough to put the car safely back on track. Any points are valuable for the championship, so I’m glad we were able to do this, and I give all credit to the team.”

For Team Owner Kevin Buckler, who grew up in nearby Newport Beach, there were many positives to the weekend.

“We really came in to this weekend with strong hopes of what we could do,” stated Buckler. “The guys did a great job getting everything ready, and it was just bad luck that kept us from really showing the results. Brendan drove a fantastic opening stint in the 68, and did exactly what we needed him to do with that sort of strategy. He brought the car back in one piece with good tires, and that’s what we needed. Dion was a terrific team leader all weekend and did a great job in practice and in setting up the car with our engineer and crew. He did everything he could have been asked to do in his position in the race. It’s tough keeping that many cars behind you with fresh tires, and he drove masterfully. It’s unfortunate he had the incident with Craig, but it’s part of racing and I’m glad to see him push the car hard. For our 66 team, big

TRG Takes Fifth and Sixth at Long Beach

Written by TRG Admin

Tuesday, 19 April 2011 17:49 -

credit to the whole team and crew. Duncan just got caught out with some bad luck after driving so well, and to see the guys completely rebuild the right side of the car in that little pit space was amazing. We feel bad for Spencer but we got Duncan his points, and if the championship comes down to the wire, we'll remember moments like this as what got us there."

The American Le Mans Series will now take an extended break as many of the team's prepare for the upcoming 24 Hours of Le Mans in June. Round three will take place at the American LeMans Northeast Grand Prix in Lime Rock, Connecticut on July 9.

TRG is a full-service motorsports company offering a total driver ladder approach, as well as comprehensive sponsorship opportunities. For drivers, this approach starts with track days, goes to club events, up into street stock series and culminates in the ultimate goal of professional motorsports. For sponsors and business partners, this approach starts with everything from Executive events, to traditional sponsorship models, all the way to business-to-business networking and experiential marketing. With facilities in Petaluma, California and Mooresville, North Carolina the team can offer turn-key marketing programs as well as arrive-and-drive support.

The company's NASCAR operations are headquartered in Mooresville, North Carolina. The team fields a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series entry and has the capacity to run ARCA, Nationwide and the Camping World Truck Series.

The Racer's Group was founded in 1993 and has been competing at the top level of motor racing. The team boasts Rolex Series GT championships in 2005 and 2006 and holds the record for the most wins in Grand-Am with 32. The team's resume is highlighted by five championships, four Rolex 24 Hour at Daytona victories, and a Le Mans 24 Hour win.