



# Race Report



**ILMC Zhuhai 6hours**  
(November 12-13, 2011)

**Macau Grand Prix/Macau GT Cup**  
(November 18-20, 2011)



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## Tough back-to-back races for Hitotsuyama Racing at ILMC Zhuhai and Macau GP

Hitotsuyama Racing participated in the ILMC 6-hour race held at Zhuhai in China on November 12 – 13 and Macau GP GT Cup at Macau the following week with Audi R8 LMS, but both rounds ended with severe results due to the machine trouble which led us to the retirement from the races to complete this season.

On November 12th and 13th, ILMC 6-hour race was held at “Special Economic Zone” Zhuhai located in the south of China and close to Hong Kong and Macau. Hitotsuyama Racing participated in the GTC Class of this 6-hour race with Audi R8 LMS.

Our ace driver, Tomonobu Fujii, was to participate in the JAF GP to be held on the same weekend, so we invited the Dutch driver Carlo Van Dam as our ace driver. Carlo is a very talented driver who won the German F3 Championship in 2007 and All-Japan F3 Championship in 2008. The other 2 drivers who were to take the steering at the ILMC at Zhuhai together with Carlo were Akihiro Tsuzuki and Michael Kim, who also took the steering of Audi R8 LMS for Super Taikyu.

In the short 20-minute qualifying held in the afternoon of November 12th, Carlo went out to the track at the right timing. He unfolded the hot fight for the pole position with our rivals, 2 Audi R8 LMSs and Mercedes SLS AMG. Carlo recorded the time of 1' 34" 934 towards the end, which seemed sure to get the pole position, then came back to the pit. However, Edoardo Mortara of No. 98 Audi R8 LMS marked the time of 1' 34" 777 on the final time trial while the checkered flag was waved and stole the pole position by a narrow margin of 0.157 second.

However, the time marked by Carlo was way over better than those of many GT2 machines in the higher class, and this qualifying session left the good impression of speed of Audi R8 LMS and its driver Carlo.

The next day on November 13th, the 6-hour race started at 11 o'clock. Carlo had a good start behind Edoardo Mortara of No.98 Audi R8 LMS and developed the tail-to-nose close competition from the opening lap. The scene Carlo making a bold attack to the DTM works driver Mortara was shown on the circuit monitor and excited the fans in the circuit.

However, just 5 laps after the start, Carlo told us on the radio that it became impossible to down shift from 6th gear and made the emergency pit-in. We were forced to repair the machine in the garage. It took about one hour to solve this gearbox trouble, which made us drop out in the title race.

After the repair, Michael Kim and Akihiro Tsuzuki took the steering for 2 stints each and made more laps with the better pace than the class leader No.98 Audi R8 LMS. However, we were 5 laps short of the laps of 70% of the overall leader, which was considered as completed the race, and was classified as retired to finish the race.

This ILMC at Zhuhai was our first overseas race with Audi R8 LMS and the 6-hour race for the first time. Hitotsuyama Racing showed the speed of a single shot, but on the other hand, this showed us the difficulty in the endurance races and the high level of the international series.

In the following week on November 18th to 20th, we participated in the legendary street race Macau GP GT Cup held at Macau boomed with casinos. The driver was Akihiro Tsuzuki again who drove the Audi R8 LMS in the previous week. However, our first car used for ILMC at Zhuhai did not make it to Macau GP due to the logistic procedure, so we prepared the new second car for this Macau GP. We took every possible measure to challenge the race.

The 30-minute practice session held on Thursday was unfortunately in wet condition. Under that condition, Tsuzuki recorded the third best time at the Macau street circuit where he had little experience. This raised the morale of the team.

The 20-minute qualifying session was held each on Friday and Saturday, and each session was favored with dry condition.

## Hitotsuyama Racing

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During the first qualifying on Friday, Tsuzuki marked the 5th best lap time. He aimed for the better position during the second qualifying on Saturday, but he lost the timing for the time attack due to the red flag interruption and finished the qualifying with 6th position.

Macau GP GT Cup commenced with the start procedure at 9 o'clock in the morning on Sunday. With one lap of formation lap, the 12-lap race started with the rolling start. With the pole-positioned Edoardo Mortara of Audi as a leader, second positioned Sawa of Lamborghini and third positioned Danny Watts of McLaren followed him. Tsuzuki dodged the pursuit of Fujii of Aston Martin and kept the 6th position. After that, Tsuzuki joined the battle for 4th position with the up-to-date GT 3 machines of Porsche, Ferrari, Audi, Aston Martin, and Ford and developed the hot competition.

However, before the Mandarin Corner on lap 3, Tsuzuki's Audi R8 LMS had fire come out from the back of the machine all of a sudden and slowed down. Unfortunately we had to finish the race with the machine trouble. On the same third lap at the Mandarin Corner, Frank Yu of Ford made a spin at the speed of over 260 km/h and crashed. This caused the multiple crashes with the following cars. Of those crashed, Eddie Yau of Porsche made the severe crash. The atmosphere became tense across the circuit in front of the circuit monitor which showed the wrecked machine, but the spectators gave a warm applause when they saw the driver coming out of the machine on his own.

After all, Edoardo Mortara of Audi led the race all the way till the end without surrendering the top position and won the race. Sawa of Lamborghini was on second position, and the first-time participant Fujii of Aston Martin made sure to get the 5th position.

We could not get the good result at Macau GP again from the previous week at ILMC Zhuhai, and Hitotsuyama Racing finished the first season with Audi R8 LMS with a lot of problems to be solved.

We promise to solve these problems during the off season and show much stronger Hitotsuyama Racing to the fans at more races in the 2012 season.

We would like to thank all the personnel and fans who supported the activities of Hitotsuyama Racing in the 2011 season from the depth of our heart.

At the same time, we would kindly ask for your continued support and encouragement for the 2012 season.