



## **For immediate release:**

### **Proton Competition and Ford Performance Stand Tall on the Le Mans Podium in Mustang GT3 Debut**

- In its Le Mans debut, Mustang GT3 finishes the world's toughest and most iconic sports car endurance race with all three cars entered, bringing home third place for car number 88.
- Dennis Olsen, Giorgio Roda and Mikkel O. Pedersen finish on the podium with a third-place finish in the FIA WEC LMGT3 category.
- Chris Mies, Ben Tuck and John Hartshorne finish fourth, helping Mustang GT3 to two spots in the field's top-five finishers.

**Dubai, United Arab Emirates, June 24, 2024** – Sixty years after Ford Mustang's first win in the legendary Tour de France, Mustang GT3 delivered a third-place result as all three cars finished the iconic 24 Hours of Le Mans. In the toughest endurance sports car race in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) calendar, the Mustang GT3 took on the ultimate challenge and delivered in some of the toughest conditions in recent memory at the famous Circuit de la Sarthe.

All three Mustang GT3s finished the race with the No. 88 of Dennis Olsen (NOR), Giorgio Roda (ITA) and Mikkel O. Pedersen (CAN) crossing the finish line third in the LMGT3 category. The No. 44 driven by Christopher Mies (GER), John Hartshorne (GBR) and Ben Tuck (GBR) secured fourth place.

"Today's podium performance shows that Mustang can compete and hold its own on the global stage against the best sports cars in the world," said Mark Rushbrook, Global Director of Ford Performance Motorsports. "It is such a fantastic feeling to be able to do it in the first outing for Mustang at Le Mans. It's a great testament to our company, our employees, our fans who are celebrating Mustang's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, and all the great partners we have with Proton Competition, M-Sport and Multimatic Motorsports. We're racing and winning all around the world, but to have a podium here at Le Mans is such a special moment."

Christian Ried, Proton Competition Team Principal, said, "It's always great to be on the podium and especially at Le Mans. Additionally, in the first year of a new car, and in the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mustang, there are just so many things that came together to make today possible. It's unbelievable. We saw that this was a good car at its debut in Daytona, and we've since taken all the steps in order to make this work in its first season. From Daytona, Sebring and Long Beach to Qatar, Imola and Spa, we felt like we could bring a car here after those six months that could fight for the win. To finish on the podium in third is amazing. I'm proud of everyone."

The No. 88 endured early challenges but showed resiliency throughout the race. Olsen climbed 13 places in the first hour of action to fourth place in a great display of speed and race craft. From there, the team consistently competed within the class's top 10, capitalizing on a pit strategy that helped to propel the Mustang GT3 into the top five throughout the race. A steady pace around Circuit de la Sarthe's 13.626km (8.467mi) circuit eventually delivered a place on the podium.

"I'm over the moon with this result," said Larry Holt, Executive Vice President of Multimatic Special Vehicle Operations Group. "Le Mans is the biggest sportscar racing challenge in the world. I've had some great results here and I've also had some bad years here and I have to say that this is right up there with the greats."

"It wasn't a win but a third-place podium, followed by a fourth place and total reliability, gives us a lot to be happy about. We've engineered this car over the past 18 months and run it since Daytona. We've had ups and downs but when we ran at Le Mans last Sunday, I knew that it was going to be good."

While the No. 77 of Ryan Hardwick (USA), Ben Barker (GBR) and Zacharie Robichon (CAN) experienced early challenges on the track during the race, their Mustang GT3 also shared in the overall team success. Barker recorded the fastest qualifying lap on Thursday, advancing to the Hyperpole. This marked the first Hyperpole by Mustang GT3 after four rounds of WEC racing so far in 2024.

#### **Driver Quotes:**

**Dennis Olsen, No. 88:** "Once we got started with the race, driving through the field, I realized the package that we had underneath us. It gave me motivation to go the extra mile and to take risks even in all the conditions we experienced in the race – like going flat-out in the wet. I wanted this outcome to happen. It was a pretty good last stint, and I'm very happy to be on the podium with Bill Ford himself. It was a proud moment for me."

"We've all been growing together. We all had to get to know each other in the beginning of the year, but we spent the time we had efficiently. Now, here we are on the podium at Le Mans. It's Ford Performance, Multimatic Motorsports and Proton Competition sharing this as one group. I'm very proud of everyone."

**Mikkel O. Pedersen, No. 88:** "This was my third time at Le Mans, and this was my first time actually finishing the race. Maybe that says something about the build quality of Mustang GT3. I'm so proud of the team, especially from where we started the week. It had been a tough week, but it played out in the end. What a great week overall for the team."

"The communication is perfect between Ford Performance, Multimatic Motorsports and Proton Competition. We work well together in resolving any issues immediately. There's great teamwork between all of us."

**Chris Mies, No. 44:** "Once again, the car had no technical issues which is amazing – after Daytona, Sebring and now Le Mans. We finished fourth, which I'm upset about because we were so close to the podium. But that's how it goes. If you finish off the podium, then you want to be on the podium. In the end though, we still maximized our potential. Fourth place is great, and from a total team perspective, it's even better that our sister car was able to get the first podium finish for Mustang GT3. The car was amazing to drive, and I think it honestly deserved a 1-2-3 finish even. The car was hooked up from a performance side, and we made good progress from a couple months ago. Hopefully for the next big races, we will have more podiums and soon, a win."

**Ben Tuck, No. 44:** "If you told me we were going to get a top-five in my first ever Le Mans, I would have honestly asked you how much money I'd have to pay for that. I'm extremely happy with that result. It'll always be in the back of your mind... one position shy of the podium. But, I really can't

complain. We were so close, and all you need to do is look at the entry list to realize the class and standard of the LMGT3 grid. It's absolutely incredible, and especially to see our teammates on the podium. That's amazing for Ford. It's an honor to be a part of it. I'm very appreciative to John Hartshorne for bringing me here, Proton for running the car and to Ford for putting this all on for us. It's really special to be a part of the Mustang history and Ford's return to Le Mans."

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**Contacts:**     **Rania Al-Shurafa**  
Communications Manager  
Ford Middle East  
+971 50 362 7791  
[rania.shurafa@ford.com](mailto:rania.shurafa@ford.com)

**Jessica El Rami**  
Senior Account Manager  
Burson  
+971 58 517 1733  
[Jessica.elrami@hillandknowlton.com](mailto:Jessica.elrami@hillandknowlton.com)