

Motorsport Communications

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From the last place onto the podium: Audi driver Duval with sensational fightback in “Dream Race”

- DTM and SUPER GT thrilled the crowd in joint appearance in Japan
- All four Audi RS 5 DTM in the top ten in Sunday’s race
- Loïc Duval best Audi driver in spite of early puncture

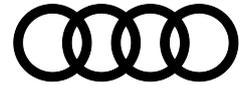
Fuji, November 24, 2019 – Spectacular duels, gripping overtaking maneuvers and an awesome photo finish in the end: The second joint race of the DTM and the SUPER GT made spectators at Fuji, Japan, jump from their seats. One of the protagonists on Sunday: Audi driver Loïc Duval, who still secured a podium finish with a sensational fightback following a puncture.

The Frenchman in the Audi RS 5 DTM had clinched pole position in rainy conditions in the morning. In the race on a dry track, the former SUPER GT Champion had to make an unscheduled pit stop due to a puncture of the left rear tire after just seven laps. His Audi Sport Team Phoenix subsequently used one of a total of three safety car periods for another tire change, a clever move that paid off: Duval was able to use the advantage of the fresher tires on the last laps, overtake several rivals and thus fight back to the third spot, cheered on by the fans. A feat he performed in spite of still having run in the last position after seven laps.

“What a race!” said Duval. On a dry track, we weren’t quite as fast as the SUPER GT cars and had a puncture right at the beginning. But thanks to the safety cars we managed to fight back. The last two laps were crazy. We were practically just racing side by side. We came to Fuji to deliver a good show and to entertain the crowd. I think we managed to do that. For me, it was an outstanding race that I totally enjoyed in the car.”

With Mike Rockenfeller (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline), René Rast (Audi Sport Team Rosberg) and Benoît Tréluyer (WRT Team Audi Sport) in positions seven, eight and ten, all four Audi RS 5 DTM cars finished in the top ten on Sunday. Rast was battling for a podium finish for a long time before the reigning DTM Champion suffered a puncture – unfortunately, at the end of the long start-finish straight, which caused him to lose even more time than Duval.

“This was an extremely exciting race with plenty of incidents,” said Head of Audi Motorsport Dieter Gass. “In spite of the tire problems we still achieved a very good result. Loïc Duval’s battle with Marco Wittmann on the last lap was simply sensational. For me, he absolutely deserved his second place. I can’t understand the decision to hand him a penalty second. The race today was perfect advertisement for Class 1. I’m already looking forward to the opener of the DTM season



at Zolder at the end of April 2020 – and of course to the next Dream Race. This weekend at Fuji has whetted our appetite for more.”

– End –

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