

Team Hardpoint Takes Leap Forward in IMSA Competition at VIR Doubleheader Despite Adversity

Co-drivers Rob Ferriol and Spencer Pumpelly Used Speed to Push Through the Field at VIR Before Deceptive Results



DANVILLE, Virginia (August 24, 2020) - Team Hardpoint may not have gotten the results they were looking for, but took a leap forward during the IMSA Michelin GT Challenge at VIR in both the IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship and the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge.

The team finished with a pair of hard-luck 13th places during the weekend's competition that didn't reflect the team's level of competitiveness on the track. Contact from a fellow competitor while running sixth on Sunday put Team Hardpoint behind in the Michelin Pilot Challenge race, while an off-track excursion ended Saturday's WeatherTech battle too early.

"I think we're finally at a point where the takeaway is 'that's racing,'" Ferriol said. "Coming into the weekend, the last three events have really been developmental in a way. Getting the team to come together, getting the engineering right on the car, getting the drivers right on the car. We put a lot of prep work in over the last three weeks. Finally this weekend, we had relatively competitive cars in both cases and we had relatively competitive positions in both races. Unfortunately, there was bad luck yesterday and got tangled up with a competitor today. While those are disappointing as takeaways, and disappointing in terms of finish, there's a lot of good to take away from the weekend."



On Sunday, Rob Ferriol qualified the No. 31 Team Hardpoint/GridRival Audi R8 GT4 10th overall and in the Grand Sport (GS) class, improving three positions on the opening lap and improving one more to sixth place after an early full course caution period. Ferriol was successfully keeping the field behind him when contact in his left rear sent him off track and dropped him to 17th place.

The position was compounded when the team, prepared to make their first pit stop and driver change to co-driver Spencer Pumpelly, saw those plans dashed by another full-course caution, eliminating a chance to go off-strategy from the leaders and make up ground unconventionally. Pumpelly restarted in 14th and was able to make up just one position the rest of the way.

Saturday's WeatherTech Sports Car Championship race ended for Team Hardpoint's No. 30 Team Hardpoint/GridRival Audi R8 LMS GT3 after just an hour of the two-hour, 40-minute run time when the car ran wide and into the tire barrier, damaging suspension pieces on the left side of the car. Ferriol had climbed from 14th on the grid into the top 10 and appeared poised to make up another position when the incident occurred.



"I can't say enough about how well everyone executed this weekend. The team took a big step forward. The GT3 car was really competitive and, when I was able to drive it, the pace was really fantastic. I felt like we really had a decent car yesterday. Our GS car, we're still learning a little bit about what it needs to go fast, but our team was flawless on the pit lane, our strategy was great, the communication with the drivers was awesome, and the way everyone worked together this weekend was impressive. I can't say enough about how much everyone helped and I'm looking forward to getting back to the track with these guys."

The team turns its attention to Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta, an event added to the calendar when the Watkins Glen International round was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I'm disappointed for the team," Ferriol said. "That's probably what stings the most is that I couldn't get the team a better finish, because they deserved it. They worked really hard all weekend, but I think everyone sees that we're starting to come together as a team and we're starting to be competitive on the grid. That's exciting. So we'll walk away disappointed, but there's a lot of good to walk away with as well."

Next on Team Hardpoint's calendar is a four-hour Michelin Pilot Challenge race during The Grand Prix at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta, September 4-6. Team Hardpoint's next race in the WeatherTech Sports Car Championship Sprint Cup comes at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, September 25-27.



About Hardpoint Motorsports:

Hardpoint Motorsports was founded by Rob Ferriol in 2018 with the vision of combining his experience as a successful entrepreneur with his passion for racing. The Hardpoint brand brings together three distinct entities into one motorsport ecosystem. Team Hardpoint is the brand's racing arm, providing its partners and customers opportunities to compete, brand, and promote in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GT Daytona class and the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge. Hardpoint Outfitters helps other teams and drivers extract more value from their motorsport investment by bundling branding, activation, and digital marketing services into customized turnkey packages, including design, apparel, hospitality, and social media management. The Hardpoint Paddock Foundation is the newest element of the ecosystem, created as a charitable foundation to support out of work paddock workers through the COVID-19 shutdown. As the shutdown comes to an end, the 501(c)3 Foundation is expected to grow into a more sustained model of providing vocational and educational support services to the professional sports car paddock community. More information on all of the Hardpoint Motorsports enterprises can be found at www.hardpoint.com or through its strong social media presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.