



BENTLEY
 ANDY SOUCEK
 Bentley Boy
 Continental GT3 #8



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Andy Soucek closes his European Season with a brilliant P4 finish at Barcelona

The last race of the 2018 Blancpain GT Series has been especially thrilling for Andy Soucek. In front of a numerous group of relatives, friends and fans, the Spaniard has lead the Bentley #8 car close to the podium after fighting back spectacularly from P14 on the grid.

The new Continental GT3 has once again shown highly competitive and reliable all weekend long. P9 in Free Practice and again P9 overall in Qualifying were a clear sign that the Bentley Boys were really going for it at Barcelona. After the end of the session however, Race Direction reinstated several lap times they had previously cancelled, leaving car #8 on P14 on the grid. On a track like Barcelona, that does not provide many overtaking possibilities, this was a pretty hefty blow that the Bentley Boys had to take.

Vincent Abril took the start and had a great initial stint, gaining two positions in the first few moments and always remaining close to the Top Ten. M-Sport's made a wise tactical decision of pitting several minutes earlier than their rivals to try an "undercut" played out just fine: Soucek found himself in P8 and within range of P5.

The Spaniard soon found himself in a group of four cars running within a three second gap, in which attacks were continuous, he prevailed and climbed to P5 with several good overtakings, until a spin by the Lamborghini in front forced him to take evasive action into the gravel to avoid contact which brought his great comeback fight to an end momentarily.

M-Sport decided to go for the same strategy as an hour before for the last stop, and Soucek handed his car over to Maxime Soulet around six minutes before the second hour mark. The Belgian was equally spectacular during his stint and fought back bravely from P10 until crossing the finish line in P4, a result which left drivers, team and manufacturer very satisfied.

Soucek comments on the emotions he went through in Barcelona:

We had high hopes for this last race which was very special for me as I was surrounded by my folks. Even though the car was at the same level it has been all season long, after Qualifying we were facing a pretty tough task. However, when I took over the car, I had a lot of fun fighting head-to-head with different cars and I was one of the few drivers who were able to overtake, not without taking risks in the process but that's the spirit of racing. Vince and Max were impeccable as usual and even though we were only one second away from the podium in the end, we are left with the satisfaction of having done a great job. It's a pity I had to leave the track to avoid the Lamborghini when it lost its rear, as I lost four positions which cost us the podium in the end.

I'd like to congratulate Bentley and M-Sport for their great work in terms of race strategy and set-up. The new Continental GT3, which debuted only recently, has been in constant evolution all season long and this result is a great closure for our European Season. 6th in Suzuka and 4th in Barcelona are a good proof of our development.

I have to digest all these emotions for a few days and then focus on my last race for 2018 which will take me to the other side of the "pond."

The last race on Soucek's 2018 schedule will take place on American soil, on October 20 and 21 with the third and final event of the Intercontinental GT Challenge at Laguna Seca – California (USA)



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