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- **#23 Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3 wins 1000kms Blancpain Endurance Series race at Paul Ricard**
- **Buncombe, Chiyo and Reip take lead in PRO Championship standings**
- **Mardenborough takes fifth in Austria in GP3 Series**
- **Rick Kelly grabs a pole position in V8 Supercars in Darwin**

Nissan's Alex Buncombe (GB), Katsumasa Chiyo (JAP) and Wolfgang Reip (BEL) took a commanding victory in Saturday's 1000km Blancpain Endurance Series race, which ran into the night at Paul Ricard in France. This was the first overall Blancpain Endurance Series win for Nissan and the best possible warm up for next month's Spa 24 Hours for Nissan GT Academy Team RJN.

The #23 Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3 started from seventh on the 60+ car grid after receiving a five-place penalty for a pit lane infringement. Katsumasa Chiyo made a great start and immediately showed off the GT-R's brakes to their full effect when a Ferrari, Bentley and McLaren crashed right in front of him at Turn Five. The Safety Car was dispatched while the track was cleared but once the race resumed Chiyo was soon up to second place, hunting down the Lamborghini that was in the lead.



Chiyo stayed in contact with the Lamborghini throughout his opening run and then pitted in order to let Reip carry on the charge. The 2012 winner of GT Academy set off after the leader but his charge was halted by a very long safety car period. He got away well at the re-start to continue the fight before handing over the GT-R to Buncombe.

Not long into his run, Buncombe took the lead when the Lamborghini took its pit stop. From this moment on the team didn't look back for the next 3.5 hours. Despite another safety car period closing up the gap the drivers went on to build up and despite a late challenge from Bentley, the #23 Nissan GT-R crossed the line first at Paul Ricard, taking the first Blancpain win for Nissan.

The #22 Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3 was on for a top result in the PRO-AM class in the hands of Mark Shulzhitskiy (RUS), Gaetan Paletou (FRA) and Ricardo Sanchez (MEX), running in second in class for much of the race. Their efforts were scuppered by a gear selection problem in the final hour of the race, which required a lengthy pit stop. They finished in 12th place in the PRO AM class.

The #23 squad now leads the Blancpain Endurance Series PRO Championship, just one point clear of Bentley. The team will head straight to Spa for the pre-Spa 24 Hours test day on Wednesday, thoroughly warmed up for their biggest race of the season.

"This is our first overall win in this championship," said team boss Bob Neville. "We won the PRO AM title a couple of years ago and we won the GT4 title before that but this means everything to us. Bentley pushed us hard at the end but Al (Buncombe) just did his job and brought it home. To win a 1000kms race just before Spa is just what we needed. It couldn't be better!"

"We've worked so hard over the years to get a win like this," said Buncombe. "This is my first year in the PRO class alongside two amazing drivers and it all came together tonight. Chiyo has been a star all weekend. He is awesomely fast in the GT-R! The team were telling me the gap back to Kaney (Steven Kane – Bentley) at the end so I knew he was catching me. I ran wide once – I'm only human – and then had pick-up all over my tyres for a couple of laps but it all worked out well in the end!"

FIFTH PLACE IN GP3 AT THE RED BULL RING

Jann Mardenborough had a race to forget in the second GP3 Series race of the weekend in Austria on Sunday. He and his team mate Antonio Fuoco got a little too close during the race, making contact early on. Mardenborough pitted for repairs and recovered to 17th place.

Race one on Saturday went a lot better for Mardenborough. He started from 12th and had to react fast when his team-mate stalled on the grid in front of him. Once the track was cleared he and his other Carlin team-mate, Ferrari Academy driver Fuoco, set about making their way through the field. Jann made some great passes, securing fifth place at the flag.

"I had a good start and managed to avoid any contact in the first few laps and then tried to make up as many positions as possible," said Mardenborough. "My goal was to get into the top eight and into a good position for the reverse grid race, but we managed more than that and took more points with fifth."

POLE POSITION AND A PODIUM IN DARWIN FOR RICK KELLY

Nissan's V8 Supercar team had a rollercoaster ride of a weekend at Hidden Valley Raceway in Darwin, Australia. The highlight was Rick Kelly taking his first pole position since Sandown in 2011. He also took a podium finish in the first race of the weekend. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information on Nissan's V8 Supercars campaign.

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About Nissan in Europe

Nissan has one of the most comprehensive European presences of any overseas manufacturer, employing more than 17,600 staff across locally-based design, research & development, manufacturing, logistics and sales & marketing operations. Last calendar year Nissan plants in the UK, Spain and Russia produced more than 675,000 vehicles including award-winning crossovers, small cars, SUVs, commercial vehicles and electric vehicles, including the Nissan LEAF, the world's most popular electric vehicle with 96% of customers willing to recommend the car to friends. Nissan now offers a strong line-up of 23 diverse and innovative models in Europe under the Nissan and Datsun brands.

About Nissan Motor Co.

Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., Japan's second-largest automotive company, is headquartered in Yokohama, Japan, and is part of the Renault-Nissan Alliance. Operating with more than 247,500 employees globally, Nissan sold 5.32 million vehicles and generated revenue of 11.38 trillion yen (USD 103.6 billion) in fiscal year 2014. Nissan delivers a comprehensive range of more than 60 models under the Nissan, Infiniti and Datsun brands. Nissan leads the world in zero-emission mobility, dominated by sales of the LEAF, the first mass-market, pure-electric vehicle. It is the best-selling EV in history with almost 50% share of the zero-emission vehicle segment.

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