



BMW Team RLL Results from Oak Tree GP at VIR

Müller & Hand 4th, Auberlen & Martin 5th, chase for driver's championship continues.

Woodcliff Lake, NJ – Oct. 5, 2013... BMW Team RLL finished fourth and fifth in today's 2.75-hour American Le Mans Series Oak Tree Grand Prix at Virginia International Raceway. A spirited drive and great battle by Dirk Müller in the No. 56 BMW Z4 GTE during the final minutes of the race secured the fourth-place finish to keep the BMW Motorsport driver second in Driver Championship point standings, now 16 points behind the leaders. The No. 55 BMW Z4 GTE of Bill Auberlen and Maxime Martin finished fifth.

Competing in his last ALMS race of the season before returning to Germany to finish his second year of the DTM series, Joey Hand started the No. 56 BMW Z4 GTE from the third position Müller earned in yesterday's qualifying session. Hand pitted on lap 36 to turn the car over to Müller. Racing in the fifth position for the next 27 laps, Müller made a strong pass for fourth on lap 63. He lost the position 13 laps later, but regained it on the last lap of the race to post a hard-earned fourth-place finish.

The team decided pole winner Maxime Martin would finish the race, so Bill Auberlen started the No. 55 machine from the front of the 11-car GT field. He pitted during the race's first caution period and ran as high as fourth in the opening minutes of the race. The fortunes of the No. 55 car turned worse as Auberlen's left-side door hinge failed and forced a second stop just past the one-hour mark. Martin swapped into the seat and rejoined the race tenth, practically two laps behind the leaders. While the race's pace was slowed by two more caution periods, Martin kept his head down and in the final 45 minutes of the race regained the lost laps and charged up five positions to finish fifth.

"At the end, Dirk and Max worked together well to give us a better margin in the race for second place in the manufacturer's and team championships," said **Jay O'Connell, Rahal Letterman Lanigan VP of Engineering**. "We kept our guys in the game, and in the No. 55 car we came back from being two laps down through a combination of hard driving and making the most of the caution periods. Both cars got faster toward the end while our competitors struggled with their tires, and I think we can be proud of the final result."

“Today was a great example of how we race with our hearts and not with horsepower that we obviously don’t have,” said **Gordon McDonnell, BMW NA Motorsport Manager.**

“It was a great job by the BMW Team RLL guys, Dirk, and Maxime to produce a very exciting finish. It was important for the points chase that we fight for every point we could get here in Virginia, and this result puts us in a good position to finish the season in Atlanta.”

Joey Hand, driver No. 56 Z4 GTE – (4th) – “For me, the role was that of a part-time guy all weekend which feels a little unusual, but I wanted to drive clean with Dirk’s championship in mind. Starting the race, that was difficult because I couldn’t quite be myself with a lot of guys chasing me and I would have liked to fight harder, but I was proud to keep the car in the hunt and turn it over to Dirk so he could race to the end.”

Dirk Müller, driver No. 56 Z4 GTE – (4th) – “First of all, we’re still in the championship hunt, so big thanks to my buddy Joey Hand. We knew it would be tough from the very beginning, but then will all that yellow [flags], it came down to a sprint race at the end. So that’s how I drove; it was hard, tough racing and I made my move on the next-to-last lap, in the hairpin. That was the only chance I had, so I took it. Actually it feels like a victory because it kept the No. 3 car from running away in the championship. I’m very happy with this result.”

Bill Auberlen, driver No. 55 Z4 GTE – (5th) – “The starts are always tough, but BMW takes care of us in the handling department, and we’re just too slow in the straights. So I got ambushed, and after the door hinge broke the team battled beautifully back up to fifth from two laps down and I think that’s a darn good day from where we might have been.”

Maxime Martin, driver No. 55 Z4 GTE – (5th) – “The best thing to say is that we knew we had to take every chance to get back on the lead lap. Thanks to the two safety car periods we were able to make it happen. Then we passed a number of cars and our car was getting faster and we put up a great fight. At the end it was a great fight in traffic and I was able to take advantage of several moments in traffic. We pushed until the end and ended up fifth. I think we had the car that could finish even better.”

The season-ending Petit Le Mans will be held at Road Atlanta, in Braselton, Georgia, on Saturday, Oct. 19th. The 1,000-mile race will be streamed live on ESPN3.com beginning at 11:30 a.m. ET and broadcast on Fox Sports 2 beginning at 11:00 a.m. An encore

presentation will be broadcast Sunday, Oct. 20th on Fox Sports 1 television at 4:00 p.m. ET.

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Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing

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