



## Hankook 12H MUGELLO record holder Herberth Motorsport on pole for 2023 edition

- *Herberth Motorsport Porsche and The Heart of Racing Mercedes split by less a tenth before final qualifying.*
- *Defending 992 champion Red Ant Racing takes class pole on series return.*
- *RD Signs - Siauliai racing team takes GTX pole on final run; Vortex loses wheel in opening minutes of Q1.*
- *Buggyra Racing pips AtlasBX Motorsport for GT4 pole; SK Racing on top in TCE.*

**MUGELLO (24 March, 2023) – Herberth Motorsport has secured its first outright pole position of 2023 24H SERIES powered by Hankook season after a climactic fight for the top spot with The Heart of Racing by SPS.**

The Heart of Racing by SPS Mercedes-AMG GT3 (#27, Ian James / Gray Newell / Roman De Angelis), in the American team's second race in collaboration with SPS automotive performance, went into the final stages of qualifying a microscopic 0.047s ahead of the Herberth Motorsport Porsche 911 GT3 R (#91, Daniel Allemann / Ralf Bohn / Alfred Renauer / Robert Renauer). Gray Newell ultimately could not overhaul a flying Robert Renauer though, who set the fastest lap of Q3 on his final run.

Herberth Motorsport, an outright three-time winner of the Hankook 12H MUGELLO already, posted an average best of 1m 48.948s around the 5.245km Autodromo Internazionale del Mugello to secure pole position. This marks the Bavarian team's first outright pole in the 24H SERIES since last year's Hankook 24H BARCELONA, and the best yet for The Heart of Racing by SPS, which will also start from the front row.

Further back, the AKKODIS ASP Team Mercedes-AMG GT3 (#88, Mauro Ricci / Jean-Luc Beaubelique / Jérôme Policand / Benjamin Ricci) emerged on top of an equally fraught battle for 3<sup>rd</sup> on the grid ahead of the Saintéloc Junior Team Audi R8 LMS GT3

EVO II (#26, Erwan Bastard / Paul Evrard). AKKODIS ended a stop-start Q1 as the fastest Q1 runner, but lost time and momentum with a spin early on during Q2. A last gasp run from Saintéloc saw the French team fall just 0.008s short of leapfrogging its compatriot.

Reigning GT Continents Trophy winner CP Racing (#85, Charles Putman / Charles Espenlaub / Shane Lewis) will start 5<sup>th</sup>. The American team endured a difficult start to qualifying when the Mercedes-AMG GT3 ended up in the gravel after a near-miss with the HRT Performance Porsche 911 GT3 Cup (#930, Bob Herber / Marcel Van Berlo) at Palagio. Both were able to continue after a brief red flag period.

The Land Motorsport Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II (#55, Stefan Wieninger / Tim Müller / Christopher Mies) posted the overall fastest lap of the entire GT qualifying session – a 1m 47.652s courtesy of 2022 Hankook 24H DUBAI winner Christopher Mies – and will start 6<sup>th</sup>, just lapped on average just 0.040s slower than CP Racing. After a stellar series debut in Dubai, the HAAS RT Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II (#21, Mathieu Detry / Stéphane Perrin / Frédéric Vervisch) begins its first full 24H SERIES European season from 7<sup>th</sup> on the grid.

Behind the Jura Racing Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II (#71, Yevgen Sokolovskiy / Vytenis Gulbinas / Arunas Geciauskas / Jonas Gelžinis), the returning Red Ant Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup (#903, Ayrton Redant / Yannick Redant / Kobe de Breucker), which took 992 Teams' honours last year in the 24H SERIES, will start 9<sup>th</sup> overall and from 992 class pole position. One place further back, the Hofer-Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 (#11, Michael Kroll / Chantal Prinz / Alexander Prinz / Carsten Tilke), which ended a stop-start Q1 with the third fastest time, rounds out the overall top 10 on the grid.

Amazingly, the returning Kessel Racing (#8, 'L.M.D.V.' / Alessandro Cutrera / Marco Talarico / Marco Frezza / David Fumanelli), which fields the only Ferrari 488 GT3 in the field, will start 30<sup>th</sup> after failing to set a time at all during Q1. The Swiss team's only lap of the first 15-minute session, set just moments before the chequered flag was flown, was deemed to infringe track limits and was disallowed.

Across in 992, and just two-tenths adrift of category polesitter Red Ant Racing, the Red Camel-Jordans.nl Porsche 911 GT3 Cup (#909, Ivo Breukers / Rik Breukers / Luc Breukers / Fabian Danz) lines up 2<sup>nd</sup> in-class ahead of Centri Porsche Ticino (#912, Valerio Presezzi / Max Busnelli / Ivan Jacoma / Francesco Fenici), the highest-placed of the 992-AM runners. Further back in 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> on the overall grid, RPM Racing (#907, Tracy Krohn / Niclas Jönsson / Philip Hamprecht) and Ebimotors (#973, Paolo Venerosi / Paolo Gnemmi / Gianluigi Piccioli / Gianluca Giorgi) were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest 992-AM entries.

Disappointed not to be further up the grid, the Willi Motorsport by Ebimotors Porsche 911 GT3 Cup (#955, Fabrizio Broggi / Sergiu Nicolae / Sabino de Castro) will start 4<sup>th</sup> after losing time in the gravel trap during Q2.

Across in GTX, a final flying lap was enough for the RD Signs - Siauliai racing team Lamborghini Huracán Super Trofeo (#720, Audrius Butkevicius / Nicola Michelin / Paulius Paskevicius) to pip class pole position from Vortex V8 (#701, Lionel Amrouche / Philippe Bonnel / Philippe Gruau). The French team will still start from 2<sup>nd</sup> in-class but endured a tough time in qualifying when a wheel nut issue led to the right front wheel on the sister #702 Vortex 1.0 (Laurent Misbach / Lucas Sugliano / Pierre Fontaine) detaching itself through Materassi. The first red flag of the GT session was flown as discarded bodywork was also removed from the racing line.

The 9und11 Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup MR (#719, Georg Goder / Ralf Oehme / Martin Schlüter / Leonard Oehme), which has taken class wins on both of its previous outings in the 24H SERIES, will start 4<sup>th</sup> in GTX ahead of the returning PB Racing Lotus Exige V6 Cup R (#726, Stefano d'Aste / Vito Utzieri / Luca Littardi / Pietro Vergnano / Costantino Peroni), the latter's first series entry since the Hankook 12H MUGELLO in 2021.

Buggyra Racing (#416, Aliyyah Koloc / David Vrsecky / Adam Lacko) made a strong start to its first full season in the 24H SERIES by taking GT4 class pole position with its Mercedes-AMG GT4, albeit by just three-tenths of a second from the returning Atlas BX Motorsports (#403, Steven Cho / Roelof Bruins / Jong Kim Kyum). In a dramatic moment, the South Korean team, also running a Mercedes-AMG GT4 this weekend, appeared to have beaten its Emirati rival on the very last lap only to suffer a track-limits infringement. Just half a second back, the Simpson Motorsport BMW M4 GT4 (#438, David Holloway / Carl Cavers / Vasily Vladykin) lines up 3<sup>rd</sup> in GT4.

The SK Racing Ligier JS2 R (#215, Franck Eburderie / Franco Lemma / Jérôme Dacosta / Alain Ferté), which took TCX class victory at last year's Hankook 12H MUGELLO, was the fastest TCE runner overall with a commanding average lap time of 2m 02.730s, a little over two seconds quicker than the BMW M2 CS Racing of nearest TCX rival Primus Racing (#251, Peter Larsen / Johan Rosen / Hampus Hedin), which will line up 2<sup>nd</sup>. The French team had a worrying moment though heading into the final part of qualifying when a component on the Ligier's front splitter detached.

Series debutant AIKOA Racing (#147, Sandro Pelatti / Nicola Baldan / Francesco Cardone / Filippo Barberi / Franco Girolami) originally qualified 3<sup>rd</sup> in TCE, but the Audi RS3 LMS DSG was summarily issued a five-place grid drop for not running its 'AM' driver

during Q1. This relegates the Italian team behind Hofer-Racing by Bonk Motorsport's dual entries. The German team's #331 M2 CS Racing (Martin Kroll / Felix Partl / Michael Bonk / Max Partl) eventually came out on top for TC-class pole position after the sister #332 BMW (Volker Piepmeyer / Martin Kroll / Hermann Bock / Michael Bonk) spun at turn five during Q3, bringing an end to its qualifying session in the process.

The first six hours of the 2023 Hankook 12H MUGELLO kicks off at the Autodromo Internazionale del Mugello tomorrow – Saturday 25 March – at 11.15 hrs local time. Following the event's traditional overnight intervention, which begins later that afternoon at 17.15 hrs, the race resumes at 09.00 hrs on Sunday 26 March, and will run uninterrupted until the chequered flag is unfurled at 15.00 hrs. The action will be live with commentary from radiolemans.com on the official 24H SERIES YouTube channel. Regular updates will also be published on Twitter (@24HSeries), Facebook (24H Series) and Instagram (24H Series). Further information can be found at [www.24hseries.com](http://www.24hseries.com).

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