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Renault Clio Cup

Hodgetts Takes The Win As Goff Extends Championship Lead

June 9, 2012 Richard Devine 20Ten Racing, AirAsia Clio Cup, Jack Goff, josh cook, Oulton Park, Renault Clio Cup, Scuderia Vittoria, Stefan Hodgetts, Team Pyro

After claiming pole position on his return to the AirAsia Clio Cup, Scuderia Vittoria's Stefan Hodgetts took a controlled lights to flag victory. Behind him, the retirement of Paul Rivett, left Championship leader Jack Goff to take second place and with it extend his lead at the top of the standings.

Hodgetts was kept honest throughout, first from Rivett and later from Goff, as he was pushed all the way. He showed the benefit of his experience however, and took the win in his first Clio Cup race since 2008. He was rightfully over the moon after the race.

"It was really good," he said. "Obviously getting the win for Scuderia Vittoria is fantastic, it couldn't have gone much better. As for tomorrow, it has to be the same again. We're starting on pole so anything less than a win is a failure. I am very focused and committed on winning tomorrow and it's made easier as half the job is done already."

"It was hard work to hold off Goff and Rivett, they are quick lads. With Goff leading the championship and Paul having been involved in the championship for years it's great. I've had many great battles with him (Rivett) but unfortunately he made a minor error with the tyres."

Reigning Champion Paul Rivett got the jump at the start, catapulting himself ahead of title rival Goff and into second place bearing down on Hodgetts. A rare self inflicted error from the Triple Champion though forced him into retirement, where he could only watch as the Championship lead extended.

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"We were absolutely flying out there," said a disappointed Rivett. "I got a great start, and as far as I could see, we were the quickest car out there but the incident was completely my own fault. I clipped the tyres on the exit of the chicane on the inside. On the lap before I missed my apex, so this time I thought I had to get it right, but I got it right maybe six to eight inches too far. It's a real shame as the PER HIRE car has been absolutely great again this weekend and we've turned up here with the lovely new paint job, but we were bound to scratch it at some point, so now we've done that we will be out for the win tomorrow. Points wise for the championship, we need to go out there and win everything we can."

For Goff, second place and finishing in front of his closest title rivals left him both with his fifth podium in seven races, and more importantly an enhanced lead at the top of the overall standings. It didn't come easy though, as in the latter stages of the race he came under increasing pressure from rookie driver Josh Cook.

"It was really good," he said. "We got an alright start but Paul also got a good start so I had to let him through at the first corner. After that I had to refocus. Later on Paul made a mistake breaking his steering arm which allowed me past and I was able to control my race from there. Overall, today has been very good for the championship."

Completing the top three, 20Ten Racing's Josh Cook claimed the Rookie win, and his first overall podium finish in the Clio Cup. Having started sixth, it was a professional yet battling effort to hang onto the vastly more experienced leading pair.

"It was pretty interesting. I got a pretty good start but really it was just a race where I knew I had to bring the car back home in one piece. It was an eventful race, I spent a lot of time trying to hang onto Jack Goff and I caught up at one point but made a little mistake with the gears. It was an awesome race and 20Ten Racing and Cook Sport have done a fantastic job setting up the car today. It's been a brilliant weekend so far and we will see how it goes tomorrow," said Cook after the race.

Masters Cup honours went to Cook's 20Ten team mate, Newark based Darren Wilson.

"It was great," said Wilson. "It's my first podium of the year, which is nice but it all came together on the last lap. I was trying to stay with the pack and there were a few incidents up ahead on the last lap and it all came to me. I had a little touch with someone but was able to come back on the circuit. When I went over the line I was thinking if it was enough for a Masters win and when I got called up to the podium it was great news! Also with Josh Cook on the podium it's been a great event for 20Ten Racing, who were also on the podium for the first time this year."

Elsewhere, it continued to be a weekend to forget for Westbourne Motorsport's James Colburn. A first lap collision with TCR's Nicolas Hamilton and Scuderia Vittoria's Finlay Crocker meant the end for all three, and the continuation of bad luck for Colburn. This brought a safety car period while the damaged vehicles were dealt with. It wasn't the only incident to scar the race either. On the very last lap, Crocker's Scuderia Vittoria team mate Ronnie Klos and Team Pyro's Kim Andersson had a coming together bringing an end to their hopes for the day.

For Round 8, Hodgetts will once again start from pole, with Josh Files alongside him in second. Championship leader Jack Goff will start from the second row.

Photo Credit: Jakob Ebrey

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