



**Avon Tyres British GT Championship
Rounds 1&2, Oulton Park, Cheshire, 7-9 April 2007
Race Report**

ELLIS PULLS OFF PODIUM AT OULTON PARK

Team RPM's Bradley Ellis (Croydon) and Alex Mortimer (Stoneleigh, Warwickshire) battled against adversity to scoop their first podium finish of the Avon Tyres British GT season in round two at Oulton Park, Cheshire, on Monday 9 April. Despite their credible third place finish, the duo suffered a disastrous first round on Saturday, where they struggled to find power and stabilise the car due to penalty restrictions imposed on the Dodge Viper.

Team strategy, driver skill, and damp weather conditions helped Ellis and Mortimer to turn around their fortune on Monday to deliver the unexpected podium. With steady drizzle and damp track conditions, Mortimer made a good start from ninth, taking Nigel Redwood in the Team RPM Porsche for eighth, but an incident at Lodge Corner saw the safety car out on track for five laps.

At the re-start the Eurotech Ascari went off in front of Mortimer, causing Mortimer and Redwood to also make contact. The incident let the leading group get away and left Mortimer holding off the advances of the Eclipse Mosler until a mistake allowed Mortimer some breathing space to push before pitting at the 30-minute marker.

With many of the leading teams deciding to change to wet tyres, Mortimer and Ellis elected to save time and stay on slicks. A blinding Team RPM pitstop allowed Ellis to rejoin the race in second, slotting in between the Tech 9 Porsche and Jonathan Cocker's Aston Martin.

Pushing the Dodge Viper to its limits, Ellis held off Cocker for two laps but decided not to heavily defend when Cocker made his move. With a comfortable margin to David Ashburn in the Trackspeed Porsche and the track still damp, Ellis kept his cool to take third without challenge.

It was evident from qualifying on Saturday morning that the Team RPM Dodge Viper would struggle for a points finish in either round. Penalties placed on the car following its flying form at the Silverstone test in March included an increased ride height and 100 kilos of ballast, in addition to an air flow restrictor.

Also suffering from power steering problems and a lack of power due to the restrictions, Ellis did well to qualify fifth for round one on Saturday afternoon. Low on power, Ellis lost one place at the start to Ashburn and a missed gear at Britten's allowed the Eclipse Mosler past, with Ellis finishing lap one in seventh. With a five-car train stretching from second to seventh place, Ellis struggled to keep up with the leading pack, with the increased ride height unsettling the car's aerodynamics.

Mortimer took the wheel at the half-way point and a perfect Team RPM pitstop helped him rejoin in fifth, but he was taken on his out lap by Tim Mullen in the Ferrari. As Mortimer fought to stay in contention, he lost two further places to Adam Wilcox's Ferrari and Matt Griffin in the Team RPM Porsche, despite defending well for much of the race, to finish ninth.

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"We did the best we possibly could, given the car's restrictions and circumstance," said Ellis. "It was really tough going this weekend, we just couldn't get near the front runners and when we did we couldn't hang on to them. There's no power and the car is incredibly unstable, so to score a podium is an amazing result. We managed to bag some vital points in round two but the car is a nightmare to drive. We've had assurances that something will be done before the next rounds at Donington Park."

Team RPM boss Robin Mortimer is already in positive discussions with championship organisers to resolve the issues which have arisen at Oulton Park, to be rectified in advance of rounds three and four of the Avon Tyres British GT Championship at Donington Park.

Robin Mortimer commented: "That was an extremely challenging weekend especially considering the penalties that both Brad and Alex had to deal with. In really tricky conditions these drivers showed their true qualities and made light of the penalties they had to tolerate the whole weekend. After a fruitful meeting with Stephane Ratel this morning, it's great that we will be competing on a comparable basis with the other manufacturers when we arrive at Donington."

For full race results and further information on the 2007 Avon Tyres British GT Championship visit the new website www.britishgt.com