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GT3 CUP CHALLENGE
MIDDLE EAST

01 February 2019

Pereira tops podium with Besler second and Al Zubair third

Luxembourg driver returns to retain Yas Marina Circuit crown in Porsche BWT GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East

Almost a year to the day since Dylan Pereira recorded the fastest lap ever recorded in a Porsche GT3 Cup car at Yas Marina Circuit, the Luxembourg driver returned to retain his Round 4 Race 1 crown with a superb display of driving.

Pereira, racing this weekend only in Season 10 championship, is remembered for his ability to negotiate the challenging Yas Marina Circuit with ease and precision in Season 9 of the region's longest running racing series.

Aged just 21, the Luxembourg driver showed no sign of conceding this pole position with a scorching start that left current championship leader Al Faisal Al Zubair stunned. Al Zubair recovered, but lost his position to Berkay Besler of Turkey, who started behind him in the third and also trails him in the championship title race.

Pereira continued his quick form throughout the rest of the race, building a staggering 7 second lead. A perfect race was not to be however, as he sustained a 5 second penalty due to shortcutting turn 6. Even that couldn't take the trophy away from him, with Pereira standing tall on top of the podium followed by Besler of Turkey in second and Al Zubair of Oman in third.



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Commenting on his return, Dylan Pereira said: “It’s my first race in Season 10, so to start on pole position and win the race feels really good. I kept pushing, trying to find that extra tenth of a second as the race went on and, fortunately, I was able to because I needed it following the penalty. So far, it’s been a strong weekend of racing, but let’s see what happens tomorrow.”

The race marked the first of two races this weekend at the famous Formula 1 track, with Race 2 taking place tomorrow. Al Zubair who currently leads the championship, finished third in Race 1, but have a stronger start in Race 2.

“It was not a good start for me and unfortunately Besler started very well. He was able to take me on the first lap and raced well from that point on. I pushed hard, waiting for him to make a mistake but it didn’t happen, and he was able to hold off for second place.”

Al Zubair concluded: “I need to say well done to Dylan, he drove an amazing race. Hopefully I can find a bit more pace for tomorrow, but on the whole the car’s feeling good and I’m confident going into race two”

Outside of the podium places, Frenchman JB Simmenauer finished in fourth ahead of Khalid Al Wahaibi of Oman in fifth and Christoffer Bergstroem of Sweden in sixth.

The Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East races again at Yas Marina Circuit Saturday 2nd February 2018, before returning to Bahrain International Circuit for the final two rounds. The series comes to a thrilling conclusion as an official support race for the 2019 Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix, the only regional racing series to do so.



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ENDS

Championship Calendar – Season 10

Dates	Round/ Circuit	Number of Races
16-17.11.2018	Round 1: Dubai Autodrome, Dubai	3
07-08.12.2018	Round 2: Bahrain Int. Circuit, Bahrain	3
25-26.01.2019	Round 3: Dubai Autodrome, Dubai	3
01-02.02.2019	Round 4: Yas Marina Circuit, Abu Dhabi	2
08-09.03.2019	Round 5: Bahrain Int. Circuit, Bahrain	3
30.-31.03.2019	Round 6: Bahrain Int. Circuit, Bahrain	2



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