



United SportsCar Championship

BMW Team RLL survives to finish third as rain reigns in Watkins Glen – BMW leads GTLM class.

Munich (DE), 29th June 2015. Bill Auberlen (US) and Dirk Werner (DE) drove the number 25 BMW Z4 GTLM to a third place finish in a very wet “Six Hours of the Glen” on Sunday. The duo completed 157 laps of the 3.4-mile, 11-turn Watkins Glen International circuit (US) with the race slowed by eight caution periods and red flagged for 14 minutes during the worst downpour. The race ended behind the BMW M4 Safety Car during the last yellow flag with the GTLM victory going to the Porsche of Wolf Henzler (DE) and Bryan Sellers (US).

The BMW duo’s third podium finish of the season, including a win at Long Beach (US), moves Auberlen and Werner to the top of the GTLM driver points standings, and keeps BMW at the top of the GTLM manufacturer points standings.

The day ended in disappointment for the number 24 BMW Z4 GTLM of John Edwards (US) and Lucas Luhr (DE) as Edwards was caught out by the slick conditions on lap 77, spinning into the tyre wall entering the heading into the “boot” section and was retired from the race.

The race started with Auberlen in the number 25 BMW Z4 GTLM and Edwards in the number 24 car from the second and third class grid positions, which were decided on current championship positions after qualifying was cancelled due to heavy rain. Auberlen spun on the opening lap due to the rainy conditions and fell to the rear of the class. In the opening stint Edwards moved into the lead on lap 36 and Auberlen recovered to fourth. Both pitted ten laps later for Luhr and Werner to take over. Edwards was back in the number 24 on lap 76, but went off on the next lap and the car was retired.

By mid-race the rain was in control of the race and with two hours to go the entire field was racing on wet tyres. As the conditions deteriorated the race was red flagged for 14 minutes with one-hour-and-28-minutes remaining. Auberlen was in the car for the final laps, and with 30 minutes to go he had moved into second place. He survived the difficult final minutes as the rain poured down causing the track to be extremely slick, affecting the car’s electronics and causing the engine to shut off intermittently. He lost second on lap 151 and was unable to get the position back as the race ended under a full course yellow.

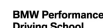
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Bobby Rahal (Team Principal, BMW Team RLL):

"It was a tough day and tough conditions. We had a little electrical glitch with the number 25 car, which caused us to lose second place right there at the end. The weather conditions made it difficult. It is a shame we lost the 24 car. All in all, another podium and the lead in both the manufacturers' and drivers' championship."

Bill Auberlen (No. 25 BMW Z4 GTLM, 3rd place):

"That was a tough one. From the get go we were on pretty hard compound dries, and it sort of sprinkled and it looked like our car hated that combination – sprinkling and a medium tire we were out to lunch. Then the track would dry, you would come to the front, sprinkle and we would go back. On rains it was just the opposite. When we put the Michelin rains on I went right to the front. We beat everyone we needed to beat in the points and we are moving forward and that is all we wanted to do. I had an ignition issue with so much rain and my motor shut off coming out of the carousel, and that is how the Porsche got by me for second."

Dirk Werner (No. 25 BMW Z4 GTLM, 3rd place):

"That was one of the most difficult races I have been in. It was a little bit like a Nürburgring feeling where the weather conditions really had a lot of surprises for us. We were out on a dry track and then out on slicks in the wet. Today everything was about staying in the race. Bill did a great job keeping the car on the road in the wet. I did my best and in the end I think we can all be happy with this podium. The car had a very good pace and it is very enjoyable to have a car like this BMW Z4 GTLM, which shows a good performance. So far we have had a very good season with quite a few podiums, and I have enjoyed it a lot so far."

John Edwards (No. 24 BMW Z4 GTLM, DNF):

"It was a very disappointing end to a promising day. We were quick in the dry, and quick in the wet. I think the only conditions we struggled with were when we had some drizzle and were on slicks, but in most conditions we could go really fast. Regarding the incident, I don't have much to say. The car snapped really quick and we checked the data quickly, but didn't see anything obvious from the car side. I was facing the wall before I even knew anything was happening, so maybe there was the chance there were some weepers or something on the track, but whatever happened the end result was the same we are out of the race. We probably had the best car in the race and the best chance to win."

Lucas Luhr (No. 24 BMW Z4 GTLM, DNF):

"To be honest it was a very disappointing day, just because I think we had a very strong car in both wet and dry conditions, and normally I think with a car like this you could win, but we didn't even finish the race. This is very, very disappointing,

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not only for me personally as a driver, but I think also for the whole team and for BMW. If you get a chance like this in a championship that is so close you have got to take it. On the bright side, we know we have a very strong package, our BMW Z4 GTLM is mega, and really I have so much fun driving it. If you ask me now what I would do to make it better I cannot tell you, so that is a good thing. Our sister car at least got on the podium, but for the next race we need to get our heads together and take the opportunity which has been given to us."

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