



Three-way fight for 2023 Hankook 12H KUWAIT at half-distance

- Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors has led the most laps on GT3 debut; early leader Century Motorsport battling CP Racing.
- Red Camel-Jordans.nl leads 992.
- Drama for new Vortex 2.0 and Razoon – More Than Racing KTM; Toro Verde developmental Ginetta leads GTX.
- Simpson Motorsport: issues cost BMW in GT4, about to lead TCR.

KUWAIT (9 December, 2023) – Century Motorsport currently leads a three-way fight for victory at the 2023 Hankook 12H KUWAIT, with just over two seconds separating the BMW M4 GT3 from 2nd-placed CP Racing, and with long-time leader Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors in hot pursuit.

The Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors Porsche 992 GT3 R (#93, Fabrizio Broggi / Sabino de Castro / Sergiu Nicolae / Papi Cosimo) qualified 3rd during yesterday's 55-minute session, and ran a competitive pace behind the BMW M4 GT3 of early leader Century Motorsport (#22, Carl Cavers / Lewis Plato / Jack Barlow) and the Mercedes-AMG GT3 of polesitter CP Racing (#85, Charles Putman / Charles Espenlaub / Joe Foster / Shane Lewis) during the opening stages. This put the reigning 992 Teams' champion in an ideal position when both of its rivals hit trouble.

The #95 Porsche moved up to 2nd when, in a rare mistake just half an hour into the race, the CP Racing Mercedes spun at turn 16a, the lynchpin of Kuwait Motor Town's shortened, 5.160 km layout for the second Hankook 12H KUWAIT.

Having qualified 2nd overall, series returnee Century Motorsport made a superb start when Lewis Plato beat the CP Racing Mercedes into turn one and, across the opening hour, pulled out a 15-second lead. After the first round of pit stops, the Century BMW had increased its lead to 30-plus seconds, but would drop to 3rd overall and lose more than a minute shortly afterwards with a spin at turn 20. Having dropped a lap back after multiple

fuel stops during the event's first Code 60, Century suffered a second spin – this time at turn four – during the fifth hour, but rapid pace thereafter brought the BMW right back onto the tail, and eventually past, CP Racing.

All of this, plus deft work in the pit stops, promoted Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors to the lead, and only a driver change shortly before half-distance prevented the Romanian-Italian team from holding the lead heading into the second part of the race.

Tellingly, this weekend marks the first endurance race in over six months for Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors' Fabrizio Broggi, and a first start – in any motor race – for Century Motorsport's Jack Barlow since 2015.

Hankook 12H KUWAIT – Top 3 after 6 hours

1. Century Motorsport (#22, BMW M4 GT3) – 174 laps
2. CP Racing (#85, Mercedes-AMG GT3) – + 2.694s
3. Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors (#95, Porsche 992 GT3 R) – + 44.899s

Red Camel-Jordans.nl (#909, Ivo Breukers / Rik Breukers / Luc Breukers / Fabian Danz) currently leads the 992 class and is running 4th overall after a metronomic run. Even so, the Dutch team is still just over 75 seconds ahead of nearest category rival RABDAN by FULGENZI (#971, Saif Alameri / Enrico Fernando Fulgenzi / Christopher Zöchling).

Series newcomer KKrämer Racing (#936, Tobias Müller / Michele Di Martino / 'Selv' / Karsten Krämer / Moritz Kranz) is currently 3rd in-class, but parked its sister #967 Porsche 992 GT3 Cup (Michele Di Martino / 'Selv' / Karsten Krämer) for the majority of the first half after a severe vibration affected the handling. The Porsche has since returned to the track for an extended shakedown ahead of the German team's full 24H SERIES Middle East Trophy campaign.

Toro Verde (#795, Lawrence Tomlinson / Freddie Tomlinson / Michael Simpson) leads GTX with Ginetta's development G56 Cup after problems befell both of its rivals in Kuwait.

Vortex V8 (#701, Arnaud Gomez / Philippe Bonnel / Lionel Amrouche / Olivier Gomez) made a sensational start to its first race with the new '2.0' sports car, leapfrogging the Manamauri Energy by Ebimotors Porsche to take 3rd overall on the opening lap. The Vortex 2.0 was back in the pits after just 12 minutes of running however for a new alternator belt.

Vortex would also suffer a scare on the cusp of half-distance when a fire, caused by a hot exhaust and a dislodged heat shield, was ignited under the carbon body. Amazingly, the team has confirmed the damage will be repaired and the 2.0 will return to the track.

Razoon - More Than Racing (#714, Artur Chwist / Haytham Qarajouli / Daniel Drexel / Dominik Olbert) similarly made an impressive start to the Hankook 12H KUWAIT, despite the KTM GTX Bow being rebuilt after a Free Practice accident. The Austrian team moved up from 8th to 5th in the opening stages, but lost time with two separate moments off-track at turn 16a: the first a few moments after narrowly avoiding Century Motorsport's recovering M4 GT3; the second after an anti-lock brake failure that required recovery. Alongside that, the KTM has collectively lost more than an hour in the pits after a right rear wheel mounting issue ground the car to a halt on-track.

GT4 honours are currently held by the Century Motorsport BMW M4 GT4 (#429, Ravi Ramyeed / Charlie Robertson / David Holloway / Nathan Freke) after numerous issues for nearest rival, AGMC Racing team by Simpson Motorsport (#438, Fabian Duffieux / Andrey Solukovtsev / Vasily Vladykin). The #438 BMW M4 GT4 had been leading its class, despite an early spin, but lost time when a bolt sheered, causing the right rear toe link to collapse. Now fully repaired, the pair are now split by six laps.

Simpson Motorsport's sister Audi RS3 LMS DSG (#138, James Kaye / Ricky Coomber / Henry Neal / Jack Lemmer) is still in contention for overall TCE class victory, despite a puncture during the fifth hour and early concerns that the Audi was leaking fuel.

Shortly after half-distance, the British team took the lead from the CWS Engineering Ginetta G55 (#278, Colin White / Neale Muston / Christian Broberg). The latter having already lost time in the gravel and survived a collision with the Razoon – More Than Racing KTM, was back in the pits for a new auxiliary belt for the power steering and alternator repair.

The final six hours of the 2023 Hankook 12H KUWAIT draws to a close at 22.00 hrs local time tonight, Saturday 9 December. The action will be live with commentary from radiolemans.com on the official 24H SERIES YouTube channel. Regular updates will also be published on X (@24HSeries), Facebook (24H Series) and Instagram (24H Series). Further information can be found at www.24hseries.com.

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