

# Hella Inc.

## Racing News

### **Tafel Racing's second consecutive GT2 Class victory**

LONG BEACH, Calif., April 19, 2008 - The question posed was if an East Coast strategy that won Tafel Racing its first American Le Mans Series victory could be as successful on the West Coast? The No. 71 Tafel/Bell Micro Racing Ferrari F430 GTC answered with a resounding 'yes!' taking its second consecutive GT2 class victory today in a dramatic battle at the American Le Mans Series at Long Beach (Calif.). 2000 American Le Mans Series GT2 Champion Dirk Müller (a native of Germany living in Monaco) crossed the finish line a narrow 0.317 seconds in front of the No. 45 Porsche in a battle that was at times even closer. A daring strategy call by Team Technical Director Tony Dowe (Cumming, Ga.) not to change Michelin tires during the race's only pit stop positioned Tafel Racing at the front of the pack with approximately 30 minutes remaining in the 100 minute race. Taking a pristine car from opening driver Dominik Farnbacher (Ansbach, Germany), Müller was able to hold-off two Porsches with fresher tires to claim the Jim Tafel (Alpharetta, Ga.) owned team's second-straight, and second career, American Le Mans Series victory.

Starting fourth, Farnbacher had the challenging task of keeping the leaders close while simultaneously protecting his Michelin Pilot racing slicks on the 1.968-mile, 11-turn, temporary street course. Farnbacher, in just his second season of American Le Mans Series competition, did a veteran-like job with both tasks. The test was then on the Cumming, Ga.-based team. The task before them was to perform a perfect pit stop on Lap 46, of the 68 covered by the GT2 class, refueling the Italian exotic while Farnbacher handed the driving duties over to Müller. Müller sped out of pit lane first in class with a four second lead. With 20 minutes to go the lead had slipped to 3.3 seconds as the competitors' fresher tires allowed them to close on Müller, the 2007 FIA GT GT2 class champion. The gap fell to less than half that with 12 minutes to go. The five minute mark showed just 0.551 seconds between the Bell Micro Ferrari and second-place at the start-finish line; a gap that was much closer on other portions of the track.

The team's day was threatened one last time when Müller saw the checkered flag flying for the overall race leader behind him. Despite thinking the race was over, Müller stayed hard on the throttle awaiting confirmation from the team. Instead of confirmation, Müller was warned he needed to take one more lap under the onslaught of the cars behind. Drawing on decades of experience, Müller kept the V8-powered, mid-engine machine at the point of the field in a close but clean one-two battle between the two great manufacturers of sports car racing; Ferrari and Porsche.

# Hella Inc.

## Racing News

For Müller, the Long Beach win gave him his tenth career Series race title. It was Farnbacher's second and the team's second in the ALMS. The victory also gave the team the outright lead in the GT2 Team Championship and widened the still narrow battles for Driver and IMSA Cup titles with eight races remaining on the schedule.

