



Intercontinental GT Challenge

LAGUNA SECA (USA) – 26th/28th October 2018

Team SunEnergy1 Racing claims two Driver titles!

The championship for Tristan Vautier and the « Bronze Driver » title for Kenny Habul...

After the final round of the 2018 Intercontinental GT Challenge, at the Californian circuit of Laguna Seca, Team SunEnergy1 Racing claimed two Driver titles with brio. The 2018 overall Championship title went to Tristan Vautier while the 'Bronze Driver' title went to the team boss, Kenny Habul. Jérôme Policand and eleven members of AKKA-ASP's staff took part in this event on the other side of the Atlantic, taking care of the technical running of the two SunEnergy1 Racing cars. A great experience, unprecedented and full of lessons to be learnt.



For Jérôme Policand, this expedition to the United States allowed the French mechanics and engineers who took part in the event to learn even more about the philosophy of 'USA-style' motorsports, but also to enjoy a fine adventure.

« This event was a real experience for us, and I would first and foremost like to thank Kenny Habul for the confidence he placed in us. Our entry alongside SunEnergy1 Racing took place in a number of stages, taking care of the running of the two cars while using

the infrastructure, tools and logistical means of SunEnergy1 Racing.



"Three AKKA-ASP mechanics and one engineer arrived in Mooresville (North Carolina), where the team is based, two weeks beforehand, in order to take care of the preparation of the two cars. Mooresville is not far from Charlotte, and is the base for a number of Nascar teams. The two cars entered at Laguna Seca were not in the same technical configuration, one being in IMSA format and the second according to the European specifications. It was therefore necessary to harmonise them to the rules of the intercontinental Challenge, a mix between the American regulations and those of the Blancpain.

"Two driver titles were at stake for Team SunEnergy1 Racing, so there was quite a lot of pressure to supply the best possible performance and achieve the goals that had been set. The two cars had top-flight driver line-ups. The #175 Mercedes-AMG GT3 (with official support from Mercedes-AMG) was fighting for the Drivers' title with Tristan Vautier, Maro Engel and Maxi Buhk. Tristan and Raffaele Marciello, leading the Championship classification before the final race, had been separated to optimise Mercedes-AMG's hopes of winning the Manufacturers' title. The Italian driver was racing with Strakka-Racing in California. The second SunEnergy1 Racing car, the #75 Mercedes-AMG GT3, which was fighting for the Bronze Drivers title with Kenny Habul, who was joined for this event by Mikael Grenier and Luca Stolz.



"During the race week, there were twelve of us from AKKA-ASP, eight mechanics, three engineers and myself. The team worked hard to place the team in an optimal condition for this eight-hour endurance race.



"The race proved to be a very particular time, a mix of strategy and technical dexterity. A crazy race for Tristan where everything came down to the last pit-stop, under safety car conditions. A strategy which made all the difference, putting them definitively out of reach of Strakka-Racing

and Lello... while at the front, Audi claimed the manufacturers' title. Finally, finishing third on the podium, Tristan Vautier claimed the Drivers title alone, with a slight twinge to the heart for Raffaele Marciello.

"As far as the #75 was concerned, it was very tight. This car had a top line-up, and quite sincerely, I find Kenny (Habul) very impressive. He is a talented driver, and in terms of the AM drivers, there is no question : he drives very, very well. During the race, Kenny was involved in a collision with a Lamborghini. A heavy collision which caused quite serious damage. Triangle, steering rack, a broken front-left fork ... it was quite worrying. Despite everything, the car was brought back to the team and repairs could get underway.

"To be classified and to keep his hopes of the title alive, Kenny's car had to complete 70% of the race distance of the winner. Within five minutes of the deadline, the #75 was able to get back to the race ... and finished having covered 71% of the distance ! The title was at the end of this mechanical marathon.



"During this eight-hour race, we had to face a real technical challenge with the #75 while playing a strategy game with the #175. There was no time to be bored ! It was worth all the hard work as two titles crowned SunEnergy1 Racing's efforts. It was a very fine experience..."

After the United States, Team AKKA-ASP will head for Bahrain at the end of November (the cars are already on their way) for the FIA GT Nations Cup. Two cars are entered, the first a Mercedes-AMG GT3 for Jean- Luc Beaubelique and Jim Pla (FIA GT Nations Cup) and the second, a Mercedes-AMG GT4 for Thomas Drouet and a driver still to be named (GT4 International Cup). On November 30th and December 1st, Team AKKA-ASP will defend the colours of France against over fifteen other countries.

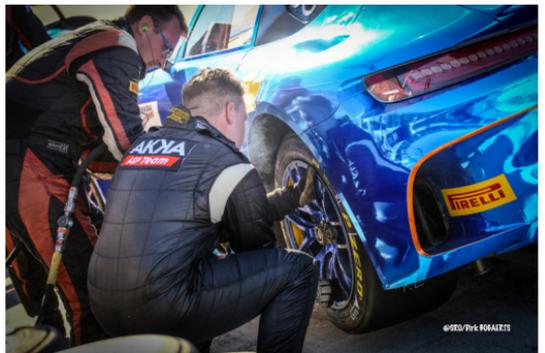
AUTO SPORT PROMOTION

4, ZA de Fongrave
82800 Rabastens - France
Tel : + 33 (0)9 54 52 95 36
Fax : + 33 (0)5 63 40 74 73
Email: atelier@jerome-policand.com

Jérôme POLICAND
Mobile: + 33 6 08 76 33 31
Email: info@jerome-policand.com

Service Communication
Email: communication@jerome-policand.com

Service Presse - Race Com
Email: race.com@wanadoo.fr



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