



**Grand-Am Rolex Series SunRichGourmet.com 1000
2008 Finale At Miller Motorsports Park**
Source: Team Race Reports



Photo courtesy Krohn Racing - Photo by Regis Lefebure

Krohn Racing Team Report

Submitted by Barbara Burns - Burns Group Unlimited

Krohn Racing ended the 2008 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series season with a fifth and 12th place finish at Miller Motorsports Park. After starting from the pole with the No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola, the fifth place finish was bit of a disappointment to qualifying driver Ricardo Zonta and teammate Nic Jönsson.

There was no pot of gold for the Krohn team, despite the rainbow over the track, when a belt that links the alternator and water pump broke on the No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola. Eric van de Poelle led two laps and kept the car at the top of the chart for much of his double stint. He then turned it over to team owner/driver Tracy W. Krohn, who had to drive most of his first stint in the rain. Third driver Boris Said took over the wheel from Krohn, until the belt issue sidelined the team for a 45 minute repair. Krohn returned to the cockpit and posted a 12th place class finish.

The No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley of Ian James, John Pew and Raphael Matos won the finale. Chip Ganassi Racing clinched their third Grand-Am Prototype Team Championship and drivers Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas clinched the Driver's Championship.

Tracy W. Krohn, team owner/driver, No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola:

“Eric and Boris did a great job putting the car in the Top 10. Unfortunately we had an alternator belt that broke and it took about 45 minutes to repair. For the last stint I got back in the car and it was just fine. I was doing laps and having fun. The car behaved very well. I was real pleased with the way the car performed in my last stint. Gosh, I wish we could start over again.

My stint in the rain was really odd because going into Turn 5, I could see the rain coming and I let off the accelerator and tapped the brakes and I the car just went into this sideways spin. I saw the cars in front of me. I got off in the gravel and I just locked it up and put both feet in. I managed to get the car stopped and got it started again while rolling around on slicks in the rain. It was really raining pretty hard. Finally I figured out that I could get more grip running with two tires on the gravel, so I did that for awhile. I was surprised they didn't allow us to come to the pits immediately. I don't know what the delay was and why they decided to have us stay out another lap when the cars were spinning all over the place. We all had to go slow enough to keep the car on the track.”

Eric van de Poele, driver, No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola:

“I was lucky to have the car in good condition at the start. Our strategy played very well for us because fortunately we had a yellow, as we expected. So we stopped on the same lap just before the GT cars. It was perfect. The car was pretty good all the way through during all my stints. Everything was perfect so I could catch a few cars. It is always nice when you see your position go higher and higher. Then Tracy got in the car next and I think we were in a very good position, in fifth place. Unfortunately the rain came very hard. I think everybody did their best and then we had a problem with the belt. Unfortunately we didn't get any luck today. It was fantastic the team fixed the car in quite a short time and we could get back on the track. Tracy could finish the race and we finished 12th. We prefer to give them a better finish but we'll look forward to next year.

I was quite happy to see the Lola become more competitive. The pole was fantastic for the team who has worked so hard this year. It was the highlight of the weekend.”

Boris Said, driver, No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola:“It's not every day you get to drive with a five-time Spa 24 Hour champion (Eric van de Poele). It was fun for me. I've known Eric forever and this was the first time we've ever driven together. Eric did just an unbelievable job for his first 2 hours and 45 minutes. I got in during the rain and was a little nervous. I've only driven this car for 7 or 8 laps the other day. In the rain it was great though. I was actually sorry to see it dry out. I think we would have had a decent finish today. I was being a little conservative when I was on slicks just because I didn't have the experience on it. But the speed started to come. It was unfortunately that a five dollar belt broke but that's motor racing. Eric was fast and Tracy did a good job keeping it on the track when the rain came down. There wasn't a car out there that could keep up with the pace car. It was pretty torrential rain there for a bit. Crazy weather here but it's a great track.”

Nic Jönsson, driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola:

“I'm pretty pleased with my stint. Unfortunately the rain started coming down in the middle of my stint and it was very dangerous. Grand-Am, in my opinion made a call that was very dangerous. They left everybody out there an extra lap on slicks which I think was dangerous because people slid off left and right and couldn't come into the pits. I was going 20 miles per hour and was hydroplaning on slicks. But we got going again and I think we moved up from third to first and then we decided to stay out two laps too long on the rain tires and we lost positions there. We also had a clutch problem and we didn't have a clutch for two stops, which also delayed us a little bit in pit lane. I think the car had the performance today to put us on the podium and least but it didn't work out that way. We have to get home and try to work hard for next year and hopefully come back and run for the championship next year.”

Ricardo Zonta, driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola:

“I am disappointed with our results. We started from the pole and finished fifth. It is frustrating we did not win or have a podium finish because we had a very good car. I got a penalty early on and then we were late on changing tires back to slicks. I worked very hard to get the car back from tenth to fifth. It's a frustrating finish for us.”

David Brown, Team Manager, Krohn Racing and Race Engineer on No. 76 Pontiac Riley:

"We started on pole position and led the race but unfortunately, due to contact in the early part of the race we incurred a drive-thru penalty which put us back. But then through a bit of stealth and a bit of good fortune, we managed to get back up to the front when we pitted just before it went yellow. We were encouraged by that and regained our position by doing that. We were on the same tire life as everybody else, as well as the same fuel timing. Then when it rained, we came in at the same time as everybody else and drove around in the rain like the others. When it came to dry, we were late putting the slicks on and that lost us an enormous amount of time and put us down into 10th position. Finally when there was a yellow, which was right at the window for the last pit stop, we took it, along with everybody else and did a driver change. Ricardo pushed as hard as he could and gain as many positions as he could and went from tenth to fifth. We're disappointed not to have finished first, however having been down as far as 12th we did actually gain something."

Jeff Braun, Race Engineer, No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Riley:

"We lost the belt on the front of the engine that links the alternator and water pump. We lost electrical power first and then we had high temperatures and had to stop. In order to fix it we had to drop the under wing and move the engine back from the back of the car to get a new belt on it. We weren't sure if the engine was damaged but it was fine and we got back out there. We thought we were done but the guys looked at it said let's work on it and see how long it's going to take. They got it done and quickly – in about 45 minutes – and we were back on track. We got a 12th place out of it. On top of that, Tracy did his fastest lap of the weekend and got another whole stint. It was a great way to end the season. The guys did a fantastic job leading the race. It was rewarding that the pit strategy worked for us and got us in the lead. Eric did a super job on his double stint and was on pace with the leaders. It was great to get to show it and a reward for the guys for all the hard work all year."

Most Grand-Am competitors immediately head to Las Vegas for the annual Grand-Am Banquet on Monday night, September 22nd. The next race for the Krohn drivers will be the Petit Le Mans race in the American Le Mans Series on Saturday, October 4th. Tracy Krohn, Nic Jönsson and Eric van de Poele will compete in the Risi-Krohn Ferrari 430 GT. For more information, please see www.americanlemans.com, www.risicompetizione.com and www.krohn racing.net.

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing

Submitted by Adam Saal

Close Out 2008 Season with Third-Place SunRichGourmet.com 1000 Finish at Miller Motorsports Park

GAINSCO, Gurney, Fogarty and Vasser Handle Rain and Hard Knocks for Sixth Podium

Alex Gurney, Jon Fogarty and Jimmy Vasser combined great drives with typically strong pit work and outstanding strategy from the GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing team to finish third in Saturday's season-ending Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series SunRichGourmet.com 1000 at Miller Motorsports Park. The hard-earned third-place showing was GAINSCO's sixth top-three podium finish of the year after also scoring a victory in the EMCO Gears Classic at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in June and four second-place finishes.

After qualifying seventh on Friday, Gurney survived a lap one skirmish, moved to the lead pack early in the race and took the lead for the first time on Lap 40, just before the end of his opening stint. He handed the No. 99 GAINSCO/Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley over to Vasser who moved back to the top five before Fogarty took the wheel for an eventful double stint in the middle of the race. Fogarty dealt with a torrential downpour that caught some other drivers out and then benefited from a solid strategy call by the team to switch from rain tires to slicks several laps before the competition.

"It was ridiculous in the rain," Fogarty said. "We were on slicks when it first came down and in standing water you are literally not touching the ground, you are hydroplaning, so we were going so slow out there. We were just hanging on until we could come in for rain tires, and that was pretty short lived, and then the team made a good call to go back to slicks right away. That gave us a good advantage."

Fogarty dropped to eighth after pitting for the slicks but worked his way to the lead when the other front runners stopped. He led 25 laps until the race's sixth and final caution period came on Lap 108, and Fogarty ducked into the pits one lap later. Gurney retook the wheel and returned to the race in second place behind eventual race winner Raphael Matos, who co-drove the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley with Ian

James and John Pew. Max Angelelli later moved the No. 10 SunTrust Pontiac Dallara by the No. 99 for third, and Gurney even fell out of the top three in the final hour of the race, but he fought his way back on to the podium by the checkered flag.

"It's not a bad way to end the season, and every time you are on the podium it is kind of a good feeling," Gurney said. "We certainly wanted to win the race. Jon had a great stint and it was looking quite promising, but we really didn't have the ultimate pace. Once the other guys really stretched their legs it was a hell of a battle. All of the guys battling for that last podium spot for the last hour, it was really tough stuff and it was nice to come out on top of that."

Although the GAINSCO race car had nothing for Matos or Angelelli in front, Gurney battled aggressively with Joao Barbosa in the No. 59 Brumos Porsche Riley in the closing stages.

"Barbosa and I hit each other maybe four times," Gurney said. "He was certainly taking risks and I was too, but we managed to come out on top."

Both Gurney and Fogarty and the No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley team ended the season officially second in the respective Rolex Series Driver and Team Championships. Although repeat titles for the 2007 Rolex Series Champs were not in the cards this year, both drivers knew nothing was left on the table, in today's race or all season.

"It's a testament to the team that we finished third," Fogarty said. "You look at our car, we really didn't have the pace of a third-place car, but good pit stops and great strategy allowed us to get on the podium. Everybody on the team absolutely took it to the maximum, not just here but all year long. We came up a little bit short in the championship but it was certainly an effort to be proud of. We had a bunch of podiums and just good team work. It is a pleasure to work with all of these guys. It's fun coming to the track when you know everybody is giving it their all."

Although the team will head to Las Vegas tomorrow to attend Monday's season-end Rolex Awards Banquet at the Bellagio Hotel, Gurney is already looking ahead to next year.

"I really think we got the most of what we had every time we hit the track this year," Gurney said. "Finishing P2 in the championship is something to be proud of but in a way we are happy it is over and we are ready to go testing. Now it is on to next year."

Team owner Bob Stallings had nothing but high praise for all on the GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing team.

"This team was just amazing all year," Stallings said. "This race kind of typified our whole season because we had about a seventh-place car and we finished third. The three drivers and the crew did an absolutely magnificent job. It is just typical GAINSCO-guys stuff and I am just so proud of them."

Noteworthy:

When Gurney led Lap 41 just before completing his opening driving stint he ensured that GAINSCO led more races than any other Daytona Prototype team this season. In total, the No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley was up front in a series-high 12 of 14 races with Gurney, Fogarty and Jimmie Johnson driving. The only races that GAINSCO failed to lead were at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca and the Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen. Gurney, Fogarty and Johnson – who led 14 laps in the Rolex 24 – combined to lead a total of 267 laps this season, including 26 in Saturday's race ... Vasser drove for GAINSCO in an actual Miller race for the second time in three years and was impressed with the team's effort. "Considering the car we had today, I was very impressed with the result," Vasser said. "The team made the right calls, they had no mistakes and that is what got us there. I felt a little bad I didn't have more speed when I was in the car. I didn't have any filtered air blowing into my helmet and that got me a little nauseous, but I just soldiered on. I fell a few spots early but got it back to fifth when I turned it over to Jon, so from that standpoint, mission accomplished. The whole GAINSCO team just impressed me once again, and they always do."

TRG Team Race Report

Submitted by Nate Siebens – TheRacers Group

Tim George Jr. Claims Rookie of the Year Honors

In the 2008 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 season-ending SunRichGourmet.com 1000 at Miller Motorsports Park, TRG finished the season as it began in January, on the podium.

The No. 67 Cabana Cachaça/Tantra South Beach/johnnie-o clothing Porsche GT3 team of Tim George Jr., Andy Lally and Patrick Long finished third, scoring the team's eighth podium result of the season. The result allowed George to clinch the MESCO Building for the Future Rookie of the Year Award.

"I'm excited to lock up Rookie of the Year," George said. "It's a great way to increase my momentum going into my ARCA program with TRG Motorsports. It was really awesome to be running with Pat Long and Andy Lally here. The team did a great job. We had a couple of deals with the tires at the end, but it was a sweet run."

"That's really big for him," added TRG owner Kevin Buckler. "He's moving up to ARCA next year on our TRG Motorsports program. His Rookie of the Year this year is great. It just reinforces it. We've got a nice, young, rising star here with Tim George Jr. and he really showed his mettle this year. He drove really, really well all year barking with the big dogs. He's ready to move towards his NASCAR goals. It's good for him."

George started the six-hour and 45-minute race from ninth on the GT grid and drove the race's opening stint before turning the car over to Lally. Early in his first stint, Lally was hit by another car, bringing about an unscheduled pit stop. The three-time Rolex Series champion managed to persevere and the No. 67 machine was soon back in contention for the victory.

Lally turned the car over to Long and the Porsche factory driver encountered an adventure of his own as the skies opened shortly past the halfway point, sending several other cars spinning off course. Long not only avoided the pitfalls, he also managed to take over the lead in the race.

The way the rest of the race unfolded worked against the No. 67 team as the race-winning No. 07 Pontiac received an incredibly lucky race-deciding "wave-by" under yellow with only an hour remaining in the race. The final 26 laps of the race were run without a full-course caution, and despite a late charge by Lally, the team settled for a third-place result.

"We had an excellent car, and I had some bonehead run into me," said Lally. "In reality, it's my fault because I should have realized he was a bonehead. That kind of set us back for the race, and unfortunately, I'll take the blame for that. It was silly. But we had a really strong car, and TRG just gave us the solid stuff. We had the fast race lap, we had a great car and we were coming through at the end. We picked up something on the tire. The tire was going down or we blistered it, and we just couldn't make that last spot, but oh well."

"The elements of rain and dry and strategy certainly played a big part in today's race," contributed Long. "I think, all in all, it was a great result to be back up on the podium with TRG after being away for about four or five years. Running with Andy, Kevin and Tim, they're just a class act. I'm proud to be back. I think we had a car to win today, but the chips just didn't fall our way."

After running most of the race inside the top five, the No. 66 Mitchell Rubber/AXA Insurance Porsche GT3 team of Ted Ballou, Spencer Pumpelly and Bryan Sellers came home seventh. Pumpelly started the race from third on the grid but quickly pulled onto pit lane early in the race to turn the car over to Ballou for his driving stint. Ted proceeded to drive a fantastic second stint, keeping it on the lead lap and never putting a wheel wrong.

Pumpelly drove a monster middle stint that was made all the more difficult by the rain and the fact that the car's power steering system stopped working. Nevertheless, he handed the car off to Sellers inside the top five. Unfortunately, the power steering problems also plagued Sellers, and fuel issues toward the end of the race relegated the No. 66 machine to seventh at the checkered flag.

"It was a challenge out there, definitely," Ballou said. "We had some problems with our power steering, but the crew did a great job of getting it back up and running. Spencer was running well and Bryan did a great job. We just ran out of gas there at the end. We could have done better, for sure, but we worked hard at it

and it was a good result. It's been great to run with Andy and Spencer this year. I learned a lot, and I'm ready to come back next year and learn even more with Spencer."

The TRG/Riegel Autosport trio of John Potter, Josemanuel Gutierrez and 2005 Rolex Series GT champion Craig Stanton were also in contention for a top-10 result in the No. 65 Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing/Total R Insulation Solutions Porsche GT3 before some misfortune. Gutierrez worked his way from a 21st-place starting spot to 11th by the end of his nearly two-hour stint before turning the car over to Salt Lake City's Potter.

Potter maintained the car's position and brought the car onto pit lane to turn the controls over to Stanton when the team discovered water leaking from the No. 65 Porsche. Stanton eventually drove his stint after lengthy repairs before turning the car back over to Potter, who brought the car home in 17th place.

"At the end, we didn't do very well because our car broke down," Gutierrez explained. "We had a little problem with a rock in the cooling system, but we were doing quite well. We were out of luck yesterday in qualifying and we started 21st, but I was lucky enough to get it to P11 and then I handed it to John Potter, who did a fantastic job. He handed it back to Craig, also in P12 or P11, and we were sure that Craig could get the car up to the top five, but that's when the failure developed. We were very happy with the car, the guys in the crew did a fantastic job. We were a little bit sad because of what happened, but we know that we had everything we needed to get a top five, or at least a top 10 quite easily."

"It's a lot of fun to race at home," added Potter. "I've got a big cheering section here, and that's kind of nice. We all worked hard, all the drivers and crew, but things do go wrong sometimes. Josemanuel started and did a great job. I got in after him and we got a bunch of alarms, and it was unfortunate. I came in, and at the same time we were doing a driver change, we realized we were leaking some water, but we got back out there. We had a couple other problems, but we still finished the race and that's great."

TRG closed out the season with four cars inside the top 15 in the GT team standings. Leading the way was the No. 67 team, which finished fourth in the team standings, followed by the No. 66 team in fifth. Despite running partial seasons, the No. 65 team wound up 14th, followed by the No. 68 team in 15th place. George also claimed the Bob Akin Award for the top sportsman driver in the GT class.

"We're a really good team," Buckler said. "We're a great group of guys and gals and we persevered through the good times and bad. At the end of the day, we had a solid win this year (at New Jersey) and I think we had seven or eight podiums. I'm looking forward to '09 and getting back up front again. It was really nice to have the 65 guys come on board and do such a stellar job all year, balancing everything in their new program with Riegel Tuning. Ted Ballou did such a great job this year, constantly improving and steady as a rock. We'll look forward to having him back with us again next year and running up front. We really delivered for Tim and helped him to win two fantastic titles. Everybody did a great job and it was a solid season. We are looking forward to even more in 2009."



Photo Courtesy Grand-Am

Farnbacher Loles Race Report

Submitted by Sylvia Proudfoot

All three Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsches led the GT class during the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series finale at Miller Motorsports Park on Saturday, but the 2007 championship team had to settle for a pair of top-10 finishes after almost seven hours of racing.

The No. 87 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car led the team contingent, with Wolf Henzler of Nürtingen, Germany; Bryce Miller of Hoboken, N.J., and Dirk Werner of Kissenbrück, Germany, finishing eighth in class. The No. 88 Porsche was close behind, as Dominik Farnbacher of Ansbach, Germany; Steve Johnson of Bristol, Va., and Dave Lacey of Toronto, Ont., notched a ninth-place finish. Leh Keen of Charleston, S.C., and Eric Lux of Jacksonville, Fla., finished 13th in the No. 86 Porsche.

Keen started from the GT pole and was the first of the team's class leaders. Henzler and Farnbacher then each led, followed by Keen again, then Lux and Werner.

The No. 88 Porsche pitted out of sequence to the rest of the class, giving the car the GT lead and fourth place overall early in the race. But it was the first team car to encounter trouble, with an intermittent alternator problem and a seatbelt glitch that slowed an early pitstop.

The No. 86 was hit next. Lux was the GT leader when a Daytona Prototype car slammed his Porsche off-track, forcing a long garage stop to repair suspension, bodywork and brakes. Werner and the No. 87 Porsche took over the class lead, but spun off-track as sudden, heavy rain created treacherous conditions mid-race.

But the Farnbacher Loles crew got everyone back on track and the three team Porsches took the checkered flag. They will have a brief hiatus before heading to Daytona International Speedway next month to start testing for the 2009 season-opening Rolex 24 At Daytona.

Farnbacher Loles will team with the Children's Tumor Foundation at the Rolex 24 to raise funds through its Racing for Research program. The team hosted a group of enthusiastic young fans at the Miller race to start the campaign.

Gregory Loles, team owner: "First of all, congratulations to Banner Racing for a well-deserved championship. Today we entered the race with three podium-level cars and it's great all three led the race at some point. Unfortunately, once again, being in the wrong place at the wrong time cost us dearly. I am proud of the performance our team demonstrated this weekend and look forward to coming back with a championship campaign next year. Last but not least, I want to thank all our sponsors for making our race program possible."

Leh Keen, No. 86: "The car was really good – the guys did a really, really awesome job. I had one of my best stints ever. I think we could have been up there for sure; we had a podium car. I felt sorry for Eric when he got tangled up with a DP and for Dirk in the 87 car. The team could have had a double podium. But we got back out and drove and had some fun. And the car was still pretty good!"

Eric Lux, No. 86: "What happened today was unfortunate and uncalled-for. I really hope Grand-Am does something in the future to enforce penalties when contact like that happens. But Farnbacher Loles gave us a great car, as usual. I didn't think we were going to see the track again today. It was a massive impact to a critical part of a Porsche – in the rear. I figured our day was done, but we were out of the pits in about 25 minutes, which was awesome. We'll hopefully come back again next year and see what we can do then."

Wolf Henzler, No. 87: "It's a little bit of a disappointing season. I was looking for a win to finish the season, but we had bad luck in the wet. Looking forward, I hope I can come back to Farnbacher Loles next year, and I hope we can turn all the back luck we had this year into good luck next year."

Bryce Miller, No. 87: "I think we had a winning car today, for sure, with Dirk and Wolf as part of the lineup. It's just unfortunate that we had the incident when the rain came, and I don't know how some of the cars were able to hold their fuel as long as they did. We were hedging our bets that they would have to pit at the end, but that's racing. We've experienced a lot of good success together as a team, so it doesn't hit so hard. I'll just try to keep focused on next year's program and work with guys like Dirk and Wolf to get faster."

Dirk Werner, No. 87: "I'm very disappointed. I feel bad for the team because this was not how we expected our last race to go. We had three fast cars, but none of the cars made it to a good position at the end of the race. The results don't show the work the team has done over the year and also this race. I hope next year we'll continue speed-wise from where we were this year. Because the cars were really good, we had a great team and we had a great year despite the fact that we didn't have great success. We had a few good results, but that's not what we were looking for. So next year ..."

Dominik Farnbacher, No. 88: "I'm very happy, but I'm sore and I want to go to bed! I was in the car a very long time without a cool suit and I was running out of water, so it was very dehydrating. But I like to race and it was nice to be back in the Porsche again. I'm very happy to be part of this team."

Steve Johnson, No. 88: "We caught a bit of a bad break just before the caution in the rain. We got passed about three seconds before the caution came out, so we just missed being on the lead lap. Instead, we went a lap down and just kinda stuck there all day. But ninth is a great finish for us. It's our fourth top-10 of the year. I hate to see the season end – back to work – but I'm looking forward to the [Rolex] 24!"

Dave Lacey, No. 88: "It was a great run. Dominik did a fantastic job to start us off. The car was pretty consistent all day; we didn't get into trouble at all. Steve brought it home in P9, so it was a good way to end the season. It's a great bunch of guys who have been working on this car and I'm very thankful for their efforts. They always field a quality product and it's great to be behind the wheel of a car you can trust and you know well. I'm happy with the whole Farnbacher Loles team and I'm looking forward to next year."

Michael Shank Racing Team Report

Submitted by Matt Cleary - Sunday Group Management

www.sundaymanagement.com

After making the commitment to upgrade to the new Daytona Prototype Riley design and making the move to Ford power prepared by Roush Yates Engines for the 2008 Rolex Sports Car Series season, Michael Shank Racing got a fast start to the year by putting both team cars on the front row of the Rolex 24 At Daytona grid.

On Saturday, just weeks after No. 60 Ford-Riley of Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri won the penultimate Rolex Series round at New Jersey Motorsports Park on Labor Day weekend, the team closed the season out on an even stronger note by winning the final Rolex race of 2008 as the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford-Riley of John Pew, Ian James, and Raffa Matos scored a convincing win in the SunRichGourmet.com 1000 at Miller Motorsports Park. The win marks the second Miller race victory in three years for Michael Shank Racing.

James opened the race up from eighth on the grid for the nearly seven-hour event, and got off to a top-ten race pace before turning the car over to Pew, who also kept the car in the top ten through his stint on the 4.468-mile track before turning the controls back over to James. The race deviated from plan, however, as James was then momentarily caught out with a spin as a sudden and comprehensive downpour enveloped the track nearly four hours into the race.

While he sat stranded for a moment, the sister No. 60 machine fell victim to the same slippery conditions and spun off directly into the path of the 6 machine.

Fortunately, the Englishman was able to continue back to the pits with just a modest bit of body damage before returning to battle and then pitting for the final driver hand off to Raffa Matos. The rain and contact meant that all the telemetry and data systems were not working properly, robbing Matos of nearly all information in the car. Despite that challenge, and a lack of radio communication, the recently crowned Indy Lights Champion worked his way forward up to fifth in the order in his first Daytona Prototype race.

For the second race running, the Michael Shank Racing crew delivered an outstanding and race-making pit stop, but this time it was the Darin Pigg-led No. 6 car crew's time to shine. The final refuel and tire change saw Matos leave the pits in the lead with 28 laps remaining. On the ensuing restart, Matos held the lead and then assumed control, growing his gap over the field to nearly 30 seconds at the finish as Michael Shank Racing made it two in a row to close out the 2008 season.

"I'm so proud of this team to finish the season like this with wins for both cars, and to have the pit stops be so important shows how vital great teamwork is," said team owner Mike Shank. "Ian did a great job in some really tough conditions, and John kept the car in contention exactly where we needed it to be through the middle stages of the race. And then Raffa just took control of this race--I can't say enough about the job he did. We showed how fast we were right off the bat this year at Daytona and we've been strong all season long, but it took until now to get our guys on the top like this. This is a great way to close out the year. We're going to celebrate a little bit tonight, but the 2009 season starts tomorrow for us, and we are really looking forward to coming back next year even stronger."

The Miller event marked the final race of the first full season of Rolex competition for Pew, who also collected the Trueman honors for the race outing.

"We thought this was going to happen quite a while ago with the strong run we had going at Daytona to start the season, but we had to wait until now to get the win," said Pew. "Michael Shank Racing is an amazing team, and the crew did a fantastic job to get Raffa out in front and then he just did a great job from there to pull out the lead that he did. This is the best possible way to close the year out, and I couldn't be happier for the team."

"It's just brilliant to be up here on the top of the podium," said James, who has now won in every current class of Grand-Am competition with the Daytona Prototype victory. "I thought it was going to be a long day because the car wasn't great early in the race and then when we spun off, I thought it was over. But the conditions changed for us and the car just came to life, so even though we lost some bodywork, I think the car got better! We've been knocking on the door for this all season long, so to win the final race of the season is just fantastic."

"Mike Shank Racing did a phenomenal job," said Matos, who opened the 2008 season with a GT Class win in the Rolex 24 at Daytona. "Ian James and John Pew were fantastic and then the guys did such a great job with the pit stop to put me in the lead, and then I was able to put a gap on everybody. The car had a great

balance and got better as the race went on. I just want to thank Mike Shank Racing and Ford and Pirelli for all the support, and this is such a happy moment for everyone in this program, it's a great way to finish the season."

Mark Patterson was quick to offer his congratulations to JC France for winning the 2008 Jim Trueman Award after the sister No. 60 of Mark Patterson, Oswaldo Negri, and Ryan Dalziel posted the fifth quickest time of the morning practice session and then ran as high as third before an oil pressure warning forced the team to retire from the event.

"It was great to have it all come down to the final round with JC, and my hat's off to the Brumos guys, they've had a great season and I don't doubt that they will be in victory lane soon enough," said Patterson. "It was a shame not to be able finish this race with Ozz and Ryan, but it was fantastic to see John take his first win with Ian and Raffa so congratulations to them for this tremendous result."

Michael Shank Racing would like to thank all team sponsors, partners, vendors, suppliers, volunteers, and race fans for a tremendous 2008 Rolex Sports Car Series season. The team is looking forward to finalizing and announcing plans for the 2009 Rolex season.

Additional information: www.michaelshankracing.com



Photo courtesy Grand-Am

SunTrust Racing Team Report

Submitted by Laz Denes - True Speed Communication

www.TrueSpeedCommunication.com

Max Angelelli, Michael Valiante and the No. 10 SunTrust Pontiac Dallara team of Wayne Taylor Racing closed out the 2008 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series season with their third consecutive top-two finish during Saturday's marathon SunRichGourmet.com 1000 at Miller Motorsports Park in Tooele, Utah.

The SunTrust team led laps for the 10th of 14 races this season and clearly had the field covered, except for the race-winning No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley of John Pew, Ian James and Raphael Matos, which took the lead on the final round of pit stops 28 laps from the end of today's 137-lap event around the 4.5-mile, 24-turn road circuit near Salt Lake City. Matos, who recently captured the Indy Racing League's Firestone Indy Lights championship, drove a stellar final stint after a lap-111 restart and gradually pulled away to a 29.3-second margin of victory over Angelelli in the SunTrust Racing machine.

Angelelli, who finished a comfortable 6.2 seconds ahead of a tight cluster of fast cars running behind him in the third through sixth positions, just didn't have enough to catch Matos but still was able to bring home the runner-up finish that comes on the heels of SunTrust's first victory of the season from the pole two races ago at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, Calif., followed by a second-place finish at New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville three weekends ago.

The runner-up finish elevated the SunTrust team one position to sixth in the final championship standings. It was SunTrust's first finish outside the top-three in the championship since it joined the Rolex Series in 2004, but certainly understandable in light of trying circumstances endured by the team this season, including a catastrophic transporter fire May 19 that destroyed a race car and all of the team's spare parts, tools, equipment and race-weekend apparel.

"I think, even though we did not win the race today, what we did these last three races is a very strong way to finish the season and it gives us huge momentum for next season," said Angelelli, who restarted in third on lap 111 today but moved into second two laps later with a nifty pass in turn one of the No. 99 Gainsco/Bob Stalling Racing Pontiac driven at the time by Alex Gurney. "The No. 6 car was the fastest at the end of the race, for sure. I was gaining on him at the beginning of that last stint and I thought maybe we might have a chance to win. But all of a sudden he just drove away from everybody and I never saw him again. They did an excellent job and Raphael (Matos) proved to everybody here in Grand-Am that he is a great driver. Second place to a car like that today is nothing to be ashamed of. We finished the season strong, though. I can't wait to get started on 2009."

Angelelli, who qualified the SunTrust Pontiac fourth on Friday afternoon, started the race for only the third time this season and quickly picked off the No. 58 Brumos Porsche for third on lap two. One lap later, he got series champion Scott Pruett in the No. 01 Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates entry for second, then was in hot pursuit of polesitter Ricardo Zonta in the No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac before pitting under yellow for the first time on lap 10. Angelelli dropped back to as far as eighth in the next sequence, but was back up to fourth when he pitted a second time to hand the car over to Valiante on lap 41.

Like Angelelli, Valiante had a strong driving stint of his own after quick pit work by the SunTrust crew put him back on track in third place. Another quick pit stop under yellow on lap 63 sent Valiante back out in second place, and on the ensuing restart on lap 65, Valiante snatched the lead away from Joey Hand in the No. 23 Alex Job Racing Porsche. Valiante stayed in front for the next 12 laps until a sudden rain squall drenched the track on lap 76, and at the same time he encountered radio trouble that cost him the lead shortly after the yellow flag came out once again with numerous cars sliding off track in the midst of the deluge. Unbeknownst to Valiante, the pit lane was closed when he navigated the final turn as he did not receive the team's radio call to stay out on track. He entered the closed pit lane but had to drive on through at the pit road speed limit without stopping to avoid being penalized. By the time Valiante reached pit exit, Hand in the No. 23 Porsche was able to cruise back into the lead under yellow.

"We started off the weekend not as good right away as we had been in the last couple of races," said Valiante, who finally did pit to hand the car back to Angelelli under caution on lap 78. "But the team did a

really great job and Max and I worked really hard to give us a great race set-up once again today. Max drove a great first stint and then I was able to get us into the lead. Unfortunately, my radio stopped working at just the wrong time and we had to give up the lead. But Max got back in and had a really strong finish.”

The rains left about as quickly as they came as the race remained under yellow for another three laps after Angelelli got in for his final stint on lap 78. With the track still wet but the sun shining once again, Angelelli decided to take a tire gamble and called for racing slicks just as the field was about to take the green flag. Angelelli’s was the only Daytona Prototype to pit just as the race went back to green on lap 81, giving up fourth place but gambling that he would end up back in front as the track began to dry quickly and the rest of the field would have to come in to replace their rain tires with slicks.

Sure enough, over the next four laps, the rest of the field did make its way in and out of the pits, moving Angelelli up from 11th on lap 82 to third on lap 85. On lap 89, Angelelli passed Memo Rojas in the No. 01 Lexus for second, and then dogged race leader Jon Fogarty in the Gainsco Pontiac over the next 18 laps. Angelelli’s most determined effort to get by Fogarty for the lead on lap 105 was thwarted when, while creeping slightly ahead of the No. 99 in a tight, left-right combination of turns, Angelelli was pushed off the track by Fogarty. Angelelli was able to recover quickly, however, and continued the chase until the final yellow of the race came out on lap 107. Shortly after the lap-111 restart was when Angelelli moved into his final finishing position of second.

“We came into this weekend, and given the year we had, we came here and said that if we could leave here in one piece and on the podium, we’d be happy,” said Wayne Taylor, whose team’s finish today by far was its best in three visits to Miller Motorsports Park. Last year, the SunTrust car caught fire and had to retire two hours before the finish, and in 2006 dominated the race and led the most laps before encountering electrical problems in the closing stretch.

“Well, we finished second today, the car’s in one piece, but I’m just not happy,” Taylor continued. “Actually, I truly am happy for everybody, but I just want to win. I think, given everything that happened this year, the support of SunTrust and Toshiba and Miracle Sealants – all of our partners, Dallara, Pontiac – everybody’s put such an enormous effort into this, especially all of our guys, and Max and Michael. You know, I always say that I can only compare apples to apples, and we were the first GM car home today. So, safe to say that for us, that was another win in its own way. Clearly, we’ve got work to do during the offseason. We’re rebuilding everything now for next year. I cannot wait to come back. Three podiums in a row – a first and two seconds – it’s hard to beat that. We’re really happy about that. But about today, we really just want to win.”

The 2009 Rolex Series kicks off in late-January with the traditional Rolex 24 At Daytona at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway.



Photo courtesy Grand-Am

Grand-Am Race Report

Raphael Matos bookended the 2008 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 season. After winning the GT class in the season-opening Rolex 24 At Daytona back in January, Matos made his return to the series by winning in his first Daytona Prototype start Saturday, the SunRichGourmet.com 1000 presented by The Grand and Little America Hotels at Miller Motorsports Park.

Matos joined regular drivers Ian James and John Pew to give the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley its first Rolex Series victory. The team became the third first-time Daytona Prototype winner in three races at Miller Motorsports Park. Meanwhile, Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas wrapped up the 2008 Daytona Prototype championship with a ninth place finish in the No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley, joined by Alex Lloyd.

The 137-lap race on the 4.486-mile circuit saw 16 lead changes among 14 drivers and 10 cars, with the event including a mid-race deluge that quickly dissipated. A record nine of the 10 lead-lap finishers led the race. However, Matos pulled away on the restart following the sixth and final caution. He led the final 28 laps - the most in the event - cruising to a 29.398-second margin of victory over the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Pontiac Dallara of Max Angelelli and Michael Valiante.

"I had a great team - Mike Shank did an amazing job, and John Pew and Ian James did a great job," said Matos, who recently won the 2008 Firestone Indy Lights championship. "The crew had an amazing pit stop, and that's what put us in first position. This is a happy moment for everyone and a great way to finish the season."

Michael Shank Racing scored its first victory at Miller in 2006 when Oswaldo Negri and Mark Patterson took the team's No. 60 entry to victory. That was their first triumph until the most recent Rolex Series race, when Negri and Patterson brought the No. 60 Ford Riley to victory lane at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

Fogarty and Alex Gurney concluded their season as the reigning series champions in the No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley with Jimmy Vasser, taking third place to wrap up second in the Daytona Prototype championship. The outgoing titlists won once in 2008.

Joao Barbosa and JC France finished fourth for the fifth time in seven races in the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley, allowing the team to finish third in the final team standings.

Polesitter Ricardo Zonta and Nic Jonsson finished fifth in the No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola. In all, 10 cars led the event, including nine of the 10 finishers. Ten cars finished the race on the lead lap.

Pruett and Rojas drove a consistent - but not completely trouble-free - race, finishing ninth in the No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley. The car spun twice, yet with a season-high six victories, Pruett and Rojas only needed to complete 30 minutes each to share the championship. Pruett drove the first stint from the second starting position, driving an hour-and-a-half before Rojas got in. Alex Lloyd, the 2007 Firestone Indy Lights champion, also earned seat time.

Collins and Edwards claim GT victory; Liddell, Davis hold second in points

Kelly Collins and Paul Edwards scored their second consecutive GT victory at Miller Motorsports Park in the No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R, and claimed the championship along the way. Edwards took the checkered flag by more than a lap over the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R of Robin Liddell and Andrew Davis, who finished second in the final standings.

Edwards took the lead late in the race and distanced himself enough to make a late splash for fuel without losing the lead. While they led flag-to-flag in this event in 2007, Saturday's race saw 16 lead changes among 11 drivers and four cars. Edwards led a race-high 49 circuits, with Collins leading six laps.

Collins and Edwards have been leading the GT points since April's race in Mexico. Since then, they have struggled with various mechanical issues, allowing both the Stevenson Motorsports team and No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8 to enter the finale in striking distance for the title, with the top three teams each winning three events. The Banner Racing victory was its fourth of 2008, giving Collins and Edwards a final margin of nine points.

While the No. 07 team was busy seeing "ones," the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R co-drivers Andrew Davis and Robin Liddell were seeing "twos." The pair finished second in the SunRichGourmet.com 1000, earning their ninth podium finish of the campaign. Earning third in the GT championship were Sylvain

Tremblay and Nick Ham of the No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8, who finished fifth in the event, joined by David Haskell.

Andy Lally, Patrick Long and Tim George Jr. finished third in the No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3. George wrapped up the season by winning both the MESCO Building for the Future Rookie of the Year and the Bob Akin Award honors. Finishing fourth was the No. 32 PR1 Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R powered by Mike Forest and Patrick Barrett.

Six cautions for 19 laps slowed the race's pace to 90.555 mph.

The Rolex Series season-ending champion banquet will take place Monday in Las Vegas. The next Rolex Series race is the Rolex 24 At Daytona from Jan. 24-25, 2009 at Daytona International Speedway.

NEWS AND NOTES

- The victory is the first-ever Daytona Prototype victory for Ian James, John Pew and Raphael Matos. This is also the first-ever victory for the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing machine.
- The victory is fourth in five races for the Ford engines. Prior to Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, the manufacturer had not tasted victory since Barber Motorsports Park in July 2006.
- This is the third time in as many races at Miller Motorsports Park the overall winners in Rolex Series competition earned their first overall victories. Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri won in 2006 while Marc Goossens, Jim Matthews and Ryan Hunter-Reay won in 2007.
- Riley Chassis won 13 of 14 Daytona Prototype races this season, the second straight season the chassis manufacturer has done so. The manufacturer also took three of the top five finishing positions.
- Their second-place finish was the third straight podium and fourth of the season for Max Angelelli and Michael Valiante in the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Pontiac Dallara.
- The third-place finish was the fourth straight top five and ninth of the season for 2007 series champions Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty in the No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley.
- Their fourth-place finish was the fifth such finish in the last seven races for JC France and Joao Barbosa in the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley. France also captured the Jim Trueman Award, the top sportsman driver in the Daytona Prototypes, and the duo finished third in the final Daytona Prototype team standings.
- The fifth-place finish was the third such finish in the last four races for SunRichGourmet.com 1000 polesitter Ricardo Zonta and co-driver Nic Jonsson in the No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola.
- Defending Daytona Prototype race winners Marc Goossens, Jim Matthews and Ryan Hunter-Reay finished seventh in the No. 91 Riley-Matthews Motorsports Pontiac Riley after climbing as high as third late in the race.
- In their ninth-place finish, Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas ended the season with 408 points. Ironically, that was the same number of points earned by 2007 champs Gurney and Fogarty.
- Ten of the 17 Daytona Prototypes finished all 137 laps of the race.
- Fourteen drivers in 10 Daytona Prototypes led laps in the race: Raphael Matos (28), Jon Fogarty (25), Bill Auberlen (22), David Donohue (18), Michael Valiante (12), Ricardo Zonta (10), Joey Hand (10), Nic Jonsson (3), Buddy Rice (3), Eric van de Poele (2), Memo Rojas (1), Mark Wilkins (1), Jim Matthews (1), Alex Gurney (1). Four engine manufacturers led the race.

- The GT victory by No. 07 Banner Racing drivers Kelly Collins and Paul Edwards was the duo's season-leading fourth Rolex Series victory of the season. They claimed the title by nine points. Edwards led 49 of the team's 55 laps.
- It was the second straight victory for Collins and Edwards at Miller Motorsports Park. In 2007, the duo led every lap in a car shared by Andy Pilgrim.
- Pontiacs owned seven victories this season, while Mazdas won four and Porsche two.
- Twelve of the 13 Rolex Series GT races were won from the front two rows, including five from the front row.
- Davis and Liddell's second-place finish was the duo's ninth podium of the season in the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R. The team won three races this season in clinching second in the team championship.

- MESCO Building for the Future Rookie of the Year Tim George Jr., as well as Andy Lally and Patrick Long, finished third in the No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3. It was George's seventh podium of the season and third in four races.

- Mike Forest and Patrick Barrett finished fourth in the No. 32 PR1 Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R, the duo's best career finish in the Rolex Series GT class.

- In finishing third for the team title, Sylvain Tremblay and Nick Ham finished fifth in the race in the No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8. Ham led a season-high 236 laps in GT this season.

- Eleven drivers in six GT cars led laps in the race: Paul Edwards (49), Eric Lux (16), Leh Keen (14), Dominik Farnbacher (14), Dirk Werner (11), Wolf Henzler (9), Patrick Long (6), Kelly Collins (6), Robin Liddell (2), Andrew Davis (2), Andy Lally (1).

OTHER CHAMPIONSHIPS

- **Daytona Prototype Team:** TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates (408 points)

- **GT Team:** Banner Racing (373 points)

- **Daytona Prototype Chassis:** Riley (487 points)

- **Daytona Prototype Engine:** Pontiac (442 points)

- **GT Manufacturer:** Pontiac (423 points)

- **Jim Trueman Award:** JC France (N/A)

- **Bob Akin Award:** Tim George Jr. (N/A)

- **MESCO Building for the Future Rookie of the Year:** Tim George Jr. (330 points)

SELECTED POST-RACE QUOTES

Raphael Matos (No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley; race winner in Daytona Prototype race): "The car was very strong at the end of the race and that's why I was able to pull a gap. I love this series and I love the cars. I love driving them. I had a great team - Mike Shank did an amazing job, and John Pew and Ian James did a great job. The crew had an amazing pit stop, and that's what put us in first position. This is a happy moment for everyone and a great way to finish the season. I was a little bit concerned about the car before the race, but the car had a great balance and the balanced improved throughout the race. That's why we were able to win at the end."

Ian James (No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley; race winner in Daytona Prototype race): "At the start, the car wasn't good. In the pits, we made a few changes and gradually it got better and better. We lost some of our rear downforce and some bodywork, and then the car came alive. Then, Raffa got in and was brilliant. The guys absolute first-class. He's head and shoulders above everyone in the paddock. I drove through the deluge. My heart's still pounding from that. I had many scares. Those last few hours in the lead also puts a stress on anybody's heart. But it was just brilliant."

John Pew (No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley; race winner in Daytona Prototype race): "Raphael (Matos) did a fantastic job on that last stint. Ian did a good comeback from his spin and collision. It's long overdue. This team deserves it. Our car deserves it."

Max Angelelli (No. 10 SunTrust Racing Pontiac Dallara; second in Daytona Prototype race): "I think, even though we did not win the race today, what we did these last three races is a very strong way to finish the season and it gives us huge momentum for next season. The No. 6 car was the fastest at the end of the race, for sure. I was gaining on him at the beginning of that last stint and I thought maybe we might have a chance to win. But all of a sudden he just drove away from everybody and I never saw him again. They did an excellent job and Raphael (Matos) proved to everybody here in Grand-Am that he is a great driver. Second place to a car like that today is nothing to be ashamed of. We finished the season strong, though. I can't wait to get started on 2009."

Michael Valiante (No. 10 SunTrust Racing Pontiac Dallara; second in Daytona Prototype race): "We started off the weekend not as good right away as we had been in the last couple of races. But the team did a really great job and Max and I worked really hard to give us a great race set-up once again today. Max drove a great first stint and then I was able to get us into the lead. Unfortunately, my radio stopped working at just the wrong time and we had to give up the lead. But Max got back in and had a really strong finish."

Alex Gurney (No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley; third in Daytona Prototype race): "It's not a bad way to end the season and every time you are on the podium it is kind of a good feeling. We certainly wanted to win the race. Jon had a great stint and it was looking quite promising, but we really didn't have the ultimate pace. Once the other guys really stretched their legs it was a hell of a battle. All of the guys

battling for that last podium spot for the last hour, it was really tough stuff and it was nice to come out on top of that."

Jon Fogarty (No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley; third in Daytona Prototype race):

"It's a testament to the team that we finished third. You look at our car, we really didn't have the pace of a third-place car, but good pit stops and great strategy allowed us to get on the podium. Everybody on the team absolutely took it to the maximum, not just here but all year long. We came up a little bit short in the championship but it was certainly an effort to be proud of. We had a bunch of podiums and just good team work. It is a pleasure to work with all of these guys. It's fun coming to the track when you know everybody is giving it their all."

Scott Pruett (No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley; Daytona Prototype champion and ninth in Daytona Prototype race):

"We hoped to finish a little higher today, but we were turned around late in race, but we did what we had to do. After three straight seasons finishing second in this championship, it's great to be back on top. To accomplish what we have all season is just a testament to everyone involved - the entire Chip Ganassi Racing team, everyone at Lexus and TRD and we couldn't have done it without the support of a great partner in TELMEX. The record is great, but I'll look back on that more at the end of my career. Right now, it's all about winning this championship and all the guys that have worked so hard. Nobody puts together a better effort than Chip Ganassi."

Memo Rojas (No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley; Daytona Prototype champion and ninth in Daytona Prototype race):

"Things were going pretty good for us. I was running right in front of both Krohn cars, we had a real good pace going until Zonta ran into my back and spun me out. I don't know what happened - I'll have to see the replay. We lost many positions and it's a matter of catching back up."

"It's great to win the championship. We got past those 30 minutes and the pressure of the last few weeks and we can call ourselves champions now. It's really amazing. I'm real happy to be here with this team and to win the championship. Highlight? We've had many highlights, but winning the pole at Mexico, especially because it's my hometown."

Alex Lloyd (No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley; ninth in Daytona Prototype race):

"My stint went well. The first few laps were tough, still figuring out the track with the lack of time, but it went really well at the end. I think we would have liked a better result for the day, but I thoroughly enjoyed it. I'm very happy to see Scott and Memo come in with the championship, which was the first priority for the day."

Kelly Collins (No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R; GT champion and race winner):

"It was unbearably hard to drive the car for awhile. I knew if we went into that kitty litter, we wouldn't be sitting here right now with the victory and the championship. There was a time I think we were going about 30 miles per hour at most. It was very touch and go. After Mexico, we had a really good points lead. Then, we decided to cool it a bit, so to speak. We thought we'd hang here for awhile and then we started having some problems and we saw the points lead diminish."

Paul Edwards (No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R; GT champion and race winner):

"We came through today. It's been a tough last six races, with weird stuff happening with the car. Today, though, the car was really strong. Andrew (Davis) and Robin (Liddell) have been really strong and consistent this season. The pressure was on. Miller is a great track for us. Our guys did amazing pit stops today."

Andrew Davis (No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R; second in GT race):

"That was a great race. We did all we could. The No. 07 car with Kelly (Collins) and Paul (Edwards) did a great job. Congratulations to Pontiac and GM for the manufactures title. Congratulations to Banner (Racing) and those guys for the championship and driver's championship. We're just thrilled. Stevenson Motorsports and the Pontiac GXP.R race great today. To finish second in the championship is huge for us - and another podium finish. We have the most podiums out of all the GT teams this year. Robin was on slicks in the rain, which was actually a mistake but we ended up being able to come back and get a strong podium finish, so we're really happy and excited."

Robin Liddell (No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R; second in GT race):

"To be honest I'm pretty happy. We obviously lost some time with the wet cautions there. We came in wet-to-wet and the Banner guys stayed out on slicks for another lap or so and then they went to rains, so that's how they got the break on us. I'm really happy with the race we did. I think we did a great job with what we had underneath us. The car was good, but it wasn't enough to be able to push it and get more out of it. Second in the race and

second in the championship - it's a great result for us. If you look at the whole season and where we've come from. We're very happy."

Andy Lally (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3; third in GT race): "I thought we had something for the win to tell you the truth. We had a really, super-solid car. TRG did a great job. Mark and Kevin were calling strategy and did a good job. My teammates did super. I'm a little disappointed with myself because I let myself get involved with (an incident) out there. He hurt our race early but we rounded and came back to it and then had a little bad luck with the way the yellow fell. A tiny little bit of bad luck to drop us back to third in the end there. All in all, it's a great way to end the season because we got Time George Jr. to win the 'Rookie of the Year' and we got to thank MESCO for putting the prize up for us and giving us a shot to go for that. It's a good way to end the season on the podium."

Patrick Long (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3; third in GT race): "The race was wild. Andy (Lally) and Tim (George Jr.) did a great job in their opening stints. Then I got in and tried to clean it up. I tried to run the middle of the laces as clean as I could and with all the rain coming down and everything under yellow, the chips just didn't fall our way at the end there. Officially, we finished third but I think we had the car to win. The TRG car was hooked-up and I had a great time getting back in the Rolex Series. It's always action-packed here. It's just an honor to be driving with these guys."

Tim George Jr. (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3; third in GT race and Rolex Series Rookie of the Year): "I'm feeling good. It's nice to wrap up the season on a good note. It's great for sponsorship for 2009. I'm really excited. I ran with Long and Lally and did a good deal...I'm pretty happy with the result."



Porsche Motorsports Race Report

Porsche Teams End 2008 Season on a Positive Note

Law, France End Up 3rd In Points; TRG Scores Podium Finish

Porsche teams competing in the 2008 Rolex Sports Car Series Presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 turned in strong performances in both DP and GT Class competition in the SunRichGourmet.com 1,000 Saturday at Miller Motorsports Park. J.C. France of Daytona Beach, Fla., and Portugal's Joao Barbosa piloted the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche-Riley to a fourth-place finish in the season finale won by John Pew, Ian James and Raphael Matos in the Michael Shank Racing Ford-Riley. The fourth-place finish enabled France and Barbosa to finish third in the final point standings. France was also able to clinch the Jim Trueman Award for gentleman drivers.

The No. 67 TRG Porsche 911 GT3 Cup driven by New Yorkers Tim George Jr., Andy Lally and Patrick Long of Belleair, Fla., scored a podium finish for third place in the GT Class.

DP Class cars using Porsche power also scored top-10 finishes as Joey Hand of Sacramento, Cal., and Bill Auberlen of Redondo Beach, Cal., placed eighth in the No. 23 Ruby Tuesday Alex Job Racing Porsche-Riley while the No. 58 Brumos Racing entry driven by Phoenix residents Darren Law and Buddy Rice and David Donohue of Malvern, Pa., finished 10th overall after employing clever pit strategy to lead the race early. However, a broken rear sway bar would hinder Auberlen on the final 30 laps while a drive-through penalty took Law out of contention.

For the Porsche contingent, the day belonged to France and Barbosa, whose steady performances lifted them to third overall in the points. In the final eight races of 2008, France and Barbosa and their Brumos trademark No. 59 finished fourth no less than five times. France, who qualified and started 14th position, managed to dodge the first-lap melee and kept the car on the lead lap when he turned it over to Barbosa on Lap 29. When the mid-race rains fell, the Portuguese driver charged up to the lead pack before France took over for a second stint on Lap 58. Porsche legend Hurley Haywood of Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., was supposed to be the third driver, but opted to sit out the race to ensure that France could capture the Trueman Award. Barbosa took over for France on Lap 78 and remained in the car for the duration. With five laps remaining, he passed Ricardo Zonta for fourth and wound up half a second behind the third-placed Alex Gurney.

"The car was awesome today," Barbosa said. "The Brumos Porsche guys did an unbelievable job the whole year. The chemistry between all of us is really good. I'm really proud of all the Brumos crew. We fell off at the beginning of the weekend, but we finished strong—that's all that matters."

Haywood, the team director, was equally proud of the Brumos operation. "The 59 car had some bad luck at the beginning of the season, but the guys hunkered down and fought like heck and we were third in the championship in the team standings." Haywood explained. "Joao and Jamie (J.C. France) did a helluva job. Overall, it was a pretty good show. After the first quarter of the season, we came on strong. Next year, we're going to run for the championship."

France certainly contributed to the effort and was understandably elated at the year-end accolades. "I'm so proud of the whole team, especially my teammate Barbosa," France said. "I had a blast out there early racing with (Jim) Matthews and (John) Pew. I was having a lot of fun until the rains came down. Barbosa had another great performance out there and brought us home in fourth which gives us third overall in the team standings. It's something that we finished where we did (in the final standings) considering we never had a podium, but Barbosa got us up there with a lot of fourths so we're going to end up on the big podium at Las Vegas."

After running near the top of the charts the entire weekend, eighth was not quite the result team owner Alex Job envisioned. "It was a real roller coaster for us," Job said. "Unfortunately, right near the end the rear sway bar broke and that affected our handling. We had been able to come back to the front, but unfortunately we weren't able to this time. "We only had six races with this Riley (chassis). We had to build the car in six days and since then it's been flat out so we had no time with car and I'm really proud of the team, especially Greg Fordahl, my engineer, and the incredible they did to be this competitive."

When the green flag dropped, a tangle on the front straightaway involving brought out a full-course caution. Hand made a tremendous start and was third by the time the cars came around to complete Lap 1. Donohue used the yellow flag period to pit and satisfy the rule requiring a visit to the pits in the first 45 minutes of the race. The stop dropped him to 13th and more than a minute behind the leaders. By Lap 14, Donohue was leading the race and built a margin of nearly seven seconds over Hand before pitting on Lap 32. Hand kept the Porsche name in P-1 and amassed a lead of more than 28 seconds over Gurney before pitting on Lap 39 and handing over the wheel to Auberlen. Auberlen rejoined in fifth place, immediately ahead of Donohue who would stay close for the next few laps.

A caution period on Lap 62 allowed the leaders time to pit and Donohue turned over the wheel to Rice after running a three-hour stint. Auberlen also pitted and had Hand take over. Hand would rejoin the race in third with Rice right behind him. "I did a double stint and the first stint was much better than the second one," Donohue said. "I had some dirt in my eye and I didn't realize how bad it was until I got out of the car. It really did affect me during the second stint."

It took Hand only a few corners to take over second and for the next 10 laps, he hounded race leader Michael Valiante. Rice also battled Jonsson for third. By Lap 71, Valiante built a lead of more than seven seconds when the first major rain of the weekend washed the track. Shod with slick racing tires, cars from both classes spun all over the vast track. Valiante mistakenly dashed into the pits (which were closed at the time) and rejoined in second behind Hand, who led the lead pack into the pit lane on Lap 78. Quick pit work from the Brumos crew vaulted Rice into the lead while a lengthy stop relegated Hand to sixth place.

However, there was nearly three hours of racing to go. Despite the heavy rain, it was short-lived and the high winds helped dry out the track. After the switch to rain tires, suddenly everyone was returning the pit lane for dry-weather slicks on Lap 84. At that point, Hand was leading, Barbosa had charged to second and Rice was fourth. Law took over the No. 58 car and by the time the three Porsche-powered DP entries returned to the track, Law was seventh, Barbosa was eighth and Auberlen (who took over for Hand) was ninth. The trio of Law, Barbosa and Auberlen would each move up a position when a full-course caution on Lap 108 allowed them to close on the lead pack. On Lap 113, Barbosa was able to pass Law for sixth, but Law's race would come apart shortly afterward when he tangled with Scott Pruett in Turn 14. The contact drew a drive-through penalty and Law rejoined the race in 10th position, 46 seconds behind the leader. Suddenly, the hope for a top Porsche finish fell onto Barbosa, who moved up two more spots in the final 137 laps.

TRG Team Scores Another Podium Finish in GT Class

Although the Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsches would occupy the top three spots early in the race, it was the TRG entry of George, Lally and Long that wound up with the top Porsche finish in the GT Class. The Banner Racing Pontiac GXP driven by Paul Edwards, Kelly Collins and Kris Wilson finished 12th overall and first in GT. The finish also enabled George to earn "Rookie of the Year" honors.

"I'm excited to lock up 'Rookie of the Year,'" George said. "It was really awesome to be running with Pat Long and Andy Lally here. The team did a great job. We had a couple of deals with the tires at the end, but it was a sweet run."

Porsche has won GT Manufacturers Championship seven times of the nine years the series has been in existence, with Pontiac winning twice, including 2008. Porsche also continues to be the leader in the Rolex Grand-Am GT series since its beginning in 2000 (includes GT, and the former SGS, GTS, and GTU class designations). Porsche has the most class wins in the history of Grand-Am (all classes), the most wins in the GT class, GT poles, and the most GT podium finishes (by more than 100 finishes). More than 90 percent of these records have been set by Porsche 911 race vehicles – including the Porsche 911 Turbo, the Porsche 911 GT3 R/RS, and the current Porsche 911 GT3 Cup.

The Farnbacher Loles team immediately took command of the GT Class with Germany's Wolf Henzler, a Porsche factory driver, in the No. 87 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup leading Leh Keen of Charleston, S.C. in the No. 86 entry. Early pit strategy and the full-course caution on Lap 12 vaulted Germany's Dominik Farnbacher into the lead in No. 88 and by Lap 16, the Farnbacher Loles team held the top three spots. Farnbacher was on a different pit sequence and pitted on Lap 27, handing the lead back to Keen who had Henzler in tow. Keen would pit on Lap 42 (Henzler had pitted a lap earlier and relinquished to Bryce Miller of Summit, N.J.) and hand over to Eric Lux of Jacksonville, Fla., with the lead now going to Lally. Lally briefly led, but Lux

regained the top spot on Lap 44 with Miller in third. His lead would last until Lap 62 when he and France had a coming-together in Turn 10. Lux got the worst of it after spinning into the tire barrier. He briefly resumed only to come to a halt at the entrance to Turn 16 with a broken suspension. The caution reshuffled the standings but when the green flag came out, Werner took over the lead with Patrick Long taking over the No. 67 TRG entry in fourth.

Long, the only American Porsche factory driver, was making the most of his guest appearance, taking the lead on Lap 76 when Werner spun and got stuck in the infield during the rainstorm. "The elements of rain and dry and strategy certainly played a big part in today's race," Long pointed out. "I think, all in all, it was a great result to be back up on the podium with TRG after being away for about four or five years. Running with Andy, Kevin (Buckler, the TRG owner) and Tim, they're just a class act. I'm proud to be back. I think we had a car to win today, but the chips just didn't fall our way."

After pitting, Long would regain the lead on Lap 106, but he surrendered the lead and his car to Lally on Lap 109. Lally would move up to third by Lap 120 and remain there for the rest of the race. "We had an excellent car, and I had some bonehead run into me," Lally lamented. "That kind of set us back for the race, and unfortunately, I'll take the blame for that. It was silly. But we had a really strong car, and TRG just gave us the solid stuff. We had the fast race lap, we had a great car and we were coming through at the end. We picked up something on the tire. The tire was going down or we blistered it, and we just couldn't make that last spot."

Complete results from Miller Motorsports Park are posted on www.grand-am.com

TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Race Report

Submitted by CGR Media

Pruett and Rojas Clinch Rolex Series Championship at Miller Motorsports Park

TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates' (CGRFS) drivers Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas paired with Target Chip Ganassi Racing (TCGR) teammate Alex Lloyd at the timed six hour forty-five minute season finale at Miller Motorsports Park (MMP) to score a top-10 finish (ninth) which clinched the 2008 team and driver championships. Pruett and Rojas fulfilled the thirty minute per driver stipulation and kept the No.01 TELMEX machine out of harms way enabling them to clinch the championship.

With a second place starting position, Pruett drove the No.01 Daytona Prototype (DP) for the first 33 laps while he reached his time requirement and consistently maintained a top-five running position. Rojas took over the helm on the team's first driver change (lap 34) and encountered light rain by lap 53 and spun four laps later after contact was made with the No.76 DP. Officials drew a yellow flag for rain on lap 60 and the team made their second driver change three laps later giving the helm to Lloyd. After the restart on lap 66, the Manchester, England native persevered through more rainy conditions while running among the top-eight positions and scored lap times rivaling race leaders. The rain became more intense by lap 78 when the team made another driver change and put Rojas back at the wheel.

In the final half of the 137-lap event, Rojas began with rain tires and advanced to first place on lap 82 before putting on slick tires one lap later as the sky cleared and the track dried. Rojas ran among the leaders from before reaching lap 93 when he eventually pitted for the team's final driver change on lap 107 in eighth place. With a full tank of fuel, Pruett ran the last 30 laps of the race which saw him running as high as eighth place before the No.58 made contact resulting in that team's drive through penalty with Pruett and set the Californian to ninth place, the position he ran to the checkered flag.

The TELMEX duo rewrote record books after Saturday's championship win. Pruett is the first two-time Grand-Am Series driver champion and is the first American to score eight major sports car championships, breaking a record he previously held with the late Peter Gregg. Pruett's titles include one Daytona Prototype championship (2004), two IMSA GTO titles (1986 and 1988), one IMSA GT Endurance (1986) and three Trans-Am championships (1987, 1994 and 2003). Rojas became the first Mexican driver to win a major racing championship in the United States.

With six wins in 2008, including an unprecedented three-straight Rolex 24 At Daytona victories, the TELMEX team added to CGRFS' mantle of Rolex Series successes. In 2004 Pruett and Max Papis clinch the driver and team championship with five wins and won the team championship in 2006 with five wins. Just two weeks prior, Scott Dixon amassed TCGR's sixth open wheel crown after winning the IndyCar championship.

CGRFS Quoteboard:

Scott Pruett: "I can not say enough about the entire TELMEX team and the organization that Chip and Felix have put together. It was great having everyone here today from Mexico to celebrate this special moment. We worked hard and had our highs and lows this season and I just can't say enough about how great this feels."

Memo Rojas: "I am so proud to represent Mexico with this championship. Everyone back home follows this series closely and I know they are extremely excited. I have to thank Chip, Felix, and Carlos (Slim) for giving me an opportunity to work with this TELMEX team for two years. Today is so special to me and we fought hard all season and our efforts and attitude was shown with what we achieved this season. Last year was disappointing and today is so special."

Ruby Tuesday Championship Racing Team Report

Ruby Tuesday Championship Racing Team drivers Joey Hand and Bill Auberlen finished the 2008 season with an eighth-place finish in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 SunRichGourmet.com 1000 at Miller Motorsports Park.

Today's seven-hour race was really a tale of two races for the Ruby Tuesday team. Early on, the No. 23 Ruby Tuesday Championship Racing Team Porsche Riley was very quick. In fact, Hand and Auberlen were fairly dominant in the first half of the race. They ran most of the first 85 (of 137) laps in the top three and even led the most laps today with 32.

But, it was the final 52 laps that were a struggle. The changing weather conditions, an unscheduled driver change, and a broken sway bar all played a role in the team's finish.

On Lap 76, a brief torrential downpour hit North America's longest road course bringing out the race's fourth caution. At the time, Grand-Am officials felt the conditions were unsafe for all of the drivers who were still on dry tires - which included most, if not all, of the field.

Leading the race under caution, Hand brought the No. 23 Porsche Riley machine to pit lane for four new Pirelli rain tires. Just minutes after Hand made the pit stop, the sun came out. The team knew it would not take long for the track to dry out and began planning the team's next stop.

Unfortunately, the team did not plan to change drivers during that stop. They had only planned to put the dry tires back on and send Hand back out. However, Hand was experiencing some cramping, which made driving difficult.

So, on Lap 84, Hand returned to pit lane for dry tires and put Auberlen back in the car. Hand was second when he came in, but after all of the pit stops cycled through, Auberlen was ninth when he started his final stint. Auberlen fought his way up to sixth with 26 laps to go. But, a broken sway bar in the late going prevented Auberlen from making a serious run at the race leaders and he finished eighth.

"The car was really good in the beginning," Hand said. "It was good enough to race with everyone. But, just before I got back in the car for my second stint, I went and ate something. Unfortunately, I don't think I got myself hydrated enough and I started to cramp up during my second stint. So, I told the team that when we went to dry tires that they needed to put Bill back in.

"We fought an understeer all day and, as the track got more rubber on it, the car got worse for Bill. We tried to make some changes during the pit stops and it made it better, but not enough.

"It was an interesting year. We didn't win, but we had some good runs. We put on some good shows. It was a great effort by the entire team this year. It was an honor and a pleasure to drive for Ruby Tuesday and Alex Job. I can't thank them enough."

"When I got in the car for the final time, it was not the same car it was before," Auberlen said of his final stint. "It was a struggle. I tried to adjust everything and I still couldn't get it to go. The car had a floppy, weird feeling to it. Come to find out, the car had a broken rear sway bar and I couldn't make it turn, which is so important on this track.

"I thought today was our chance to win. The car was so good all weekend. The car was really good in the first couple of stints. We led and we were pulling away from the field. And, I thought to myself, 'why can't we pull away like we did early in the race.' It's because we had a broken sway bar.

"I want to thank Ruby Tuesday and the entire Alex Job Racing crew. When the going gets tough, this is a group that just keeps on going. Alex works so hard and he deserves wins. Unfortunately, we did not give him one. But, I want to thank Alex and all the guys for letting me be here with Joey."

"It was a disappointing day after spending most of the day running either first or second," Job said. "When the wind and the rain came, things did not go our way. It set us back a bit. But, we were able to come back from that. The last yellow really helped us. We were in position to make a run to the front and Bill started to do it, but the car just wouldn't do it anymore. When we got the car back to the garage, we found that we had a broken sway bar, which explained our handling issue.

"Both drivers gave it everything they had and the team did a great job. I want to thank Ruby Tuesday for their support over the past three years. We could not have done this without them. They are a great company with a great bunch of people. We just can't thank them enough."

The Ruby Tuesday Championship Racing Team finished the 2008 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series with two podiums, three top-five and seven top-10 finishes.

Pontiac Race Recap

Kelly Collins and Paul Edwards, driving their No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R, won the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 SunRichGourmet.com 1000 today and the GT class championship. SunTrust Racing was the top finishing Daytona Prototype in second.

- *Banner Racing wins GT class team championship
- *Collins and Edwards win GT drivers championship
- *Pontiac wins GT manufacturers title
- *Stevenson's Davis and Liddell second in GT championship
- *Pontiac wins manufacturer title in Daytona Prototype category
- *GAINSCO Bob Stallings Racing second in Daytona Prototype championship

In ever changing weather conditions at Miller Motorsports Park the duo of Edwards and Collins were able to defend their race win from last year as well as close the 2008 Rolex Series season as the GT champions. The race had plenty of drama including a rain storm that saturated the racing surface. Collins was caught in the downpour and pitted on Lap 77 for a driver change and rain tires under caution. The team then had Edwards return to pit lane before the race went green on Lap 81 for slicks and this gave the team nearly a lap advantage on the rest of the GT field and was the deciding moment of the race.

"A dream come true," Edwards said. "A championship is something you dream about when you first start racing. It has been a tough couple of weeks since New Jersey thinking about the last race. We had a strong start to the season and accumulated a lot of points. We led the series since Mexico City and then Davis and Liddell started to put a lot of pressure on us. We had a great car today. The team made an excellent call to go to slicks before the green came out and that gave us a big gap especially when a yellow did not follow. Also one of our pit stops gave us a lead of about 17 seconds on the 70 and about 10 on the 57, so that made our job on the track a little easier."

"The car was unbelievably hard to drive in the wet," Collins said. "We could barely go 25 mph and the thing was aqua-planning off of the track and cars were spinning everywhere. It was touch and go there for a while. I think that was the toughest four laps of the season just putting around in first gear under yellow waiting for

the pits to open. It was a fantastic weekend. We took a conservative approach after we got the points lead early in the season. Paul and I just had to get back to what we do best and that is be aggressive and go for the win."

"The 70 and the 57 guys gave us a great run the second half of the season," Leighton Reese, Banner team owner said. "We had an uphill battle with the weight adjustment and some other things during the middle of the schedule. We have the best drivers, mechanics, engineers and overall team. We have a lot of fun people on the team which has made this that much more special. It was a big test of our character the second half of the season. But we came here to Miller and took it back with a big win and the championship for Banner Engineering."

"A great win and championship," Steve Wesoloski, GM Racing, road racing manager said. "Paul and Kelly drove aggressive yet smart all day. The team did a super job on car preparation and with the pit stops. Stevenson kept the pressure on all day and did a great job to finish second. The Stevenson guys really helped us to secure the GT manufacturers championship with their three wins and consistency all year. In the Daytona Prototype category, the 99 and the 10 had a great race today. Although we did not have a lot of wins in Datona Prototypes, the depth of our teams made the manufacturer championship possible."

Robin Liddell and Andrew Davis gave it their all in their No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R as they came home in second place. The duo was able to lead four laps on the day and run consistently upfront. At the end the 07 had the legs and an excellent call in the pits to get the gap. The Stevenson team finished the year second in the GT class standings.

"We had nine podiums and three wins on the season," Davis said. "Congratulations to the Stevenson team for a great year. Congrats also to Pontiac and Paul and Kelly for their championship. We had a great year for a team that started the season with a new car and as well as a new group of drivers and technical staff."

"It is tough when you come to the last race in competition for the championship and you don't win it," Liddell said. "It is disappointing when you don't deliver the goods. However we did have a great season, we brought the Stevenson team to the fore. Kyle (Milay, team engineer) and Mike (Johnson, team manager) do an excellent job on the strategy. We had nine podiums and three wins, but we also had a couple of bad races which you can't have when the championship is this close. But I am ultimately happy with the way the season turned out."

In the Daytona Prototype race the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Pontiac Dallara driven by Michael Valiante and Max Angelelli finished second. The team had a strong race all day leading 12 laps. At the end Angelelli could not get a break to take the win.

"We started off the weekend not as good right away as we had been in the last couple of races," said Valiante. "But the team did a really great job and Max and I worked really hard to give us a great race set-up once again today. Max drove a great first stint and then I was able to get us into the lead. Unfortunately, my radio stopped working at just the wrong time and we had to give up the lead. But Max got back in and had a really strong finish."

Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty finished third in their No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley. The duo, who were the 2007 Daytona Prototype champions, also had a very competitive race at the front of the Daytona Prototype field. The team will accept second place honors for the Daytona Prototype championship at the banquet on Monday.

"It's not a bad way to end the season and every time you are on the podium it is kind of a good feeling," Gurney said. "We certainly wanted to win the race. Jon had a great stint and it was looking quite promising, but we really didn't have the ultimate pace. Once the other guys really stretched their legs it was a hell of a battle. All of the guys battling for that last podium spot for the last hour, it was really tough stuff and it was nice to come out on top of that."

Nic Jonsson and Ricardo Zonta led laps early in their No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola from the pole position. Some mid race drama involving Zonta and a GT competitor had him driving through pit lane to serve a penalty for avoidable contact. The duo brought their green No. 76 home in fifth place.

The trio of Marc Goossens, Jim Matthews and Ryan Hunter-Reay battled back from being down a lap early. Goossens was making a run at the top five when he just ran out of car and had to settle for a seventh-place finish.

"The car was used up at the end," Goossens said. "I had no tires left. We didn't have the speed of the top guys so I really had to push to keep up with them. Then with one hour to go I was really out of car and was just trying to hang on. The rain caught us out as well and it was hard to get a rhythm back and then I had a lot of pickup on my tires."

The No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola of Tracy Krohn and Eric van de Poele showed some early speed. Van de Poele managed to lead two laps and had the No. 75 in the top five for most of the first third of the race. The car then lost the belt that drives the alternator forcing them to pit for repairs and settled for 12th place.

"I was lucky to have the car in good condition at the start," van de Poele said. "Our strategy played very well for us because fortunately we had a yellow, as we expected. So we stopped on the same lap just before the GT cars. It was perfect. The car was pretty good all the way through my stints. Everything was perfect so I could catch a few cars. It is always nice when you see your position go higher and higher. Then Tracy got in the car next and I think we were in a very good position, in fifth place. Unfortunately the rain came very hard. I think everybody did their best and then we had a problem with the belt in the engine. Unfortunately we didn't get any luck today. It was fantastic the team fixed the car in quite a short time and we could get back on the track. Tracy could finish the race and we finished 12th. We prefer to give them a better finish but we'll look forward to next year."

The Rolex 24 Hour at Daytona will be the first race of the 2009 Grand-Am season and will be held January 24-25.

Stevenson Motorsports Race Report

Stevenson Pontiac Locks Up Second Place In Rolex Championships

It was a great first season for the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports – BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R, driven by Andrew Davis and Robin Liddell, in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16. Davis and Liddell finished second in the GT Driver's Championship and Stevenson Motorsports claimed second in the GT Team Championship.

When you consider the car was brand new at the start of the year, to have pulled down second place is a remarkable achievement. Even more remarkable is that, had they scored just 10 points more, first place would have been won by the Jacksonville, NC based Stevenson team.

The 13th and final race of the 2008 season was the SunRichGourmet.com 1,000 at Miller Motorsports Park in Tooele, Utah. Paul Edwards and Kelly Collins, driving the No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R picked up the win and, having finished ahead of the second place Stevenson car, they wrapped up the championship with a slim 9 point lead.

The Stevenson team accomplished the remarkable feat of ending 9 of the season's 13 races on the podium, with a balanced record of first, second and third place finishes. That is, they finished 1st three times (Mexico, Virginia, Montreal) 2nd three times (Watkins Glen, New Jersey, Utah) and 3rd three times (Lime Rock, Mid-Ohio, Daytona). In the other four races, they were knocked out of contention by other cars twice (Daytona Rolex 24, Laguna Seca), they had just one mechanical failure all season (Homestead), and they finished just off the podium in 4th one time (Alabama).

Change their fate even slightly in any one of those four races and this team might have gathered up those 10 additional points. That is how close this battle between the Banner Engineering and Stevenson Motorsports teams was this season.

Accepting that fate and circumstance will not always rule in your favor, Team Manager Mike Johnson congratulated the overall champions and made it clear that the Stevenson team intends to build on this incredible foundation in 2009.

"First, my congratulations go to Banner Racing on winning the Championship. " Johnson said, "They did exactly what they had to do today and that was to go out and win the race. As for us, I can't imagine a better season for our little team. We have many great things to be proud of like most podiums by ANY team (GT or DP) for the season and unbelievable reliability and race execution.

"This is, of course, the time of year when you look back and say to yourself if only this would not have happened or that would not have happened we would have won the championship, but that's racing. You even start counting the points as if we used the NASCAR, F1, or IRL Points system to see if we would have won, and yes we would have, but again it doesn't matter. Right now I am just so happy for John and Susan Stevenson, they showed the commitment to me and the team, and we were able to deliver for them. My goal at the beginning of the year was to put them on the podium at the banquet and we achieved it, and next year we will do one better."

The SunRichGourmet.com 1,000 also marked the 11th time the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports – BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R has finished in the top ten.

The race at Miller was interrupted by Mother Nature as the skies opened to unleash a torrential rainstorm in the desert basin in which Miller Motorsports Park was built. With nowhere for the rain water to go, hydroplaning of race cars became all the rage. Cars went off course everywhere, leading to a caution period that saw everyone diving (surfing?) into the pits to put on rain tires. Thankfully the rain subsided quickly and the track began to dry out before any of the involuntary surfers could wipe out completely.

Despite a brief spin in the wet, the No. 57 Pontiac escaped damage and went on to finish a strong second behind the Banner car.

Andrew Davis offered these comments on the race and the remarkable season he enjoyed with this team.

"That was a great race. We did all we could. The No. 07 car with Kelly (Collins) and Paul (Edwards) did a great job. Congratulations to Pontiac and GM for the manufactures title. Congratulations to Banner (Racing) and those guys for the championship and driver's championship."

Davis continued, "We're just thrilled. Stevenson Motorsports and the Pontiac GXP.R raced great today. To finish second in the championship is huge for us - and (we picked up) another podium finish! We have the most podiums out of all the GT teams this year. Robin was on slicks in the rain, which was actually a mistake but we ended up being able to come back and get a strong podium finish, so we're really happy and excited."

Robin Liddell too felt this team had much to be thankful for when he said: "To be honest I'm pretty happy. We obviously lost some time with the wet cautions there. We came in wet-to-wet and the Banner guys stayed out on slicks for another lap or so and then they went to rains, so that's how they got the break on us, but I'm really happy with the race we did. I think we did a great job with what we had underneath us. The car was good, but it wasn't enough to be able to push it and get more out of it.

"Second in the race and second in the championship - it's a great result for us. If you look at the whole season and where we've come from, we're very happy."

Team owner John Stevenson expressed his sense of pride in his team's accomplishments, and offered his congratulations to the Banner Engineering team, when he said: "First of all, my congratulations to Leighton Reese and the entire Banner Team for winning the GT Championship. Congratulations are also due to Pontiac for taking the Manufacturer's Championship. Thanks to Pontiac and Pratt & Miller for providing with such a great car.

"WOW! What a year Stevenson Motorsports had and it was a great ride!

"I would like to thank Nick Bellon and Bryan Mark Financial Group for their support this season and Team Manager, Mike Johnson, for calling some great races. Our engineer, Kyle Millay, and Data Acquisition, Greg Jones, performed flawlessly all year. I also send kudos one more time to our superior crew, Randy Kuyoth, Michael Hoffman, Chris Vallely, Grant Ford, Andy Maxwell, Steve Henderson and Dexter Johnson.

"What more can I say about our drivers, Andrew Davis and Robin Liddell, as we have the best driver team in GT. We will be back for the 2009 season in full force!"

Stevenson Motorsports operates out of a facility located in Jacksonville, North Carolina. Fans of the Stevenson Team are invited to visit the team's website at www.stevensonmotorsports.com

Rum Bum Racing Report **Submitted by TeamSignalSport**

Rum Bum Racing co-drivers Gene Sigal, Matt Plumb and Stephan Gregoire finished 11th in last Saturday's SunRichGourmet.com 1000 race at Miller Motorsports Park.

The Rum Bum Racing team finished 12th in the 2008 Rolex Series team point standings. If you look closely at the rankings, two teams that finished ahead of the Rum Bum Racing team have two cars entered in the series. This means that Rum Bum Racing is virtually one of the top-10 teams of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16.

The 2008 season was a learning experience for the team, who has competed in the Rolex Series for five seasons, since this is only the second year of Daytona Prototype competition for the team. The team had three top-five finishes, including a third-place finish at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course after leading most of the race and 52 laps during the season. Of course, one of the most memorable highlights of the year was when Matt Plumb led 40 minutes of the first hour of the biggest race of the year, the Rolex 24 At Daytona, which was broadcast live on FOX.

It is important to note that Rum Bum Racing finished all its races except two, due to huge crashes that were out of the team's control, proving the level of preparation and performance of the car at every event. The two major accidents took a real toll on the team but both times Rum Bum Racing was able to bounce back and return to competition with a fighting spirit.

"I am satisfied with our 2008 results," declared team owner and co-driver Gene Sigal. "It was a tough season for the crew due to the accidents that had us rebuild two complete cars within 30 days. I believe we proved that we have the foundation of a winning team and can easily score better results as soon as we go on to the next steps of our Rolex Series program announced a year ago. It was only our second year in Daytona Prototype (competition) and the Rolex Series being one of the toughest and most competitive in the world, I am proud of what we accomplished this year. I am pleased to say that our team is one of the best top-10 teams of the Rolex Series and I think it's a very important statement when you look for a sponsor these days. Our team will be ready to score big in 2009 and we look forward to the Rolex 24 at Daytona," Sigal said.

"I want to thank our sponsor, Luis Bacardi, founder of Rum Bum who supported our team all season. Luis helped Sigalsport at a key moment of its life. We can hopefully continue carrying the Rum Bum colors next year and win some races together now that NASCAR has purchased Grand-Am and is fully involved in the marketing side of our series business to create B2B opportunities," continued Sigal.

The next activity for the Rolex Series will be testing at Daytona International Speedway on October 27 - 29 to prepare for the 2009 Rolex 24 At Daytona.