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Lamborghini win in Vallelunga

Giorgio Sanna & Giacomo Barri victorious in a rain-affected Italian GT weekend

18 September 2013, Sant'Agata Bolognese. Lamborghini scored their maiden win of the 2013 Campionato Italiano Gran Turismo at Vallelunga last weekend, navigating atrocious wet conditions in Autocarrozzeria Imperiale's Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4 to win the weekend's second race in the series' penultimate round.

Saturday's qualifying sessions at the Rome circuit were conducted in the dry, and the #63 car claimed ninth place after the first session, just ahead of the sister car of Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo regular, Mirko Zanardini. Q2's result however, set a strong platform for the second race by setting the second fastest time and claiming a place on the front row of the grid.

The Autumnal weather deteriorated significantly on Sunday, although the first 50 minute race, while declared wet at the start, saw the field swap back to dry tyres at the pit window. The Imperiale Racing car made some good progress over the course of the two stints and claimed two positions over its grid slot to finish in 7th place.

By the time the field assembled for race two just after 6pm on Sunday evening, the rain returned with a vengeance, challenging teams and drivers to adapt set-up, strategy and driving styles from dry qualifying to a damp race one to the torrential conditions of a full wet race to conclude the race meeting.

In the event, the race started behind the safety car - its first of three appearances in adverse conditions, which Giacomo Barri navigated with skill and care during the opening stint, utilising the superior performance of the Gallardo's four-wheel drive to good advantage. Having seen the safety car on track for the second time, Barri defended a lead from the Roal Motorsport BMW Z4 of Stefano Comandini and the following Audi R8 LMS of Johan Kristoffersson.

After the driver change, Giorgio Sanna inherited a similar set of circumstances: a wet track, continuous rain and the BMW Z4 and Audi R8 LMS in his wing mirrors. His careful defence was lightened when the conditions caught out the Audi, now in the hands of Alex Frassineti, who suffered a spin, but it wasn't long before the safety car made its third and final appearance on track, and shortly afterwards, the race was concluded early as a caution to the conditions, leaving Sanna victorious and providing the team with their first victory of the season in hard-fought and challenging conditions.

Giorgio Sanna said, "During this season working with Imperiale Racing, we have been progressively learning and understanding the Reiter GT3 car and with the support of everybody including Squadra Corse, improving the set-up. This journey has been different for us as we have not only had to adapt the car to its Avon tyres, but also keep pace with professional teams and established cars that have far more experience than us in the series."

He added, "The performance in the two races at Vallelunga - with dry qualifying, and the victory in the wet, indicates we have found the right direction. Although we still have work to do, we will come to the series next year with plenty more experience to fight at the front. I trust and thank the team for their good work."

The series concludes at Monza in a month's time on October 20.