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NGT MOTORSPORT CLAIMS PODIUM WIN AND LEADS GOLD CUP CLASS

NGT Motorsport continued its quest for victory at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Rounds 3 & 4 of the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama. After an impressive qualifying session on Friday, the team renewed their determination to defend their positions in the Gold Cup class.

Saturday's Round 3 of the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama began with teammates Carlos and Henrique side-by-side in Row 3 of the starting lineup. With a clean start, Henrique was able to get a good run and move his #26 past Carlos for the P1 position in the Gold Cup Class. Henrique defended his position until a romp through the dirt allowed Carlos to pass, along with several Platinum Cup contenders. As Carlos regained his front position, Henrique righted himself and began the daunting task of moving back up through the pack.

Henrique managed to skillfully maneuver through traffic and was running 3rd in class, when Platinum Cup driver #47 John Baker, Orbit Racing, took a sharp line through Turn 3. Henrique slammed on the brakes of his 2008 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car and swerved to avoid Baker, spinning his #26. Before Henrique could correct himself, the #71 of Paul Barnhart, Jr., Kelly-Moss Racing, was upon him. Barnhart collided with Henrique, launching the #71 into the air. Although neither driver suffered injury, the crash ended the race for both entrants. "I'm thankful that both Paul and I were uninjured," said Henrique. "After having such a great battle with Carlos in the beginning of the race, it's heartbreaking to have to walk away, but I'm truly thankful that I was *able* to walk away."

Despite his teammate's poor luck, Carlos Eduardo was able to maintain his P1 position, and continued the race flawlessly, taking the podium for his 3rd straight Gold Cup Class victory. "It has been an amazing season so far," said Carlos. "NGT Motorsport continues to provide me with an incredible car, and these Yokohama tires are fantastic. I'm looking forward to what the rest of the season will bring."

Ludovico Manfredi, driving the #27 NGT Motorsport machine, was determined to improve on his starting position of 10th in class. Ludovico moved stealthily along the track, taking the checkered flag and claiming a 4th in class finish. Andres Cisneros also pushed his #25 machine up through the grid, advancing three spots from his starting position.

On Sunday, Round 4 of the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama proved to indeed be a challenge. Thanks to his victory, Carlos was able to start his #24 in Row 3, while Henrique was placed in Row 8 after his collision with the #71 in Round 3. Ludovico and Andres started from Rows 13 and 14, respectively, but were confident they would improve their finishing positions.

Carlos had a clean start, but #14 Amadeo Quiros, II, AASCO Motorsports, was right behind him. Eager to move through the grid and put some distance between himself and Quiros, Carlos pushed his #24 hard, passing two Platinum Cup cars, and giving himself a little more breathing room. Said Carlos, "I passed the two Platinum Cup cars and was able to focus on maintaining my position, rather than having to defend it against Quiros." But as he came out of Turn 5, Carlos made an error, spinning his #24 and putting it in the gravel. Unable to continue, the spin brought out a full-course caution, and placed Carlos at the back of the grid. Down 3 laps to the leader, Carlos finished 16th in class after a frustrating turn of events. "It's a shame that the race ended the way it did for me," said Carlos, "but the good news is that I can drop my two worst finishes, so let's hope this is as bad as it gets!"

Ludovico Manfredi did not have much better luck. While pushing his #27 NGT Motorsport Porsche up through the grid, the car suffered a mechanical failure, ending Round 4 early for the disappointed driver. “Unfortunately we broke an axle today,” said Ludovico. “There’s no way to recover on track from a failure like that, but thankfully I was able to drive it into the pits and not cause any trouble on the track. NGT has done such an amazing job with the car, and I’m just sorry I wasn’t able to bring them a better finish. We’ll just make the necessary repairs and prepare for the next Round.”

There was no question as to Henrique Cisneros’ determination in Round 4. “My team worked so hard repairing my car after Round 3,” said Henrique, “so I really wanted to get back on the track and make a strong finish.” And Henrique did just that. Starting 5th in class, Henrique had a good start and passed #02 Nick Parker, Gruppe Orange Racing, putting him behind #4 Kendall Smith, Maxwell Paper Racing, and in the running for a podium finish. But as the race continued, Henrique felt his tires becoming worn, and the car began to get loose, allowing Parker to sneak back by the #26. “I knew my tires were pretty much done,” said Henrique. “But then the yellow came out, and I knew if I could just get a good jump on the restart, I might be able to get back by Parker before the end.” Unfortunately, with worn tires and not enough time, Parker defended his position, keeping Henrique in 4th place, and just shy of the podium.

Andres Cisneros once again moved up through the grid, finishing two positions up from where he had started Round 4. “Each race is an opportunity for me to learn and improve,” said Andres. “The more track time I get, the better I become. I’m honored to be a part of the NGT Motorsport team. They continue to give me a great car.”

Although the event was full of victory as well as frustration, Team Owner Ramez Wahab was pleased with the results. “This was a tough event for the team. We had to make several repairs and the guys really had to dig deep and focus,” says Wahab. “But there is no question that the team is committed and they have incredible dedication to win the Championship in this series.”

Highlights of Rounds 3 & 4 of the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama, including footage of NGT Motorsport, will air on SPEED TV on Sunday, June 20 at 1:00am EST (Saturday, June 19 at 10:00pm PST). NGT Motorsport continues to raise the bar of professionalism and commitment to developmental series such as the 2010 Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama.

The Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama continues with Rounds 5 & 6 at New Jersey Motorsports Park, June 26 – 27, where NGT Motorsport will continue its quest for the championship. For more information on the team and a complete schedule, please visit www.NGTMotorsport.com

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