

68

GRAND PRIX MACAU

MacauDaily 澳門每日時報® Times

SUPPLEMENT

MON 22.11.2021



LADY LUCK ON O'YOUNG'S SIDE THIS TIME

JASON ZHANG CROWNED TCR ASIAN CHAMPION IN MACAU

RENATO MARQUES

JASON Zhang Zhi Qiang won the TCR Asia driver's title this year after an outstanding performance over the weekend in Macau.

Although the Shell Teamwork Motorsport Lynk&Co driver was on the verge of being crowned champion ahead of the Macau season finale, Zhang did not take the title for granted. He gave his best performance around the Guia circuit, taking the win in the final race on Sunday ahead of teammate Ma Qin Hua.

Zhang scored brilliantly on Saturday in Race 1 in taking second position behind Ma, who was on a near impossible mission to snatch the crown from Zhang.

But Lady Luck was not on Ma's side despite his great efforts on day one, when he continuously made the best lap times around Guia. This earned him pole position for

RENATO MARQUES



Race 1, followed by a victory in the same race, and the best starting spot in the grid for Sunday's final 12-lap race.

In the end, Zhang said he

had mixed feelings about the weekend. While very happy about his Race 2 and TCR Asia championship wins, he expressed sympathy with Ma's

bad luck only taking third place in Race 2 after a tire puncture forced him to slow down and give way to Lo Sze Ho in the Hyundai i30N.

Zhang, Ma, Lo, Sunny Wong (another Lynk&Co driver) and local driver Filipe Souza were in a race of their own, with all the other drivers finding matching their pace difficult.

Souza finished fourth in Race 1 and had also been fighting for a place on the podium in the final race. He was, however, surprised at the entrance with the black flag, signifying his disqualification from the final race. According to the information provided, he was disqualified for jumping the start, an unusual decision in its timing and a very rare move from race control. In such cases, the driver would usually be penalized on time, with penalty seconds added to the final race time. If it happens during a race, the driver may be called on to drive through the pit lane at slow speed, adding time and potentially costing race positions.

In the press conference following the race, Zhang said he was happy to win the TCR Asia category as a Chinese driver in a Chinese car, expressing his hope the same could happen in the TCR International Series and other worldwide championships.



RENATO MARQUES

A massive pile-up involving at least a dozen cars from the Macau Touring Car Cup category brought the race to an early end during the eighth lap out of a planned 12.

The race had been halted for a period by the safety car to allow the removal of a vehicle driven by Jun Wong, which had stopped on the track in a dangerous position. As soon as the safety car pulled out of the track to allow the race to resume, Cheang Kin Sang's car failed to turn at R Bend, hitting the safety barriers on the exit of that turn. The

Chevrolet Cruze driven by Lam Ka Chun was also involved in the accident, crossing the track uncontrollably and causing a roadblock that caught a number of contestants by surprise as they were in close proximity following the safety car's intervention.

A few frontrunners managed to escape the pile-up which started from sixth position onwards, only to be caught in a second crash caused by the spin-off of race leader Célio Alves Dias at the Reservoir Bend. Like the prior accident, this incident saw Dias's Mini Cooper S cross the track, causing contact between

other cars. These included cars driven by Rui Valente and Lui Man Fai, who also crashed hard and took severe damage.

In a near-miracle, both crashes saw the drivers walk away with just a few bruises, despite the damage incurred by their cars.

Per the usual procedures for these situations, race stewards determined the final race classification at the time of the last complete lap before the red flag incidents, meaning that Dias came out the winner, having dominated Race 1 on Saturday. In second place was Sabino Lei, with Lui completing the podium.

CHALLENGE CUP: WONG REPEATS 2020 WIN

RENATO MARQUES

WONG Wan Long repeated his success in last year's Macau Touring Car Cup category by winning the renamed Macau Challenge Cup this year.

With a dominant performance over the whole weekend, the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution 10 driver was the fastest on the track since Friday's Free Practice 2 session.

Wong took this success into the qualifiers, taking pole position in Saturday's Race 1 and winning comfortably, repeating the same in Sunday's 12-lap race.

As in the eight-lap race on Saturday, Wong was joined on Sunday's podium by two Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution 9 drivers, Summer Chan and Delfim Choi who then swapped positions for Race 2, with Choi climbing to second place.

In an undramatic race, and with drivers

RENATO MARQUES



happy with their positions after Choi's recovery, Wong ran a lights-to-flag race without his dominance ever put in question by any of the other drivers.

Unusually for this category, in which incidents and crashes are commonplace, the race ran at a normal pace and without any significant interruptions on the course.

Noteworthy, howe-

ver, was the misfortune of Jerónimo Badaraco. While in eighth place and trying to climb the ladder, he went straight into the run-out area at the Hairpin. His car caught fire, potentially ignited by his brakes, and it was only his quick reaction that averted major consequences, with firefighters on site responding slowly, seemingly stunned by the events.



MACAU GT CUP

Lady Luck on O'Young's side this time

RENATO MARQUES

HONG Kong's Darryl O'Young has finally doubled his title in the Macau GT Cup after his first win back in 2008.

13 years later, the Craft-Bamboo Racing driver — who has let a second title slip between his fingers many times after being lined up for success — finally overcame his bad luck and won yesterday's 12-lap race of the Macau GT Cup.

Although luck was with O'Young during the final race on Sunday, a lot of the success was down to a sleepless night of hard work from his team. The AMG Mercedes GT3 from Craft-Bamboo Racing looked like it was nowhere near rea-

dy to race after the dramatic finish of Race 1 on Saturday, in which O'Young slipped on spilled engine oil braking into Lisboa Bend and hit the rail hard, severely damaging his car.

The subsequent red flag meant that he was ranked second in the qualifying race, but the challenge was getting the car into the grid for Race 2 on time.

In a press conference following the race, O'Young said the teamwork overnight was relentless, working over 30 hours to get the car in a condition to race.

"We made it onto the grid with 10 seconds to go. If we hadn't pushed the car in while the gate was open, I woul-

dn't have made it to the grid. So literally 10 seconds before [the paddock gate closed] we managed to put the car together. The guys worked [...] all through the night, [they] did not stop for a second. This victory is for them. It's unbelievable. When I looked to the car [on Saturday I thought] it was written off but they did everything possible," O'Young said. He added that the race was difficult as the damage included a bent chassis, and all he could do after taking an initial lead was to control the race and hope that he could make it till the end.

Eventually, he succeeded, while benefiting from a safety car period lasting several laps for the removal of several cars

that had crashed or stopped on the track.

O'Young paid back the team's extra efforts for the race with a win in the 12-lap finale. The most important moment in the race came right at the start when he managed to jump polesitter Leo Ye Hongli despite being placed in second on the grid. From there he reached the first pass through Lisboa Bend ahead of the pack, a position that he held on to until the checkered flag flew.

With this win, the Hong Kong driver joins Keita Sawa, Edoardo Mortara, and Maro Engel as the fourth multiple winner of the Macau GT Cup, and the second (along with Mortara) to do so in cars from two different manufacturers.

At the press conference that followed the race, Toro Racing drivers Ye (Porsche 911 GT3R) and Luo Kai Luo (AMG Mercedes GT3) agreed about the heavy damage to O'Young's car, claiming that the situation was dangerous and arguing that he should have been stopped from participating in the race.

"[For] the whole race, oil kept spraying on my screen. I couldn't see anything towards the end of the race. And my tires were also covered in oil. It was very dangerous, I'm surprised that they didn't call him in," said Ye, backed up by Luo.

Despite these protests, race stewards certified the results, crowning O'Young the winner of the Macau GT Cup 2021.

GBA GT CUP

Taiwanese driver takes the win

RENATO MARQUES

TAIWAN'S Chang Chen Shang took the win in this year's Greater Bay Area GT Cup. Demonstrating complete control over the race outcome, Chang took his BMW M4 GT4 to the top spot after a consistent performance from day 1. He was consistently the fastest man on the track and managed to keep the competition at bay.

Most of the action in this event was in the fight for second place, with heated battles between Chris Chia, Pluto Mok, Evan Mak, Nicholas Lai and others.

It was an interesting

race to follow, with unpredictable results until the very end, capturing the attention of the spectators filling the stands and those watching at home.

In the press conference following the podium ceremony, Chang said that his race went exactly as expected and he'd just had to manage his pace to protect the tires until the race's end.

UNPREDICTABLE UNTIL THE VERY END

The drama of the final results continued even after the race ended and the podium ceremony was held. Just like in 2020, Chris Chia, finishing second in an AMG Merce-

des GT4, was disqualified post-race. This pushed Pluto Mok up one place to second and provided an unexpected podium finish to Evan Mak in the BMW M4 GT4.

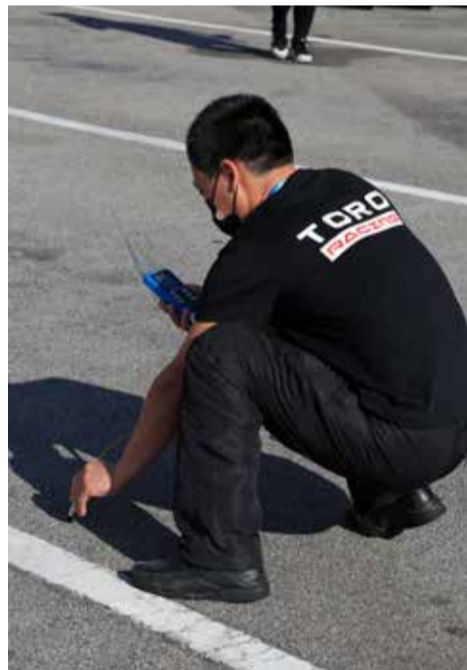
This outcome also benefited Lai, who scored fourth overall after the decision, making him the best local driver in this category and matching the result he obtained in Race 1 on Saturday.

Lai showed significant improvement from last year, with a steady hand and an increasingly capable performance that proved he's one to watch carrying the Macau flag for this category.



68th Macau Grand Prix

RENATO MARQUES PHOTOS



WINNERS

SJM F4 MACAU GRAND PRIX
Charles Leong (MAC)

SANDS CHINA MACAU GT CUP
Darryl O'Young (HKG)

**GALAXY ENTERTAINMENT
MACAU GUIA RACE**
Jason Zhang (CHN)

MELCO MACAU TOURING CAR CUP
Célio Alves Dias (MAC)

MGM GREATER BAY AREA GT CUP
Chang Chien Shang (TPE)

WYNN MACAU CHALLENGE CUP
Wong Wan Long (MAC)

SPECTATORS

Official figures: 56,000 (19-21/11)

