

RACE 07 — MIDNIGHT MERIDIAN Detroit Blacklist Underground | Event #7 of 12 Location: Downtown Detroit — Campus Martius to Riverfront, figure-8 circuit via Woodward & Jefferson Conditions: March, 11:58 PM | Clear, 9°C, dry surface, light civilian traffic diverted Winner: Ace — Nismo 270

—

They ran the heart of the city.

Not the periphery. Not the industrial margin or the park or the border road — the actual heart of it, the downtown grid where the buildings went up twenty storeys and the streets ran in a geometry that the city's founders had drawn with the kind of confidence that assumed permanence. Campus Martius at the north end, the riverfront plaza at the south, Woodward Avenue as the north-south spine, Jefferson Avenue as the east-west cross, and a figure-8 route connecting them that required two intersection crossings, three hard-angle turns, and a section through the Woodward-Jefferson junction that was the geometric center of the whole exercise and which three of the seven participating drivers had already identified as the decisive point.

The city cooperated, the way cities sometimes do with things they should not cooperate with. Traffic had been managed — not officially, not with any paperwork attached to any decision, but managed nonetheless, the result of several phone calls and a certain number of people who owed other people certain kinds of consideration. The storefronts and office towers stood dark at this hour and threw back the headlight beams of seven cars arriving at Campus Martius in a controlled column before breaking into their starting grid arrangement.

The crowd here was different again — larger, urban, mixed in a way the industrial and peripheral events had not been. People in clubwear who had come from venues three blocks over. People in work clothes who had extended their shifts for a reason. People who had been following the Blacklist for years and knew what downtown meant: this was the event that separated the circuits that wanted to be legitimate from the ones that simply wanted to be impossible.

This was impossible. That was the point.

Seven cars. The returning names among them — Sable in the white 911, Viktor Drach's ZL1 somehow more menacing on the narrow downtown grid than it had been on the width of Woodward, Reyes in the Corvette. Three new entries that the Blacklist's expanding reputation had drawn: a tuned Maserati MC20 in deep blue, a Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series running a setup that suggested someone had spent money professionally, and a modified Porsche Taycan Turbo S — electric, which produced a reaction from the assembled crowd that ran somewhere between genuine curiosity and structured disrespect until they heard the acceleration numbers, at which point curiosity won.

And Ace. And the DB11.

The figure-8 format meant that the two loops crossed each other at the Woodward-Jefferson junction on every lap — and on each crossing, cars running the north-south and east-west segments respectively would arrive at the junction from different approaches. The crossing was managed by a timing system: the junction was an active conflict point, and the Blacklist's operation rules for this event specified that junction approaches were decided by approach speed and timing, not by right-of-way conventions that nobody was observing anyway. This was stated plainly in the briefing that went out the night before the event. The implication of it was also stated plainly: if two cars arrived at the crossing simultaneously, the resolution was physical. This had happened before in other cities. It would not be the first time and everyone at the briefing had listened with the kind of attention that confirmed they understood what they were entering.

Ace had stood at the Woodward-Jefferson junction for forty minutes during the late afternoon. She'd watched the traffic clear it — the timing of the signals, the geometry of each approach angle, the sight lines from each direction, the specific way the road surface changed at the painted intersection box where four lanes of city grid compressed into a shared point. She'd stood at each corner of the intersection and looked at the others. She'd done the math on approach speeds and arrival times until the crossing was not a hazard but a system, and she understood its parameters.

Then she'd gone back to the Nismo and sat in it for twenty minutes and said nothing.

"You've decided something," the DB11 had pulled up alongside her at the staging area, and it was Shammy who said it, not a question.

"The junction," Ace said. "Third lap. I'll be ahead of the field by then. Clean crossing."

"And if you're not ahead?"

A pause. "I'll make the decision when I arrive at it."

"That's not a plan."

Ace looked across at her. "It's a framework."

Shammy had considered this and apparently found it acceptable, because she'd nodded once and wound her window back up.

The green light dropped at midnight precisely.

Downtown Detroit received seven cars and their combined output simultaneously and the sound bounced off the building faces and came back at a different frequency than it left — the glass and concrete rearranging the acoustic event into something that had no single origin point, just a presence, a city-wide sensation of things moving very fast in places that were not designed for this.

The first lap was sorting. The figure-8 format required the field to immediately negotiate not just speed but the logic of two interlocking loops, and two drivers — the Maserati and one of the new Porsches — went the wrong direction in the first sixty seconds, discovered this, and corrected without disaster, but the correction cost them their starting positions and put them at the back of an already strained field.

Sable took the lead through the first north loop. Viktor Drach took the crossing junction second, reading the traffic flow with the same efficiency he brought to everything. Ace ran third, finding the rhythm of the figure-8 with an ease that the format did not typically allow — most drivers needed two loops before the layout became intuitive. The Nismo moved through the first crossing at the junction having arrived there at a moment Ace had pre-calculated from her afternoon study: she was thirty metres ahead of the car approaching from the east-west segment, which was enough, which was exactly enough.

Second lap. The field was establishing itself.

The AMG GT found its speed in the north loop's long straights and moved from fourth to third, pushing Viktor Drach out of that position. Viktor responded with the particular aggression of someone who did not enjoy being pushed, and the two of them ran the south loop in a state of mutual antagonism that cost both of them fractions of seconds at every corner entry.

Ace found Sable's pace on the second lap and matched it. Not overtook it — matched. She was running the Nismo through the figure-8 in a rhythm that had settled into something sustainable, efficient, reading each corner before she arrived at it and spending no energy on recovery from imprecision because there was no imprecision to recover from. She was one car length behind the white 911 on the north loop's back section, two car lengths behind on the south loop's extended straight, and she was learning the specific speed at which Sable ran the junction crossing.

Sable crossed the junction on the second lap with a margin of approximately forty metres ahead of the east-west approach car — deliberate, comfortable, planned. She was managing the event. She was doing what she had done at every event she'd entered.

Third lap.

Ace moved.

Not dramatically. Not with the theatrical thrust of maximum acceleration from a clear section — it started earlier, in the north loop's entry, where she took a line through the first corner that was half a metre tighter than she'd been running and which recovered half a second by the corner exit, and she brought that half-second into the long section and used it to compress the gap to the 911 from one car length to half, and she carried that half-car into the back section of the north loop and took another half-second at the final corner before the junction approach.

She arrived at the Woodward-Jefferson crossing with the 911 two and a half car lengths ahead.

And the east-west approach car — the Taycan, running its fourth lap in a sustained charge that had brought it from sixth to fourth — arriving from the left at a speed that put it in the junction box at approximately the same moment as Sable.

Sable crossed first by a margin that was, in physical terms, exactly adequate. The Taycan braked — not panicked, not badly, but the brake was the decision and it cost momentum, and the electric car came through the junction third behind a gap that hadn't existed four seconds earlier.

Ace crossed the junction clean. She'd been behind Sable through the conflict point and the timing had worked in her favour — the east-west approach had bracketed Sable's crossing window and left Ace's arrival a clean moment later.

She came out of the junction in second with Sable two and a half car lengths ahead and the south loop of the third lap ahead of them both.

The south loop's extended straight was where the 911's weight and balance asked the most of its driver in terms of top-speed management — the Porsche platform was not a liability here, but it was honest about what it wanted. Ace brought the Nismo up the straight with an acceleration that was simply appropriate for the power available, which was enough, and she reached the end of the straight with the gap to the 911 at one car length.

The final corner before the finish was a hard-right onto the riverfront approach — ninety degrees, the Woodward-Jefferson junction behind them, the water ahead, the crowd audible before the corner exit because people had positioned themselves along the riverfront plaza for exactly this moment.

Sable took the corner clean. The 911 rotated well and came out with its momentum intact, which was the right result.

Ace took the corner slightly tighter, slightly faster, and the Nismo came out of the ninety-degree turn

with a marginal velocity advantage that existed for the next 200 metres and was exactly 200 metres of race remaining.

She crossed the line first by less than a car length.

The crowd on the riverfront erupted with the particular energy of an urban crowd that has just watched something happen in their city that shouldn't be possible and that they will describe for years to people who weren't there. Sable crossed second with composure. Viktor Drach crossed third, having extracted himself from the AMG engagement on the final lap through a junction manoeuvre that was borderline by any definition and clean by the narrowest available margin.

Ace brought the Nismo to a stop on the riverfront plaza, engine at idle, the river behind her and the downtown towers on all sides throwing back light.

Second win.

She sat with it the way she sat with everything — quietly, without rush. The city around her making its sounds. The crowd finding its voice. The DB11 arriving beside her on the plaza, Mai parallel-parking it with the precision of someone who had found this amusing at some point and perhaps still did.

Shammy got out. She was too tall for the plaza in the way she was too tall for everything, and she stood beside the car and looked at the city around them — the towers, the lights, the river — with the uncomplicated appreciation of someone who found large things genuinely interesting.

“Downtown,” she said.

“Yes,” Ace said, stepping out of the Nismo.

“Next time we run this course, I want to drive through the junction at full speed.”

Ace looked at her.

“Hypothetically,” Shammy added.

It was not clear that she meant hypothetically. Ace chose to let it stand.

The cash arrived. The city continued around them, indifferent and alive, doing all the things a city does at midnight when no one is watching.

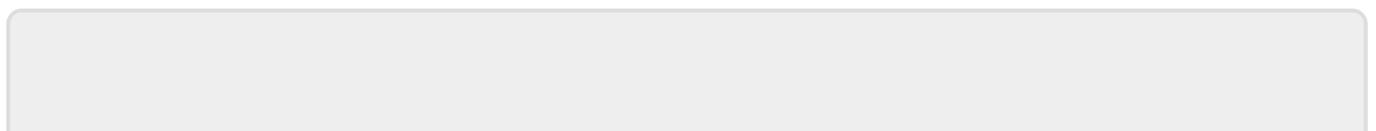
Which was, in this particular case, a great deal. —

© 2025-2026. “World of Ace, Mai and Shammy” and all original characters, settings, story elements, and concepts are the intellectual property of the author. All rights reserved.

Non-commercial fan works are allowed with attribution.

Commercial use, redistribution, or adaptation requires explicit permission from the author.

Contact: editor at publication-x.com



From:
<https://datavault.ws/> - **DataVault**

Permanent link:
<https://datavault.ws/doku.php/canon:ace14:blaclist:chapter7>

Last update: **16/03/2026 17:39**

