

## Fantastic Hard Earned Maiden Win For Mike Guasch and Matt Bell After Dramatic British Championship GT Race

- Guasch & Bell & score Audi's first BGT race win with R8 LMS to take series lead
- Bell claims Anglo-American team's first BGT front row start position



Mike Guasch (left) and co-driver Matt Bell stand on the top step of the winner's rostrum at Snetterton today

United Autosports scored a stunning maiden race victory today (Sunday May 15) when Michael Guasch (USA) and Matt Bell (GB) swept the #23 MOLECULE Audi R8 LMS to a dramatic, last-gasp yet thoroughly deserved victory in the third round of the Avon Tyres British GT Championship at Snetterton (England).

Guasch & Bell started the race joint third in the championship standings but their hard-earned 2.946-secs victory now puts them at the top of the rankings .

Bell, having briefly been in pole-position at the beginning of the red flag interrupted 30-minute qualifying session on Saturday (May 14), claimed a place on the front row with 10-minutes remaining. The achievement represented Matt's career best qualifying position in the Audi R8 LMS and the first front row start for United Autosports in the team's fifth BGT race.

### **Avon Tyres British GT Championship (after three rounds):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Mike Guasch & Matt Bell, 70.5-points

2<sup>nd</sup> - Jones/Jones, 46pts

3<sup>rd</sup> - Gedie/Gedie, 41pts



## **Race (duration 120mins)**

Qualifying: 2<sup>nd</sup> #23 Bell, 1m 51.398s; 12<sup>th</sup> #24 Bintcliffe, 1m 52.701s. Weather: Dry, bright.

Race Result: 1<sup>st</sup> (#23) -2.946s; 5<sup>th</sup> (#24), +71.666s. Weather: Damp, wet, drying, changeable.

With light rain falling, Guasch started the race in the #23 MOLECULE car, Mike slipping to third on lap four before a 20min. Safety Car period from lap 10.

Rain began to fall once more but Guasch aggressively forced his way back into second place at the re-start on lap 20 before Mike pitted for his compulsory driver change on 50mins (lap 22) – Bell rejoining the race in 13<sup>th</sup> respectively.

Unfortunately seventh-placed Bell, who was actually “leading” the race by 14secs in terms of the cars having pitted, was back in the pits on 65mins (lap 29) to serve a six-seconds stop-go penalty, officials having deemed the #23 Audi’s pit-stop to have taken under the minimum time limit.

With 45mins to run a charging Bell was challenging for third and had moved into third place on 93mins (lap 43) – 36-seconds down on the leader.

Bell, consistently the fastest car on track, with 21mins remaining when the second-placed Ferrari retired. But with just 12mins remaining and with the lead now down to just 22secs, second-placed Bell was summoned to serve a drive-through penalty for a “no overtaking” yellow flag infringement although Matt retained second place but now 40secs adrift of the leading #10 Ferrari.

However, having been shown the black/orange warning flag by race officials five minutes from the finish for loose front bodywork, the lead Ferrari was forced to make a quick pit-stop for repairs at the start of final lap, exiting the pits marginally still ahead, although Bell snatched the lead around the outside of Turn One – Matt setting the #23 Audi’s best lap time on the final lap.

## Upcoming . . .

The fourth round of the Avon Tyres British GT Championship at Brands Hatch (England) on June 19.



## #23 MOLECULE – Audi R8 LMS

**Matt Bell (GB).** Age: 21. Born: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, T&W. Lives: Barningham, N. Yorks, England:

“I’m very happy. It was a race full of incidents and mistakes. I was a little surprised to get P2 in qualifying and to ultimately win the race after everything that was thrown at us which made it additionally hard. I just kept my head down, focus on the grip level in the slippery conditions and it paid off for us. I had a scary sideways moment on the grass when a Ferrari which I’d just overtaken came back up the inside and drove me off the track damaging his car in the process. I quickly had to get the two penalties out of my head and get the job done. From then on I just needed to be fast and consistent. I was alongside the #10 Ferrari as he exited the pit-lane on the final lap and drove around the outside of him at Turn One.”

**Michael Guasch (USA).** Age: 53. Born: Palo Alto, California. Lives: Walnut Creek, California, USA:

“It’s a fantastic result for the team, Matt and I, and Audi. It was hard work – we had a lot of bad luck and also a little good luck which evened out in our favor. I ran either second or third in my stint and there was a lot of carnage out there. Matt was released a little early costing us a stop-go penalty but Matt drove the wheels off the car – he was brilliant.”

**Zak Brown (USA).** Chairman & Co-Owner of United Autosports:

“It’s a fantastic result for everyone connected with our team which ran its first race in April 2010. We achieved GT3 class podium finishes in the FIA European Championship, 24 Hours of Spa, Intercontinental Le Mans Cup and at Macau in our maiden season of competition and I’m thrilled that our team has achieved a race win – the first of many I’m sure this year. I’m very proud that United Autosports has scored Audi’s first BGT win with the R8 LMS.”

**Richard Dean (GB),** Managing Director & Co-Owner of United Autosports:

“Achieving United Autosports’ maiden race win has been hard to achieve but Zak and I have been extremely proud of the work ethic shown from every individual in the team and I’m sure we can go on and win more races. We made hard work of it but the victory was fully deserved. Mike and Matt both drove really well – the entire team deserve this success and I’m personally delighted for everyone. Today’s race was difficult but once again the Audi was especially strong in the second half of the race. “

## **United Autosports**

Created in 2009, United Autosports is co-owned by American Zak Brown and Briton Richard Dean, both successful entrepreneurs and international race car drivers. The unique Anglo-American racing team fields GT3 class Audi R8 LMS sports cars from its United Kingdom headquarters in Leeds. It also races a fleet of “Legends of Motorsports” historic racing cars from its US facility in Indianapolis, Indiana. In 2011, the team competes in full-seasons of FIA GT3 European Championship, Avon Tyres British GT Championship and the “Legends of Motorsports” series. It will additionally contest selected GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series events, the 24 Hours of Spa (Belgium) and Macau GT Cup race (China).

### **Audi R8 LMS**

V10 5.2-liter engine, 4 valves per cylinder, petrol direct injection, 365-412 kW (496-560 PS), emission control by two racing catalytic converters, rear-wheel-drive, traction control (ASR), sequential pneumatic activated 6-speed sport gearbox with shift-paddles, Audi Space Frame (ASF) made of aluminum with bolted steel roll-cage, carbon-fiber composite/aluminum bodywork, Avon radial tires. Start weight 1,300kg. Limitation at 8500rpm for every gear. Developed by Audi Sport with cooperation from quattro GmbH. Won seven championships across Europe in 2009-2010 plus Spa 24 Hours class victory in début 2009 season and Nürburgring 24 Hours class victories in 2009-2010 and scoring a total 64 victories.

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