



**Avon Tyres British GT Championship
Round 8, Silverstone, 11&12 August 2007
Race Report**

Ellis Maintains British GT Championship Lead at Silverstone

Croydon GT racer Bradley Ellis still leads the Avon Tyres British GT Championship with teammate Alex Mortimer (Stoneleigh) despite a challenging two-hour round eight at Silverstone on Sunday 12 August. In a lightening performance, Ellis scythed through from 14th on the grid to run as high as second, taking eight places on the first lap, eventually finishing sixth and securing three valuable points to stand two points clear in the championship battle.

Following their double win at Brands Hatch, qualifying 14th at the premier Northamptonshire track was disappointing. It was clear that the Team RPM Dodge Viper Competition Coupe's set up was not complementing its tyres under qualifying conditions in the souring heat.

Cooler by 10 degrees on Sunday, Ellis made an awesome start from row seven to pass a gaggle of cars going in to Copse and continued to charge past eight cars in total and finish lap one in sixth. By the end of lap two, the 20-year-old took fifth place from Kevin Riley in the Mosler and began to close on Matt Harris in the Porsche 997.

With the gap to the Porsche down to just 0.4 seconds at the end of lap five, Ellis and Harris bore down on Phil Burton and both took the Ferrari across the line to start lap seven, promoting Ellis to fourth. Staying within half-a-second of Harris, Ellis maintained the pressure, sticking with the Porsche to gain on the third-placed Ferrari 430 of Hector Lester. Once again the pair passed their target in quick succession, with Ellis moving up to third on lap nine.

Just over 15-minutes in and Ellis was still glued to Harris' bumper, the pair just three tenths of a second adrift, but the Croydon ace stayed patient and picked off the Porsche for second on lap 15. With Adam Jones in the Lamborghini Gallardo 26.5 seconds up the track, Ellis tried to chip away at the massive margin before Jones stretched his lead once again.

Ellis stayed unchallenged for much of his stint, until his penultimate lap before pitting, when he suffered a wheel-nut failure exiting Luffield. With the left-rear wheel hanging-on only by the safety stop and wobbling precariously, Ellis couldn't make the pit lane and had to complete an entire lap before he was able to dive for the pits at the one-hour marker.

The Team RPM mechanics did a great job to refuel, wrestle the damaged wheel loose and change all four wheels, before Mortimer took finally to the track. Many of the teams chose not to change tyres and when the pitstop shuffle was complete, Mortimer emerged 10th.

Immediately matching Ellis' pace, Mortimer made it up to eighth with 36 minutes to go. The 22-year-old pushed to reduce the seven second gap to seventh-placed Godfrey Jones in the Ascari until Tom Ferrier, now in the #9 Porsche, and Jones took Matthew Owen's Lamborghini, leaving Mortimer to take Owen on lap 63.

Mortimer set his sights on the now sixth-placed Jones, six seconds ahead. With just 15 minutes to go, the Team RPM Viper had slashed the gap to 2.5 seconds. Mortimer managed to take sixth with just six minutes remaining, where he stayed unchallenged until the chequered flag.

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"We've earned important championship points here at Silverstone and to finish sixth from 14th on the grid is nothing to be ashamed of," commented Ellis. "Qualifying was a bit of a struggle but, in fact, we didn't lose as much time as some of the other teams when you compare our qualifying and race pace. We actually had a much better set up for the race."

"I had a mega start and going from row seven to sixth place on the opening lap certainly helped our championship chances. I think we would have certainly scored a podium finish if we hadn't suffered the wheel-nut failure, but we are still leading the championship. It's really close at the top of the table and we are going to keep chipping away and try to increase our lead."

Robin Mortimer, Team RPM Principal, said: "It's been a really strange weekend, with all team members struggling to get a qualifying lap in their Vipers. I think we were all frustrated after qualifying, but there did appear to be a trend, in as much as all of the front engined cars, including the Aston Martins, seemed to struggle."

"In the race, both Al and Brad drove impeccable sessions and once again our race pace returned. I think the boys have done an incredible job to open up a bigger lead this weekend, after extremely difficult circumstances in qualifying. We have six races left and I think we now have a really good chance to land this title. As a final comment, I think we must commend the hard work of all the team mechanics, who have not seen their beds for the last four nights until 3am. The whole team is extremely optimistic for the rest of the year."

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