

## Keating Motorsports/Risi Competizione 6 Hour Report For 24 Hours Of Le Mans - 2018

**No. 85 Ferrari 488 GTE-Am:**      **Ben Keating (USA)**  
                                                 **Jeroen Bleekemolen (NLD)**  
                                                 **Luca Stolz (DEU)**

**(Le Mans, France, June 16, 2018)...** The No. 85 Keating Motorsports/Risi Competizione Ferrari 488 GTE-Am team had a solid start to the 86<sup>th</sup> annual 24 Hours of Le Mans race today at Circuit de la Sarthe in front of a large spectator crowd.

Jeroen Bleekemolen, a Dutch driver, was qualifying and starting driver for the American team based in Texas in the USA. Starting from the 11<sup>th</sup> position in the GTE-Am, it didn't take Bleekemolen long to climb up through the field and by the team's first pit stop approximately 45 minutes into the twice-around-the-clock endurance race, they had climbed to fifth in class. After fuel and a slight tire pressure adjustment, Bleekemolen was back out on track. Unfortunately, just a lap later he was back in the pits after suffering a spin at the Porsche Corner and requiring new tires.

About 45 minutes later Bleekemolen turned the car over to team principal/driver Ben Keating, who drove a very solid, steady pace for over two hours, including several laps under caution. His drama-free stint was duplicated with Le Mans rookie Luca Stolz, who also had several laps under caution but a steady, solid pace. The No. 85 Keating/Risi Ferrari sits in sixth position in class at the end of six hours.

### **Jeroen Bleekemolen, starting driver, No. 85 Ferrari 488 GTE-Am:**

*"We had a great start and were able to move up, take one position after the other. The car was looking really good. I had some oversteer in the first stint, so we just adjusted the pressures and it felt even better after that, so I was looking forward to gaining a couple of more positions. Then, by myself, I lost the car on the entry to the Porsche Corners. I got too much confidence with the car, thought it would be fine but went in too hard, lost the rear and made a spin and unfortunately the tires were flat-spotted so I had to come in for an extra pit stop, which is really unfortunate. We lost over a minute with it. We're still definitely in the race but you don't want to have these kinds of things. It's what makes the difference between winning and losing. Hopefully we stay clean from now on and can move up to the front."*

### **Ben Keating, Team Principal and second rotation driver, No. 85 Ferrari 488 GTE-Am:**

*"Because Jeroen had gone through the gravel and collected a bunch of trash on his tires, we went ahead and put on a new set for his second stint. We are double stinting tires right now. I got in on the second stint on Jeroen's tires, which was great, no problem. I did a full stint mostly under green there. Then I came in and got a new set of tires and full fuel. The way the rules are this year, no matter what happens, you must do 14 laps in a stint, even if there is a safety car. Because of that, we had a safety car come out for some debris from contact between a couple of LMP2 cars. My last several laps were just cruising around behind the safety car. The problem with that is the tires get too cold to work very well. So immediately after a safety car, you want to come in and pit and put on new, hot tires, and that's what we did. Luca then got in the car. It was a really good stint for me. I had some good battles on track, made a few passes for position and had a really good time working hard to keep the Aston (Martin) behind me. I don't know who was in the car, but they were pretty quick, and I did my fastest lap of the weekend trying to keep my position. It was fun!"*

**Luca Stolz, third rotation driver, No. 85 Ferrari 488 GTE-Am:**

*"I did a double stint and went out of new tires. We had four or five laps though behind the safety car during my stint, which gets a little tricky because the tires cool off at Le Mans so quickly. Of course, you try to heat them up a little bit, but I think we managed quite well and are up to P6 and we'll try to go up into the top three."*

**Dave "Beaky" Sims, Keating Motorsports/Risi Competizione Team Manager:**

*"At the moment it's going quite well. Pit stops have been excellent. We've had one small warning (from the ACO) which was because our pit was blocked quite a bit from the LMP2 car behind us in pit lane. That gave Ben no place to park to pit so he did the best he could to park at our pit, but the car was angled a bit. They understood though because of circumstance and we received a warning but hopefully we won't be blocked again."*

For more information, please visit [www.viperexchange.com](http://www.viperexchange.com) or [www.risicompetizione.com](http://www.risicompetizione.com) and follow on Facebook/BenKeating and Facebook/RisiCompetizione and Twitter @keatingcarguy and @RisiComp. You can also follow via Instagram/RisiComp.

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