



American Le Mans Series

### **BMW Team RLL finish third and fourth at Laguna Seca.**

Munich, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2012. Although both BMW M3 GT cars of BMW Team RLL led the GT class for a significant part of the six-hour American Le Mans Monterey race, they ultimately finished in the third and fourth positions. Bill Auberlen (US) and Jörg Müller (DE) completed 232 laps of the 2,238-mile, 11-turn Laguna Seca circuit bringing the no. 55 BMW M3 GT home in third place, scoring their first podium together and delivering the team's third consecutive podium of the season.

Joey Hand (US) and Dirk Müller (DE) finished just behind their team-mates in fourth place. Both drivers were on the receiving end of aggressive contact by competitors during the race with Hand getting the worst of it while leading. Rear ended by the second-placed Corvette just past the mid-race mark the no. 56 BMW M3 GT eventually lost the rear fascia and diffuser therefore affecting the car's aerodynamic balance for the remainder of the race.

Slowed by multiple caution periods during the first five-and-a-half hours, the race was ultimately decided in the last 15 minutes after the green flag waved following the last full-course yellow. With Dirk Müller firmly in control of fourth, Auberlen restarted the no. 55 BMW M3 GT from second. Before the experienced Californian could make a charge for the lead he was blocked by a prototype entering turn one, which allowed the third-placed Corvette to squeeze by for the second spot. Losing more ground on the exit of the corner he had to settle for third.

BMW now stands second in Manufacturer points. Hand and Dirk Müller are second in the Driver points with Auberlen and Jörg Müller moving into a tie for fourth. Following the traditional break in the ALMS season for teams competing in the 24 Hours of Le Mans (FR), round four of the series, the American Le Mans Northeast Grand Prix, will be held at Lime Rock Park (US) on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

#### **Bobby Rahal (Team Principal):**

“Our competitors certainly are not making it easy. We hung in there despite being hit many times and came away with valuable points.”

#### **Jörg Müller (BMW M3 GT – No. 55):**

“I am happy to be back at Laguna Seca. This was a brilliant week. It was not an easy race, but Bill and I leave with our first podium together.”

#### **Bill Auberlen (BMW M3 GT – No. 55):**

“This was a six-hour race and we treated it as a 45 minute sprint. It's unreal how competitive this series has become. On the last restart I got hung out to dry by a prototype car and Magnussen took advantage of it. It is great to make the podium, but we still have two more steps to climb.”

#### **Dirk Müller (BMW M3 GT – No. 56):**

“Even though our car was damaged we still had the potential for a top-three finish, but just missed it. Congratulations to our team-mates for their first podium of the



season. I look forward to the next race at Lime Rock Park where Joey and I can try to regain the lead in the driver points."

**Joey Hand (BMW M3 GT – No. 56):**

"We really got knocked around today. Losing the rear bumper loosened the car up in a big way. The car got so free in the high speed stuff that Dirk and I really had to hang on and work hard. This championship is tightening up only three races in. We will leave in second place in the driver standing but a number of the tracks coming up have been very good to us."

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