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SRT Motorsports Post-Race Report - Lone Star Le Mans at Circuit of The Americas

September 19, 2014, Austin, Texas - SRT (Street and Racing Technology) Motorsports swept the IMSA TUDOR United SportsCar Championship race at Circuit of The Americas (COTA) with a one-two finish in the GTLM class with its pair of Dodge Viper SRT GTS-Rs, in addition to a victory in the GTD division with the ViperExchange.com Dodge Viper SRT GT3-R on Saturday.

Jonathan Bomarito and Kuno Wittmer co-drove the No. 93 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R to both the GTLM race win and the class points lead with only next month's Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta left on the 2014 IMSA TUDOR Championship schedule. The No. 93 was closely followed across the finish line by the No. 91 Viper of Marc Goossens and Dominik Farnbacher, giving SRT Motorsports its first one-two race sweep since returning to major-league sports car racing in 2012.

The victory gave SRT Motorsports its first championship lead since the 2012 return and the No. 93 is now seven points ahead of the second-place team, with 300 points to 293. SRT is also tied with Porsche in the GTLM manufacturer championship standings at 308 points.

The season-ending Petit Le Mans takes place in two weeks on Saturday, October 4.

The COTA victory was the third for SRT Motorsports. Bomarito and Wittmer also won the Brickyard Grand Prix at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in July and Goossens and Farnbacher won at Wisconsin's Road America in 2013.

Starting from the pole today, Wittmer led the race's opening laps and was soon joined at the front of the field by Farnbacher. Bomarito and Goossens took over from their respective teammates during the race's first round of pit stops that occurred 60 minutes into the event and the Vipers continued to run with the leaders throughout the final one hour and 45 minutes.

Bomarito was in second with Goossens trailing closely in third with less than 20 minutes remaining in the race when the leading Porsche came to the pits with a terminal mechanical issue. The Vipers quickly moved into the lead and were never challenged to the finish as Bomarito took the checkered flag only a few car lengths ahead of Goossens, but over 20 seconds ahead of the third-place Porsche.

Although today's one-two finish was an SRT Motorsports first, it marked a series-leading third dual podium finish for the Dodge Viper team this season. At New York's Watkins Glen International in June, Goossens and Farnbacher finished second and Bomarito and Wittmer were third before swapping finishing positions in the following race at Canadian Tire Motorsports Park.

The No. 93 team also continued an unmatched string of six consecutive top-five finishes at COTA that began with the third-place showing at The Glen. The run of success includes the COTA and Indy victories, second in Canada, third at Road America and fifth one race ago at Virginia International Raceway (VIR). The six-race top-five run is also the longest such streak in SRT Motorsports history.

While the No. 93 squad took the GTLM points lead, Goossens, Farnbacher and the No. 91 team solidified their position with today's second-place finish. The team ranks third in the team and driver championships with 283 points. They trail the second-place team by 10 points and are seven points clear of the fourth-place team.

In the GTD class, Ben Keating and Jeroen Bleekemolen drove the No. 33 ViperExchange.com Dodge Viper SRT GT3-R to their second win of the season after earning their first victory at Canadian Tire Motorsports Park. Bleekemolen took over from Keating at the race's one-hour mark and climbed from seventh to take the lead with 30 minutes remaining.

The season-ending Petit Le Mans can be seen live in its entirety on IMSA.com and in same-day coverage on FOX

Sports 2 beginning at 3 p.m. EDT on Saturday, Oct. 4. Race highlights will air on FOX on Sunday, Oct. 5 and viewers can check local listings in their areas for air times.

Jonathan Bomarito, driver, No. 93 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R

How do you feel after saying you needed to win to take care of things?

"I think I'm going to start saying that before every race. Everything went according to plan. What else can I say? One and two for our Dodge Viper GTS-Rs with amazing strategy and amazing pit stops. It was an awesome job by the crew today. Marc was my wingman there and I'm just so excited. We're leading the championship going into the last race and I'm just absolutely in shock. We're so focused and so motivated and so excited to get to the next race."

How does it feel to go from six points down to holding a seven-point advantage?

"It's just incredible. I didn't want to leave here being more than six points behind and to be seven points up is huge because I know how hard it is to earn six points in this class and it's phenomenal. We couldn't have asked for a better day."

How important was your pit crew's effort today?

"They were absolutely amazing. Hat's off to them and I owe those guys a dinner and a few drinks."

Kuno Wittmer, driver, No. 93 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R

How does it feel to win and take the points lead?

"It's just mind blowing right now. I don't have the words to describe it. I'm still in total shock. I guess when you're in Texas you win big, right? Finishing one and two is important and it was a great team effort. The pit stops were incredible all day long. The pace of the car was right there. We did everything flawlessly – no mistakes on course, no contact and the least amount of time in pit lane. We've got the points lead going into Atlanta and I'm just getting goose bumps as I talk about it."

How was the race when you were in the Viper?

"My stint in the Viper was pretty good. We got off to a good start and the Porsche was putting good pressure on us and, to be honest, I think we just missed the window on the tire pressures. I had a hard time keeping the pace in front of them and then I locked up and went a little bit wide. I let Dominik attack the Porsche for the lead and then I tucked in behind him. A little bit of game play on our part and a bit of a team effort. You've got to win as a team and not do it solo."

What made the difference in today's race?

"Definitely pit stops. We had no mistakes. Our strategy was perfect – we pitted at the right times, the right amount of fuel, the right tire compounds – and it was just a great team strategy by the engineering staff. There was a little bit of good luck for us with the 911 falling out, which was unfortunate for them, but that's racing."

Marc Goossens, driver, No. 91 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R

How was your race?

"It was tough for me. I wasn't able to drink during my entire run, so it was tough. I started to feel myself cramping up at the end and was very dehydrated so it was tough when I got out of the car. The heat was so overwhelming and you can't do a whole run without drinks here. Something on the system failed. The bottle was in there, but it wasn't functioning. The car stayed very consistent and once we got behind the 93 after our pit stops, I just had to make sure there was a cushion for the 93 who needs that lead in the championship. We're in good shape now with one to go. I can't wait to get to Road Atlanta."

How will you and your teammates approach Road Atlanta?

"We obviously need to repeat what we did here today. I don't know what the points are right now, but the 93 for sure can win the championship. Right now, we need to make sure that happens and also that we win the manufacturer's title. It's going to be a long race, but anything is possible. The strategy has to be the same as every race – try to get a double podium."

Dominik Farnbacher, driver, No. 91 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R

How was your race?

"It was good, but I didn't expect that. We were very strong, but the Porsches were strong too and they had a mishap and that's how we were able to finish one, two. The cars just ran flawless and we always had the car free the whole

race, so it was pretty good. The 93 Viper made a big step toward the championship. The 20th of September will be known as 'Viper Day' from now on."

Did you enjoy racing against your teammate?

"We were ahead before in the race, but due to the good pit stop by the 93 crew and the consistent driving of Kuno and Jonathan, it gave the lead to our sister car. When we were fighting it out, Kuno was right on me a couple times and so was Marc on Jonathan, so it was a good one – a good team fight. It was fair and respectful and that's what the Viper stands for."

What are your thoughts heading to Atlanta?

"Now we can win the championship on the driver's side, the team side and the manufacturer. We're going to be all in for the last race."

Ralph Gilles, president and CEO of SRT Motorsports

How do you feel about the performance of SRT Motorsports this weekend?

"This has been a successful, winning weekend for SRT Motorsports. In the TUDOR Championship points standings, we've gone from second to first place, not only in the driver's championship but also in the manufacturer's championship. It's an incredible achievement for our second full season in the sport. Ben Keating and the Viper Exchange team also won in the GTD class. We're also very happy about Miller Racing's effort in Trans Am and the TA2 class with Cameron Lawrence taking the podium and winning his first race in the Dodge Challenger SRT and Tommy Archer, a fixture in motorsports, finishing second at Lime Rock."

Beth Paretta, SRT director of motorsports marketing and operations

How was today's race?

"Just fabulous. Everybody did a great job. We had some very intricate pit stops that the team nailed and with such a tight field it comes down to who makes the fewest mistakes. That was probably how we won today. The setup was fine, so going into the race we were comfortable, but you never know what is going to happen. There's always a concern that a yellow could get thrown and sometimes you're waiting on a yellow and it never happens. I definitely feel bad for the Porsche team that had a late retirement. That's just heartbreaking when that happens, but it happens to all of us and it's always tough. We're going into Petit Le Mans, the final race of the year, and it's going to come down to the wire and I think that's the best thing for the fans."

Gary Johnson, SRT racing manager

How important was today's win?

"Today was a perfect day for us. The opportunity to win the race after one of our competitors had some bad luck – we'll take it. It shows how important durability is. I just have to say the team had some really amazing pit stops while we were in the pit today. I have to congratulate Riley Technologies on a great day for not only the GTLM win in first and second, but also the GTD win."

Why has the No. 93 Viper had a successful second half of the season?

"Consistency is everything. We've got a fantastic team that makes sure the cars are 100 percent each time. Our team's been dodging issues all season and it just shows the strength of the team and what a great job they do."

Matt Bejnarowicz, lead engineer, No. 93 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R

How does it feel to win in Austin?

"You can't really complain when you are first and second in GTLM and first in GTD. Talk about a dominant day for the Viper. We caught some luck in the race and a few of our competitors had some problems that took them out of the race. We've been on the receiving end of that before, so you take it when you can get it. I'm really proud of the crew. It was a really tight race through the first stint and the crew put us in front of everybody with the first pit stop. My hat's off to the crew. They put us in the lead and gave us that opportunity and we just had to keep it from there."

What are your thoughts on the points?

"We couldn't have had a better day both on the manufacturer side and the driver championship. We gained a lot of valuable points and it gives us a lot of cushion going into Road Atlanta. A 10-hour endurance race is nothing to take lightly, but it sure is nice going in with a little bit of gap."

How do you approach Road Atlanta with the lead?

"At this point, we will probably approach it a little bit differently. You have to run your gap and watch the championship and even more so not take any risks. Usually our strategy is to win every race, but it will be a little bit of a different mind set for Road Atlanta."

Bill Riley, lead engineer, No. 91 Dodge Viper SRT GTS-R

How does it feel to finish first and second in Austin?

"It's a huge day for Viper with a one-two finish. We got a big jump on points both in the manufacturer and driver standings. It's a big day for us and on top of that we had the No. 33 Viper finish first in their class. We couldn't have asked for a better day."

What is your mindset heading to Atlanta?

"We're going to attack it just like we did this one. We've got to go out there and put it on them, put the screws to them and just keep it high pressure on everybody else. We have to make sure we keep ourselves in check, but we have to put pressure on the opposition. We'll go back to the shop and we've got eight days of prep. We'll put a ton of new parts on the car and make sure it's 100 percent."

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