



ASTON MARTIN RACING PRESS INFORMATION

FRUSTRATION FOR ASTON MARTIN RACING IN JAPAN

Okayama, November 1 2009. Despite leading for the majority of the race Aston Martin Racing finished fourth in the inaugural round of the Asian Le Mans Series in Okayama, Japan.

Drivers Stefan Mücke (DE) and Harold Primat (CH) fought hard throughout the 126-lap three-hour race to finish fourth on track on Saturday 31 October.

ACO rules state that cars must finish with all bodywork intact. Unfortunately for the 007 crew, cracked louvers on the front wings of the car required Mücke to stop for repair in the final minutes of the race. The team taped the louvers to secure them and added a splash of fuel to get to the finish, dropping the car from first place to third but still in contention for a podium.

However, officials notified the team that the louvers must be mechanically fixed to the car so 007 returned to the pits a second time. The team changed the whole front nose in record time and Mücke ended the race as he started, in fourth.

The car that finished third sustained a similar level of bodywork damage to 007 during the race but did not stop for repairs. Aston Martin Racing questioned the validity of the result as, if the team had stopped for the repairs required in the rules the 007 Aston Martin would have received the podium position it had fought so hard for.

The protest lodged by Aston Martin Racing against the third placed car was rejected leaving the team frustrated and questioning the stewards reasoning.

Aston Martin Racing specifically sought clarification on this matter following similar incidents at the final round of the Le Mans Series at Silverstone in September which is also sanctioned by the ACO. It is confusing to the team that the stewards have not applied the same interpretation of the regulations as the ACO administrators.

Team Principal, George Howard-Chappell: "It's a disappointing result as we led for the majority of the first race but the rules state that the car must finish with all bodywork intact so, as advised by the stewards and to comply, we stopped for repairs. The fact that this rule was not applied across the board is frustrating. The positives are that the drivers both performed extremely well as did the team but their efforts are not truly reflected in the result. Let's hope this helps to highlight the issue and the rules are clarified for next year."

Mücke started the race in the Gulf liveried Aston Martin LMP1 car from fourth but quickly gained a place. The German driver remained at the wheel of 007 until almost one hour into the race when he pitted for fuel and fresh Michelin tyres and handed over to co-driver Primat.

Following the first round of pit stops Primat led the race and held on to the lead despite strong competition until he pitted on lap 80 with just over one hour remaining.

Mücke took over for the final hour; he rejoined in fourth after the pit stop but soon fought his way back to the front, leading the race until approximately 10 minutes remained when the team stopped for a slash of fuel and to repair the broken louvers.

DRIVER QUOTES 007

Stefan Mücke (DE): "I'm really disappointed with the result; we both worked so hard on the track and fought for three hours only to lose time over a small piece of bodywork. Still, that is racing and we will be back to fight again in race two."

Harold Primat (CH): "Stefan did a great job during and the team's quick work in the pit enabled me to lead from the start of my stint. The circuit is generally a little bit slow for our car but I really enjoyed my drive. I used the traffic to my advantage and it helped me to keep the rest of the competitors behind me. Stefan and I received a very warm welcome from all of the Japanese race fans at the autograph session which was held before the race and I am looking forward to race two."

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