

Baas and von Moltke Give APR Motorsport Second Place at Miller

September 22, 2008

Tooele, UT - APR Motorsport gained its first ever podium of its inaugural year in KONI Challenge ST today at Miller Motorsports Park, thanks to the great driving of teammates Ian Baas and Dion von Moltke.

The #171 VW GTI, started by von Moltke in second place on the grid, quickly took the lead going into turn one of the first lap of the 2.5 hour race. Never relinquishing the lead throughout his hour-plus long stint, von Moltke literally ran away from the competition during the opening stages, establishing an eight second lead on the nearest competitor. Only a handful of full-course yellow flags would bring the competition close to the flying von Moltke, who truly drove a mistake free stint.

Just past halfway through the race, von Moltke handed over the first place GTI to veteran Ian Baas, who reentered the race in 11th position after the pit stop. Over the first 20 minutes of his stint, Baas passed seven cars to gain fourth place, while running the fastest laps of any car on circuit at the time. The last twenty minutes of the race saw Baas pass the #146 Freedom Autosport Miata and the #00 Georgian Bay Cobalt SS to put his car into second place overall in class.

As the end of the race neared, Baas was so low on fuel that he was short shifting at every opportunity, but was still able to maintain a four second gap behind eventual winner Eric Curran in the #01 Georgian Bay Cobalt SS. Realizing on the last lap that Curran was also seemingly running slower to save fuel, Baas went for the win on the last lap, pushing tenths to try and pass Curran on the front straight. The effort did not result in a win, but rewarded the fans with a very close .872 second gap as the cars crossed the finish line.

The #181 GTI of Mark White and Randy Pobst had a great race dashed only by a broken fuel nozzle during White's handover of the car to Pobst during their pit stop. The broken nozzle caused a minor fuel spill that resulted in a 60 second stop-and-go penalty.

White, who qualified the car in 5th place, drove a fantastic and fault free race while battling high engine temperatures that forced him to have to run outside of traffic in order to keep clean air flowing through the radiator. White persistently climbed up the standings, eventually taking first place in the race right before the end of his exceptionally long 1 hour and 35 minute stint. Handing over a first place car to the ever successful Randy Pobst usually bodes well, but the fuel nozzle failure during the drivers change forced the car back to the pits for the 60 second penalty, taking the podium likely GTI out of contention. The #181 car ended the day 16th overall.

von Moltke said about the race: "I am just so happy that we finally hit the podium. My goal was to get out in front, build the biggest lead possible and keep the car clean for Ian. It was so great watching Ian run down the competition from the pit stand, but those last few laps we were so low on fuel it was nerve racking. I am so happy for Ian and the crew and I am glad I could do my part. Bring on VIR!"

Baas added: "The car was just fantastic today. This circuit, like the upcoming VIR, really suits our GTI's well. Dion was remarkable in his stint, running away with a huge lead. I am so proud of Dion and our crew as well, who gave us such a good car. It was really nice to get back on the podium, as we've just been close so many times only to see luck go away in the last laps. Today everything just clicked and we were able to bring her home. I can't wait to get back in the car at VIR!"

White said about his stint: "I am pretty happy with my drive. I had a lot going on trying to fight for position, keep the car cool and gain as many positions as I could. I drove my longest stint of the season today and eventually gained the P1 position, which felt pretty good. Sadly the fuel filler problem took us out of contention. Regardless, I am so happy for Dion, Ian and the team. It's just too bad we didn't get a chance to meet our young guys on the podium."

Pobst added: "Mark did a great job of managing the engine temperatures. High altitude and tight traffic accounted for the high temperatures, which we fought all weekend. I really feel for the crew, as there was just no way to foresee the fueling issue. It's really too bad, though, as we might have had a double podium had the fuel rig not have failed. Thanks to all of the crew for all their hard work."

APR Motorsport will race next in the Six Hours of VIR on October 4-5, 2008.