



PRESS RELEASE

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SIGNATECH ALPINE ELF SCORES BIG POINTS IN SHANGHAI

- **At the conclusion of an enthralling race, André Negrão, Pierre Ragues and Thomas Laurent finished just off the podium in the 4 Hours of Shanghai in China.**
- **With twelve more points, the Signatech Alpine Elf team jumps to third place in the LMP2 championship classification.**
- **The Alpine A470 will try to continue to move up the general classification at the next round, the 8 Hours of Bahrain (14 December).**

After failing to finish on the podium for the first time since 2017 at the most recent round in Japan, the Signatech Alpine Elf team arrived in China with the goal of bouncing back as soon as possible in a season where even the smallest amount points differential could turn out to be crucial.

Under the impulsion of its trio of drivers; the Alpine 470 improved through the free-practice sessions before Thomas Laurent and Pierre Ragues got down to business in qualifying, but the team was faced with a traction control problem and went with only one set of new tyres to give themselves a better chance in the race.

After qualifying seventh in their category, the duo left André Negrão to take the green flag. The Brazilian driver put in a stellar start to move up to fourth place in the opening lap, then the top three on the following lap.

Overtaken by the n°38 Jota entry, André Negrão held on to fourth place after the first round of pit stops, but a small mistake on his out lap opened the door to two of his rivals. He managed

to get more mileage from his tyre than his adversaries to move up the order before handing over to Pierre Ragues.

In sixth place when heading out, the Silver driver went on the attack, overtaking the n°29 Racing Team Nederland entry, then he narrowed the gap to the United Autosports entry. Thomas Laurent pressed on, then stayed out for a double stint during a full course yellow one hour before the end of the race.

The Frenchman maintained a fast tempo to move into fourth place, but his hopes for a podium result vanished when he spun and lost 20 seconds. After a last pit stop with 20 minutes remaining, Thomas Laurent kept Nyck de Vries at bay in the final laps to assure fourth place for the Alpine A470 under the chequered flag.

With another 12 points, the Signatech Alpine Elf team is now just 13 points from the leaders in the LMP2 category. The FIA World Endurance Championship will next head to the Sakhir circuit to conclude the first half of the season at the 8 Hours of Bahrain on 12-14 December.

Quotes

Philippe Sinault, Team principal Signatech Alpine Elf

“Despite a difficult weekend, we are leaving China third in the championship. The four-hour race format doesn't work to our advantage and it is something new to deal with this season. We did a good job with it at Silverstone, but it was a bit more complicated this time. We spent a long time looking for good balance and we found it but it was a little too late. Our race pace is our strength and we were in the heat of the battle. André did a fantastic job at the start to put us in contention and even in the lead just as he handed over. We then asked Pierre to save fuel until he fulfilled his minimum driving time. It was a thankless and very frustrating task, but he was able to fill it perfectly as part of our stint management. Thomas did the final two and a half stints on the same set of tyres despite the very abrasive track conditions. We ended up finishing fourth and it would have been hard to imagine finishing any better. This result see us move up to third place in the general classification that is incredibly close after the win of three different teams in as many races. Like we have said since the start of the season, you must take advantage of every opportunity to score as many points as possible in every race. The format of the next race in Bahrain will be better suited for us, but the battles will be once again fought with no quarter.

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André Negrão:

“ It was a difficult weekend from the start as we had struggled with the setup. We made a few drastic changes that improved the overall package but they were not enough. Our two problems in qualifying didn't help us out, but the car felt good early in the race despite a significant tyre degradation. Seeing where we were on Friday morning, this fourth-place kind of feels like a podium result. It was a struggle, but fourth place is a good result and the points that go with it will be good for the team in the championship. I am now looking forward to continuing the battle in Bahrain!

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Pierre Ragues:

“ This race will be remembered for the significant tyre degradation, which was seen in the lap times. I tried to save fuel while staying out for 24 laps on the tyres we qualified on. I focused on this by giving it everything I've got. You have to remain consistent, but also gentle with the tyres and not make any mistakes. I was out for revenge after Fuji and I am relatively pleased with my stint, but we were not here to race for fourth place. I hope that we will learn some lessons from this weekend to come back stronger and show more in Bahrain.

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Thomas Laurent:

“ The huge job done by the engineers and the mechanics this weekend was unfortunately not enough to fix our small problems. I had too much understeer in free practice, but the balance was good for qualifying prior to this traction control issue. I felt like there was too much oversteer in the race and this cost us time at the end of a stint although my mistake at the first corner did not help. After an up-and-down weekend, we have to put our heads down to move forward, but I am confident that we will learn from our mistakes to come in Bahrain confident and ready to fight for a podium and even victory.

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Classification

4 Hours of Shanghai – LMP2

1. JOTA n°38 121 laps
2. Jackie Chan DC Racing n°37 +17:090s
3. United Autosports n°22 +21:727s
- 4. Signatech Alpine Elf n°36 + 1 lap**
5. Racing Team Nederland n°29 + 1 lap

6. High Class Racing n°33 + 1 lap
7. Cetilar Racing n°33 + 2 laps

- NC. Cool Racing n°42 + 81 laps

FIA LMP2 Teams' Trophy

1. Racing Team Nederland n°29 – 51 points
2. Jackie Chan DC Racing n°37 – 49 points
- 3. Signatech Alpine Elf n°36 – 38 points**
4. Cool Racing n°42 – 36 points
5. JOTA n°38 – 35 points

6. United Autosports n°22 – 30 points
7. High Class Racing n°33 – 26 points
8. Cetilar Racing n°33 – 20 points

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