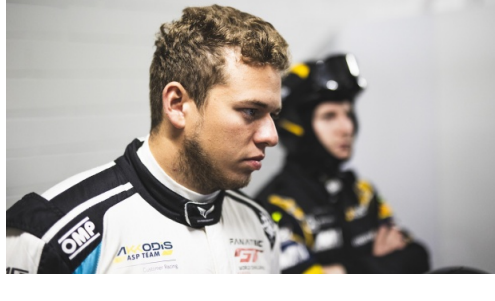


# Fanatec GT World - Sprint (Hockenheimring) - A win to mark the end of the summer break!

04-09-2023

## #News

After a five-week long summer break, it was back to business at the Hockenheimring (third round of the Sprint Cup), on a demanding track and among a pack of 41 cars. For Akkodis ASP Team, current leaders for both teams and drivers in the championship with the #88 of Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy (leading by 16.5 points), the two 60 minute races were total opposites of each other. In the first, the #88 only managed four laps then had to retire following a contact. However, they scored a wonderful victory in the second race, built lap after lap by a determined crew that kept them leading the championship by 9 points. In the #87, Jim Pla and Eric Debard, entered in the Bronze Cup, did not manage to build on their good performances displayed in the test sessions. On Saturday, the #87 also had to retire early, after contact in the second lap. The next day, the crew finished 8th in Bronze Cup after receiving a penalty for not respecting track limits. Next up, off to Valencia (Spain) in two weeks for the before-last round of the championship.



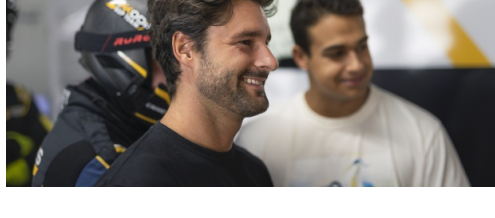
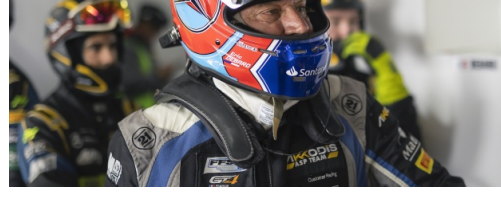
Sprint Cup leaders, Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy (#88) got right to work in the first test sessions. With a field of 41 cars, it was hard to get a clear moment over the 4.6km of track, which also had some spots of rain.

The free practice session took place on a drying track. After numerous changes in the leaderboard, Raffaele Marciello (#88) finished P2 with 1m39.368s, while Jim Pla, driving with Eric Debard (#87), was P4 in Bronze Cup (P19 overall) despite heading off track at turn 16, which caused a red flag.



A few hours later, the Pre-qualifying session allowed Raffaele Marciello to take third place. For the #87, they set the same as they did in free practice, with Jim Pla (#87) P4 in Bronze Cup (P19 overall).

On Saturday morning, in the first qualifying session, Timur Boguslavskiy (#88) qualified 28th overall after having lost his best time (P12), cancelled for not respecting the track limits, which is a trap on this layout. In Bronze Cup, Jim Pla (#87) had the same issue and finished P8 in the category (P24 overall).

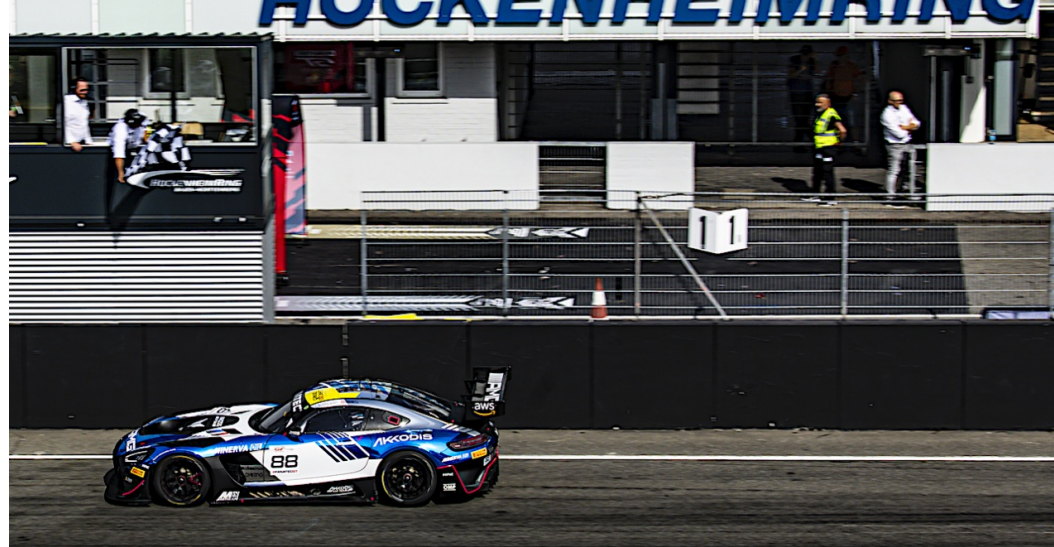


## Race 1 - A race to forget!

Although it was a nice sunny Saturday afternoon, the first race quickly turned into a disaster. The #87, driven by Jim Pla, was the team's first car to give up, after a contact at the hairpin in the second lap, which required the safety car to go on track.

The sister car, the #88, then also followed with an early retirement. Timur Boguslavskiy returned to the pit box on the fourth lap after a contact following a late brake caused some significant damage to the front. The crew of the #88 held onto their championship lead in the Sprint Cup, but their advantage was down to 1,5 points...

On Sunday morning, it was time for the second qualifying session which would set the grid for race 2. The fight for pole was intense and the ranking was constantly shuffling. Often at the top, Raffaele Marciello (#88) finished third to start from the second row. The poleman was no other than his closest rival in the championship (#40), who was only 0.5 points off the leaders. In Bronze Cup, Eric Debard (#87) had a good pace but saw his times cancelled multiple times for not respecting the track limits. He would start from the back of the grid.



## Race 2 - A reassuring victory

Raffaele Marciello had a perfect start and headed out in P2, up against the exhaust of the leader (#40). But during the first lap, a contact required the intervention of the safety car. Ten minutes later, the restart was blazing. Lello put the leader under pressure straightaway, then quickly overtook him in a clean manner, setting the best lap time as well. Leading the pack, the Akkodis ASP driver had one goal - widen the gap. In Bronze Cup, Eric Debard (#87) managed his start and was running P35, P7 in the category. But it wasn't long before he received track limit warnings.

When it was time to change drivers, Jim Pla (#87) was the first to pass over to his teammate, while Lello stayed behind the wheel for as long as possible. Timur Boguslavskiy (#88) went out on track, still leading, with more than 6 seconds ahead of his nearest rival. A string of fast times allows him to keep his advantage, just before he had a great fright with 14 minutes to go. Calling about a gearbox issue on the radio, everyone held their breath... Jim Pla (#87) increased his efforts to reclaim positions, but received a 5-second penalty (after the chequered flag), for not respecting the track limits. In the end, the #87 finished P32, P8 Bronze Cup.



Despite some concerns (about the gearbox and a rather high temperature), Timur Boguslavskiy crossed the finish line as the winner, and for the first time without starting from pole. The crew perfectly managed the 35 laps of the race. This was an important victory for the championship. The #88 stayed on top with a 9.5 point lead ahead of the #40.

Next, it's off to Spain and the circuit of Valencia in two weeks' time. There are four races left to fight to find out who will win the 2023 Sprint Cup.

