



## Team GP Elite vs. Herberth Motorsport at 2024 Hankook 12H MUGELLO mid-point

- Team GP Elite bounces back from early puncture to lead at half-distance; event record holder Herberth Motorsport to take tomorrow's restart on the lead lap.
- Heart of Racing by SPS currently 3<sup>rd</sup> after starting from the pitlane.
- Red Ant Racing holds 1-2 in 992; undefeated Centri Porsche Ticino 2<sup>nd</sup> in 992-Am.
- 9und11 Racing leads GTX; Hofor Racing by Bonk Motorsport vs. Lionspeed GP in GT4.
- World Rally Championship GOAT Sébastien Loeb, 2016 FIA World Endurance Champion Romain Dumas currently 3<sup>rd</sup> in 992.

**MUGELLO (23 March, 2024) – Team GP-Elite currently leads the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Hankook 12H MUGELLO after the opening 6.5 hours, despite suffering a puncture on the first lap.**

Having been pipped to pole by the BOEM by Kessel Racing Ferrari 296 GT3 (#8, L. M.D.V / Alessandro Cutrera / Marco Talarico / Marco Frezza / David Fumanelli) in a dramatic qualifying session, the Team GP Elite Porsche 992 GT3 R (#32, Lucas Groeneveld / Jesse van Kuijk / Daan van Kuijk / Max van Splunteren) then had a troubled start to the race. The Dutch team was outdragged into turn one by the fast-starting Herberth Motorsport Porsche 992 GT3 R (#91, Ralf Bohn / Scott Noble / Jason Hart), then pitted shortly afterwards with a slow front left puncture. After just one lap, Team GP Elite had already dropped to the tail of the field.

Deft fuel strategy and rapid stints by Jesse and Daan van Kuijk throughout the afternoon though saw GP Elite take the lead for the first time during the third hour, and the #32 Porsche has stayed at the front of the field ever since. Daan van Kuijk collected the chequered flag for 'part one' of the event 1m 33s clear of the rest of the field, completing 185 laps of the 5.246km Autodromo Internazionale del Mugello in the process.

Herberth Motorsport is your current GT3-Am class leader and runs 2<sup>nd</sup> overall. Ralf Bohn made a lightning start from the second row of the grid to take 2<sup>nd</sup> at the first corner, and

though the 2017 Overall GT Teams 'Continents' champion at one stage fell a lap behind the hard-charging Team GP Elite Porsche, a short fuel stop in the closing moments means both Porsches will take tomorrow's restart on the lead lap.

Both Ralf Bohn and Herberth Motorsport are looking to extend their Hankook 12H MUGELLO records with a fourth overall win this weekend.

The Heart of Racing by SPS Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo (#27, Gray Newell / Ian James / Roman de Angelis) is currently 3<sup>rd</sup> overall after a superb recovery drive for the American team, one that started from the pitlane after being served a post-qualifying penalty. Heart of Racing by SPS was also involved in a thrilling, on-track dice for position with the Poulsen Motorsport BMW M4 GT3 (#14, Roland Poulsen / Kristian Poulsen / Christoffer Nygaard) heading into the closing stages.

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### **Hankook 12H MUGELLO – Overall top three (after 6.5 hours)**

1. Team GP Elite (#32, Porsche 992 GT3 R) – 185 laps
2. Herberth Motorsport (#91, Porsche 992 GT3 R) – + 1m 33.367s
3. The Heart of Racing Team by SPS (#27, Mercedes-AMG GT3) – 184 laps

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After pitting in the closing moments, Poulsen Motorsport will take tomorrow's restart from 5<sup>th</sup>, just behind the Mercedes-AMG GT3 EVO of reigning GT3-AM Teams' champion CP Racing (#85, Charles Putman / Charles Espenlaub / Joe Foster / Shane Lewis). The American team this weekend celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> start at a CREVENTIC event for team staple – and 2018 Overall GT Drivers' champion – Joe Foster.

The pole-sitting BOEM by Kessel Racing Ferrari 296 GT3 (#8, L. M.D.V / Alessandro Cutrera / Marco Talarico / Marco Frezza / David Fumanelli) will take the restart from 6<sup>th</sup> on the grid, and currently leads GT3-Pro/Am. The Ferrari, with David Fumanelli at the wheel, opened up a 45-second advantage during the first hour, but dropped back due to time lost during the opening rounds of pit stops.

Having started its day with a spin at turn one, the sister Kessel Racing Ferrari 488 GT3 (#5, Alexandre Bochez / Mikaël Bochez / Murat Cuhadaroglu / Felice Jelmini) has dropped to 30<sup>th</sup> overall after colliding with the Lionspeed GP Porsche 718 Cayman just over four hours into the event. An impact that punctured the Ferrari's radiator, dislodged its front cover, and cost the Swiss team almost an hour in the pits.

E2P Racing Porsche 991.2 GT3 R (#90, Pablo Burguera / Antonio Sainero / Álvaro Parente) – one of six overall leaders of the 2024 Hankook 12H MUGELLO thus far – bounced back from a moment in the gravel early on and now lies 8<sup>th</sup> overall. Italy's MP Racing (#58, Thomas Gostner / David Gostner / Manuela Gostner / Corinna Gostner), also on a recovery drive, sits 9<sup>th</sup> overall after a tough start to the event. The Mercedes-AMG GT3 EVO, while avoiding the spinning Kessel Racing Ferrari, had a spin of its own at turn two on the opening lap, following that up a few laps later with another spin – at turn 15 this time – while fighting its way back through the traffic.

The Juta Racing Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II (#71, Lukas Sundahl / Casper Stevenson / John Corbett / Arunas Geciauskas), another early podium contender, has recovered to 10<sup>th</sup> overall after losing time to front-end damage, caused by a collision on-track.

Two early podium contenders – Car Collection Motorsport and 2017 Overall GT Teams' 'Europe' champion Hofor-Racing – have fallen to the tail of the field after earlier mechanical issues. The Car Collection Motorsport Porsche 992 GT3 R (#12, 'Hash' / Alex Fontana / Ivan Jacoma / Yannick Mettler), which had run 3<sup>rd</sup> overall early on, lost close to 25 minutes in the pits with a broken front right wheel hub, while the Hofor Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 (#11, Michael Kroll / Chantal Prinz / Alexander Prinz / Maximilian Partl / Kenneth Heyer), which moved its way up from 6<sup>th</sup> on the grid to 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in the opening stages, lost more than 60 laps to the leader with differential failure.

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### **Hankook 12H MUGELLO – 992 top three (after 6.5 hours)**

1. Red Ant Racing (#903, Porsche 992 GT3 Cup) – 181 laps
2. Red Ant Racing (#903, Porsche 992 GT3 Cup) – 178 laps
3. Orchid Racing Team (#963, Porsche 992 GT3 Cup) – +2m 21.577s)

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Red Ant Racing ended 'part one' of the Hankook 12H MUGELLO 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in 992, and with the #903 Porsche (Ayrton Redant / Yannick Redant / Kobe de Breucker) three laps clear of the sister #904 GT3 Cup (Peter Guelinckx / Brent Verheyen / Michiel Haverans) after a commanding run. Impressively, the #903 Porsche is 7<sup>th</sup> overall on the road heading into the overnight intervention.

Nine-time World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb and 2016 FIA World Endurance Champion Romain Dumas have made a strong start to their respective 24H SERIES debuts, and are currently running 3<sup>rd</sup> in 992 aboard the Orchid Racing Team Porsche 992 GT3 Cup (#963, Sébastien Loeb / Romain Dumas / Laurent Misbach / Loic Villiger /

Alexandre Mottet). The sister #917 entry meanwhile (Laurène Godey / Antonio Garzon / Daniel Gillioz / Frank Villiger / Alexandre Mottet) has dropped to 12<sup>th</sup> in 992 after an early trip into the gravel.

Despite being served a 30-second penalty for overtaking a car under Code 60 conditions, NKPP by Bas Koeten Racing (#992, Gijs Bessem / Harry Hilders) is 4<sup>th</sup> in 992 and currently holds the 992-Am lead ahead of Centri Porsche Ticino (#912, Valerio Presezzi / Max Busnelli / Ivan Jacoma / Francesco Fenici). With three class wins at the event already to its name, the Swiss team is undefeated at the Hankook 12H MUGELLO.

HRT Performance Porsche 992 GT3 Cup (#967, Nicolas Stürzinger / Amedeo Pampanini / Linus Diener) rounds out the 992-Am podium after 6.5 hours.

NEUHOFER RENNSPORT BY MRS GT (#988, Markus Neuhofer / Felix Neuhofer / Alexey Denisov / Manuel Zlof) had been in contention for a top five finish in 992 throughout the afternoon, but ended its day in the gravel trap at turn 15, bringing out the seventh Code 60 of the day with just three minutes left on the clock.

Reigning 992-AM Teams' champion RPM Racing (#907, Tracy Krohn / Niclas Jönsson / Philip Hamprecht) had also been in contention for both the 992-Am win and an outright 992 podium, but has seemingly retired from the event after a high-speed collision against the pit wall. Tracy Krohn has been taken to the local medical facility for further observation.

Collected in the opening lap melee, Porsche Baltic (#993, Robertas Kupcikas / Domas Raudonis / Tautvydas Rudokas / Eduardas Klepikas) has yet to complete a full race lap at Mugello, but hopes the Porsche 992 GT3 Cup will be repaired in-time for tomorrow's restart. Red Camel-Jordans.nl meanwhile (#909, Ivo Breukers / Luc Breukers / Fabian Danz), which was also involved in the first lap incident, eventually returned to the track after significant repairs – including a sheered radiator mount – but completed just 13 laps after a suspected electrical issue struck late in the day.

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The 9und11 Racing Porsche 991.2 GT3 Cup MR (#719, Georg Goder / Ralf Oehme / Tim Scheerbrarh / Martin Schlüter) currently leads the GTX class after a clean run, and holds a 57-lap lead over Vortex V8 (#701, Lionel Amrouche / Philippe Bonnel / Gilles Courtois / Lucas Sugliano). Running just one example of its older Vortex 1.0 this weekend, the French team lost significant time earlier in the day to transmission issues.

2018 Overall TCE Teams' champion Hofor Racing by Bonk Motorsport (#431, Martin Kroll / Michael Bonk / Rainer Partl) leads the GT4 field heading into tomorrow's restart, despite the BMW M4 GT4 inadvertently tipping the SebLajoux Racing by DUWO Racing Porsche 992 GT3 Cup (#908, Jean-François Demorge / Philippe Polette / Gilles Blasco / Stéphane Perrin) into a spin at turn 12.

Long-time class leader Lionspeed GP (#424, José Garcia / Daniel Miller / Patrick Kolb / Dennis Bohn) is also in contention for class victory, the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport having survived three separate on-track collisions with the E2P Racing Porsche, the Poulsen Motorsport BMW, and the Kessel Racing Ferrari.

Last year's GT4 Teams' runner-up Buggyra ZM Racing (#416, Aliyyah Koloc / David Vršecký / Adam Lacko) had been in podium contention, but lost several laps in the pits after a power loss issue struck the Mercedes-AMG GT4. Finally, PCR Sport's Mercedes-AMG GT4 (#418, Vicente Dasi / Josep Parera / Harriet Arruabarrena) has yet to return to the track after a heavy off at turn 11 just under five hours into the event.

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The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Hankook 12H MUGELLO is scheduled to restart tomorrow – Sunday 24 March – at 09.00 hrs, with the final 5.5 hours running uninterrupted until the chequered flag is flown at 14.30 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 X (@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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