

Juniper finishes sixth in Sepang

No matter what race you're competing in, if you were leading for more than 56 laps, you'd think you would have a good shot at winning it.

Sunshine Coast's Shaun Juniper certainly did when he and Gold Coast-based Craig Baird and their team mate Paul Kelly led the 12-hour Merdeka Millennium Endurance Race in Sepang, Malaysia by that margin at the weekend.

But an incident on turn nine deep into the race blew any shot they had at glory.

The team, driving Juniper's Porsche 911 (Type 997) GT3 RSR, were leading by nearly 60 laps when they collided with another Porsche, piercing their radiator hose.

The team was forced into the pits for over an hour to rectify the problem, before they rejoined the race in 58th position.

Undeterred by the set back, the trio fought back to finish an amazing sixth overall, and second in their class, in one of the worlds most prestigious endurance races.

"There's no doubt we could have won it, but that's motorsport," Juniper said after the race.

"The car went like a dream all weekend and the entire team was fantastic. It was a great result considering we got the car only 10 days before the race."

While disappointed with the final outcome, Juniper said he was thrilled with the whole experience.

"We won 25,000 (Malaysian) Ringgits (approximately AUS\$8600) and finishing on the podium is always good," he said.

"I can't wait for the Dubai endurance race in January and we will definitely be back next year."

Driving the Porsche RSR - one of only 35 in the world - was a huge joy for Juniper, who usually steers a Porsche 911 (Type 997) GT3 Cup car in the Carrera Cup Australia.

"Driving the car was better than I imagined," he said.

"It was quick, handled brilliantly, and the brakes were unbelievably better. It's the best car Porsche has ever made."

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