

STEEDA TAKES TWO WINS AND RUNNER-UP AT THE BUD MERRILL MEMORIAL DOUBLE SARRC/TES/ECR ENDURO AT PALM BEACH INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

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Driving the 2017 Steeda Autosports Q500R Ford Mustang, drivers Dario Orlando and Glen Vitale nearly swept the weekend at Palm Beach International Raceway (Palm Beach, FL), taking two wins and a second place finish in the triple-race, Bud Memorial Double SARRC ECR Challenge. The event included two 20-minute sprint races and a 1.5-hour Enduro that included refueling and a driver change.

Orlando, who drove both sprint races, qualified the yellow and black Number 20 Ford on pole in both twin South Atlantic Road Race Championships events. Admittedly rusty, he struggled at the start of the first race and spun on the second lap—but despite having not competed in over two years, he gathered the Mustang and fought his way back to grab a second-place podium finish. “It was great to get back in competition,” said Orlando. “We’ve worked diligently to produce a Mustang with greatly enhanced handling performance, but one that’s easy to drive at the limit. Our Q-series Mustangs are balanced and do well on the street or the track. In fact, one of the reasons we race is to

show enthusiasts they can have the very best parts whether they drive on the street or track,” Orlando added.



Orlando was better prepared for the second sprint race. He rocketed to a great start and despite a strong challenge from the Number 52 BMW M3 (see photo), he was able to maintain the lead and take the victory. “It was a challenge staying ahead of the supercharged M3,” stated Orlando, “However, the Steeda Mustang prevailed and it was really exciting to take a win. Our Q500R utilizes a tuned 5.0L Coyote engine, a stock transmission and our full Steeda G-Trac suspension, with Pro Action adjustable shocks.

It's stuff you can buy and adapt easily to any S550 Mustang. This system really enhances performance and we offer a few levels depending on your demands."



The team concluded the weekend running the 1.5-hour ECR Enduro, where Orlando took his third pole of the weekend. SCCA regular and Steeda team driver, Glen Vitale, took the first stint, and he made the most of Orlando's P1 starting position. Vitale jetted to the lead, poured the coals to the Steeda Q500R and never looked back. He ran fast and clean, leading the race until half way, when he pitted for refueling and to hand the

reigns to Orlando. With 30 minutes to go, Orlando got back in the mix and held off the field for a true flag-to-flag victory.

“It was an amazing race weekend for our team,” said Orlando. “The car performed well, the only glitch was a wiped stock clutch during the end of the last race. We plan to upgrade to an Exedy clutch and we’ll be back to the track. We use this car to develop new Steeda parts, so we’re always pushing and learning. And we can’t wait to get back, take a look at the Mustang and then do our job making the best parts for our customers.

