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Grand-Am Rolex Montreal 200 at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve

Source: Team Race Reports Compilation



Photo Courtesy Grand-Am.com

Grand-Am Race Report

Close finishes continue to be a common occurrence in the 2008 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 season, and Friday's Montreal 200 at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve became the closest in series history.

Canadian Mark Wilkins, a native of Toronto, passed another Toronto-born driver Darren Law and Spanish driver Antonio Garcia on the final of 69 laps when Law ran out of fuel on the main straightaway. It was the first career victory for Wilkins and co-driver Brian Frisselle, whose margin of victory – 0.064 seconds – was the closest in series history. It also marked the third straight race where the top two drivers were separated by less than a second at the checkered flag.

Frisselle jumped from third to first on the opening lap but contact between him and point leader Scott Pruett sent the No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley spinning and to the rear of the field. However, he marched the car quickly into the top 10, and Wilkins took over on Lap 23.

Law took the lead from Pruett's co-driver and fellow point co-leader Memo Rojas on Lap 57 and held off first Joey Hand – who led a strong charge before retiring after running out of fuel on the final lap – then Garcia and Wilkins. Later in that lap, Law's No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley slowed as it approached the checkered flag.

Garcia, co-driving for the first time this season with Christian Fittipaldi, tried to go left and then right when he saw Law slow, but Wilkins was already making the pass. Wilkins shot past both drivers,

taking the checkered flag first, the only lap the AIM Autosport team led all race. Garcia, in turn, kept second over Law, who co-drove with David Donohue. Donohue also led four laps.

It marked the third straight race the margin of victory was less than a second. Only 0.654 seconds separated the top three drivers.

Joao Barbosa and JC France earned fourth in the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley, while Pruett and Rojas took fifth in the No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley. Pruett led the first 17 laps after earning the pole earlier in the afternoon with a time of 1:33.199 (104.641 mph), and Rojas led 10 laps before surrendering the point to Law.

Liddell, Davis earn last lap victory in GT class

Robin Liddell and Andrew Davis won the GT portion of the race, their third of the season in the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R, after leader Dirk Werner ran out of fuel on the final lap. It marked the only lap either Liddell or Davis led all race.

Werner led a race-high 42 laps and was attempting to give himself and Bryce Miller their first victory of the season when the No. 87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3 slowed on the main straightaway. They went on to finish fourth.

Montreal-born Sylvain Tremblay and co-driver Nick Ham finished second in the No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8, while Diego Alessi and Matt Connolly took third in the No. 21 Matt Connolly Motorsports Pontiac GTO.R.

Pole sitter Eric Lux and co-driver Leh Keen finished fifth in the No. 86 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3. Lux posted a qualifying time of 1:42.362 as he and Miller broke the track record.

Two cautions for debris, lasting a total of six laps, slowed the race's average to 92.368 mph.

Daytona Prototype competitors return to action in the Crown Royal 200 at The Glen on Aug. 8 at Watkins Glen International.

NEWS & NOTES

- The victory is the first-ever Daytona Prototype victory for Mark Wilkins and Brian Frisselle in the No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley.
- The victory was the first for a Ford engine in Daytona Prototypes since Barber Motorsports Park in July 2006.
- Friday's race marks the second race this season a race has been won from the third-place starting position.
- Riley Chassis has won every Daytona Prototype race this season and 20 dating back to last year's Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen. The manufacturer also took four of the top five finishing positions.
- The race marks the third straight in Rolex Series competition the finish was decided by less than one second (0.081 seconds – Daytona; 0.341 seconds – Barber; 0.064 seconds – Montreal). The last three races, overall, have been decided by a total of 0.486 seconds.
- Their second-place finish was the highest finish for Cheever Racing and Christian Fittipaldi since Homestead-Miami Speedway in March 2006 and the best career finish for Antonio Garcia and the Coyote chassis.
- Their third-place finish was the sixth straight top-five finish for the No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley of Darren Law and David Donohue. The two finished outside the top 10 in each of their first four starts.
- Joao Barbosa and JC France improved a season-best 10 positions in their fourth-place finish aboard the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley. It also marked the duo's second fourth-place finish of 2008.
- The fifth-place finish by the No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley drivers and point co-leaders Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas was the car's and drivers' ninth top-five finish of the season. Scott Pruett and the No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley have now finished in the top 10 in a record-extending 29 consecutive races. Pruett has

now led a season-high 280 laps.

- Fourteen of the 18 Daytona Prototypes finished all 69 laps of the race.
- Vancouver driver Michael Valiante and defending race co-winner Max Angelelli finished sixth after starting fourth in the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Pontiac Dallara.
- St. Leonard, Quebec, Canada driver Marc-Antoine Camirand finished 16th in his home race with Guy Cosmo in the No. 09 Spirit of Daytona Racing Porsche Coyote.
- Eight drivers in seven Daytona Prototypes led laps in the race: Alex Gurney (19), Scott Pruett (17), Darren Law (12), Memo Rojas (10), Shane Lewis (4), David Donohue (4), Jon Fogarty (2), Mark Wilkins (1). Four engine manufacturers led the race.

- The GT victory by Stevenson Motorsports drivers Robin Liddell and Andrew Davis was the duo's third Rolex Series victory of the season and the third for the team this season. It marks the third driver pairing to have three victories this season.
- Pontiacs now own six victories this season, while Mazda's own four and Porsche one.
- All 11 Rolex Series GT races have been won from the front two rows, including five from the front row.
- Tremblay and Ham's second-place finish was the duo's sixth podium of the season in the No. 70 SpeedSource Mazdaspeed/Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8. The team's No. 69 FXDD Mazda RX-8 won the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen.
- Ham has now led a GT class high 236 laps this season.
- Diego Alessi and Matt Connolly earned the Matt Connolly Motorsports Pontiac GTO.R's second podium finish of the season with third place. It was Alessi's second third-place finish of the season and the first for Connolly, who was making his first Rolex Series start of the season.
- Fourth-place GT finishers Bryce Miller and Dirk Werner drove the No. 87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3. It was their third straight top-five finish after the pair finished second at Daytona and Barber last month. In 16 career Rolex Series contests driving together in the Farnbacher Loles Racing stable, the pair has 12 podiums and 14 top fives.
- Kelly Collins and Paul Edwards finished seventh in the No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R. This was the fourth straight race the pair finished behind Ham and Tremblay, who cut the lead to six points. Four races ago, heading into the EMCO Gears Classic at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, the lead was 35 points.
- Defending race co-winners Andy Lally finished sixth and RJ Valentine 16th in TRG Porsche GT3s. Lally has finished in the top six in five of six Rolex Series GT starts this season.
- Four drivers in three cars led in GT competition: Dirk Werner (42), Eric Lux (22), Nick Ham (1), Robin Liddell (1).

POST-RACE QUOTES (TOP THREE IN EACH CLASS)

Mark Wilkins (No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley): "It was so close at the finish. I feel for the No. 16 and the No. 58 cars. Those guys drove a heck of a race. Our engineer came on and said, 'You've got to save fuel, we're low.' I thought we had pretty good tires at the end so I have to thank Pirelli for that. We need to thank Ford for getting us a great engine. Brian did a great job with recovering from the earlier contact and to get the car back up front. This feels great for AIM Autosport. I can't say enough for the guys we've been working with and it feels really great."

Brian Frisselle (No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley): "It started off a little bit rough. Scott got into the back of me at the start and spun me around which pretty much put me dead-last. We came from the back of the pack and the car was great. I think we had the fastest lap of the race during my stint. I think I passed all the way to seventh. Then I passed it off to Mark and he did a great job. He kept us in contention. He did a great job of conserving fuel, short shifting and coasting into the braking zones. We also need to thank Ford, because I think we had the best fuel mileage today and we have great power every time. I feel for the No. 58 guys. They've been knocking on the door all year. Darren drove a beautiful race today. At the same time, we've had terrible luck all year. I

had my heart ripped out at Barber. But that's just racing. Sometimes it breaks you and sometimes it's awesome. Today was just awesome."

Christian Fittipaldi (No. 16 Cheever Racing Pontiac Coyote): "To be honest, I feel pretty bad because we lost the race! But that's racing. Obviously, the No. 58 guys are feeling worse than I am. Those guys have been knocking at the door for a long time. That's how it is. The No. 61 came up with a better package today. The way the whole race went, it suited their team a little bit better than everyone else. So hat's off to them. We still had a very strong race. We finished second. I'm happy for the sponsor. I'm happy for Eddie because I know he's had a pretty rough season. Hopefully, we have a good future ahead of us. We've got a pretty big revised car for the last three races. I feel sorry for the No. 58. That's racing. They're going to turn the page and try to win at The Glen."

Antonio Garcia (No. 16 Cheever Racing Pontiac Coyote): "I think without that little drop (of fuel), I could have stayed at the front. It was also really scary. It was really tight between the No. 58 and us. There was a point where I even needed to lift. I think we deserved to finish second because they did a really good job. It's very good for the team. Christian did a really good job on his stint. The team and the car did a really good job here."

Darren Law (No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): "It's probably the most depressing podium that we've had and that I've had ever. We had a great car and the team did a great job. We had a car to win. David had a beautiful first stint, taking it from seventh to third on the first lap. He brought it into the pits in first. I had a great run and brought it up front. We had it up front all the way until the end. When it started stumbling and slowing down, and I saw these guys coming down the straightaway, I don't know. I think the team really deserved to win. It's depressing."

Robin Liddell (No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R.): "I feel great now. I felt pretty crummy about 10 laps from the end because we started to wonder if we'd done the right thing. I've seen in races like this, when the time is a little different, a few oddities appear. When I drove through during the end lap, the number of cars that ran out of fuel was pretty amazing. People take gambles that perhaps they wouldn't normally take. You try to come up with different strategies to win. For some people that plays out and for others it doesn't. But at the same time, it gives you an opportunity to do a good job. I must say the team did an excellent job today. Mike did a great job with the strategy. The guys did a super job in the pit stops. Had it run yellow for long periods, we would have not had that position at the end. To win is outstanding. We're over the moon. Hopefully we'll keep fighting for the championship in the last couple of races."

Andrew Davis (No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R.): "I was quite happy with my stint in the car and with the progress the team has made; especially over yesterday with the time we had during practice. We came into qualifying pretty confident. I was happy with where I was. We didn't really have anything for the Farnbacher Porsches at that time. I knew the car would be good until the end. The team just did great and the strategy played out in our favor. I thought for sure with the contact with the Daytona Prototypes that we'd see a yellow, but thankfully we didn't. We say that the Rolex Series should race out of the States more often because it's been really good for the Stevenson Motorsports team."

Sylvain Tremblay (No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8): "We struggled this year with some races that we thought we could have done better at. We'll take the good luck today, and take a look at our strategy. It was a really gutsy call by the engineers. We wondered if we should take tires, and we compromised. We just don't have the speed of the Porsches. We were wondering what was going on in the last three or four laps – why they weren't pitting. It was surprising that they lasted as long as they did. We just stayed really calm. We just tried to keep it clean on the track. For us to finish second is really a dream result with the points we made up on the No. 07 car. We're proud to be here."

Nick Ham (No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8): "It got down with like five minutes to go and nobody was running out of gas. I've never seen a group of guys so excited as our in the pit box at

the end. That was a lot of fun. Sylvain and I just did our job. This race really was won by our crew. That was a great call. They made the right call. It's a big win for them."

Diego Alessi (No. 21 Matt Connolly Motorsports Pontiac GTO.R): "I feel very tired because I drove most of the two hours. At the end, my tongue was really on the floor. It was very enjoyable. We lost second place at the end, but did manage to gain points against the Banner car. I think without the radio problem, we might have had the win. I could not hear that we were going to green flag. We are happy with this place, and it was a very good race for us."

Matt Connolly (No. 21 Matt Connolly Motorsports Pontiac GTO.R): "I'm feeling pretty good. I have been trying to get a replacement driver for myself since last year at Iowa. The last guy cancelled on the way up here on Wednesday, so I needed to reinstate my license. My job was to give Diego the car on the lead lap. This race is about Diego. He is the man. He is 'The Diego' as we call him. The crew did a great job. We have a new fuel guy who just started with us and he said he never pulls it out until he sees air come up the vent. He reminded me of that today, which was a pretty good thing. We're thrilled. We're getting the best results with what we have."

Michael Shank Racing Report

John Pew and Ian James backed up their run to a debut podium at Barber Motorsports Park with another top ten Rolex Sports Car Series result on Friday, scoring seventh in the Montreal 200 at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Ford/Riley combination.

Pew had a strong opening stint, moving up to eighth in the cut and thrust of the opening laps after qualifying 12th earlier in the day. Pew kept his top-ten form throughout the stint before turning the car over to James, who made up ground quickly despite having to turn off all of his driver cooling systems to preserve power after an alternator issue. The two hour race had two caution periods, setting the stage for an exciting dual which ultimately saw fuel economy play strongly into the final results.

"Dale (Wise) and Erik (Peterson) definitely did their sums right today because we finished the race with exactly as much fuel as we needed to cross the line," said James, who emerged from the car in fine shape despite not having his cooling systems in place. "The car was pretty strong in the closing laps and I had a chance to get one more position, but it was too close to take that chance and you have to be mindful not only of what you are racing for, but also who you are racing against. So we just brought the car home in good shape. Another yellow late in the race would have been perfect, but this is another good points result for us."

"That was an exciting race!" said Pew. "There was a lot going on during my stint all around me. The car didn't have perfect balance, but I was able to make up some ground early and that was fun, and Ian did a great job at the end. Now I'm really looking forward to the Glen because we had a great test there earlier this season, and it's just a track that I love racing on."

The sister No. 60 of Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri was unable to finish the two-hour event after a fire in the back of the car forced Negri to retire the machine. Negri calmly pulled the Riley to a safety point on the circuit as he deployed the fire extinguishing system on the car, which fortunately resolved the situation on the spot. After entering the race weekend 4th in the standings, the incident was a serious blow to the No. 60 machine's championship position.

"We had a solid weekend going and a good race with both cars, but obviously what happened with the fire is going to hurt the 60 car in the championship and that is really frustrating," said team owner Mike Shank. "We haven't got the car back yet to see what caused the problem, but fortunately Ozz got out of there safely and hopefully there isn't too much damage. John had a

really good stint; he just went right at it and did a great job. Now we are just focused on the Glen. We've been on the podium there before, so hopefully we can do that again next week. The test we had after the 6 Hour went well, so we're confident about our chances again and hopefully we can make up some ground in the championship."

Qualifying recap:

Michael Shank Racing will start the Montreal 200 from the sixth and eighth rows of the combined Daytona Prototype and GT class grid in Montreal on Friday for round ten of the 2008 Rolex Sports Car Series championship. The afternoon qualifying session will be followed in short order by the green flag for the two hour event, the shortest race of the Rolex Sports Car Series season.

John Pew will lead the Michael Shank Racing charge with his lap of 1:36.232 seconds, which was within one second of the previous track record on the 2.7-mile facility as he struggled with an understeering Ford-Riley combination.

"From turn-in to apex, the car has a pretty big push, so hopefully that's something we can make some progress on before the race starts," said Pew. "But overall, the car is good; I kept trying to leave some room for a gap, and every time I'd catch someone up so that didn't help my fast lap time. But that's encouraging for our pace in the race this afternoon."

The No. 60 Ford-Riley of Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri will take the green flag from 15th on the grid after Patterson set a fast lap time of 1:36.875 seconds during the 15-minute qualifying session.

"We still have some work to do with this car because we just aren't getting everything we want out of our braking set-up, and it is a tough car to drive right now," said Patterson after he made a quick check to confirm that he had only come very close to hitting the wall, but not having actually done so. "We will have to see what this track feels like after the NASCAR cars run and put another layer of rubber down."

Michael Shank Racing will travel directly to Watkins Glen for round 11 of Rolex Series competition for a Daytona Prototype only race on August 8 as part of the NASCAR Sprint Cup event weekend.



KROHN Racing Report

Krohn Racing looked to potentially have a Top Five and Top Ten finish in hand for their two-car team at the two-hour mark and end of the Montreal Grand-Am race. Instead they could only celebrate a Top Ten for owner/driver Tracy Krohn and Montreal race co-driver Oliver Gavin in the No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola.

Brake problems on Ricardo Zonta and Nic Jönsson's No. 76 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola caused Zonta to slide into the No. 99 Gainsco Pontiac of Alex Gurney on Lap 60 of 69. A drive-thru penalty was assessed by Grand-Am for 'avoidable contact', relegating the car to a 12th place finish after being in sixth place at the time of the incident and for most of the race.

The No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley team of Brian Frisselle and Mark Wilkins were the winners in their first ever Grand-Am victory.

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

"It was sure nice to have a Top 10. Ollie did a great job! The car was a little bit tentative at first because of the brake situation we've had. But after awhile the car settled down. I started running some quicker laps. I turned it over to Ollie on the lead lap and he took it from there and improved it several positions and ended up in the Top 10. So it was a really good day for us. Of course, this was not the ideal track for this car at this point of the development. But it's getting better all the time so we're catching up."

Oliver Gavin, driver, No. 75 Krohn Racing Pontiac Lola:

"That was a lot of fun! It's great to be racing again –you know really battling with people and people trying to battle with you, and a little banging here and there. It was really a great amount of fun. I really enjoyed working with the team this whole week. Everybody is going about the same speed. It's very tough to get that little break and to try and get that jump on somebody. I think we're lacking a little bit of straight line speed in places. We still need to work on the car, but I think the team has done a fantastic job this week. I really enjoyed driving with Tracy. He's a great guy. It's also been great with Nic and Ricardo. They are great characters and both very fast. I've been learning a lot

from both of them. It's great to come and have another challenge. It's been a very refreshing weekend for me!"

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

"My stint was more about taking care of the car and the brakes basically. That was kind of what the game plan was. The car was pretty good. The brakes started giving out pretty early, especially running too close to guys. Unfortunately I also picked up debris on the very first lap, coming out of the hairpin and got a lot of smoke off the right front. I was very concerned so I kind of had to back off. I had a very good start. I got off third from sixth place and was third coming on the back straightaway. But I picked up the debris, so I tried to take it off the car. You have to brake a little earlier and kind of shake the car. In the meantime, I had three guys get by me because I was concerned about getting a puncture again like we had at Barber. I was being a little conservative. As soon as I got that off, we ran at the same pace as the third, fourth, fifth place. I think the top two guys were a little quicker. It was more about taking care of the brakes and handing the car over to Ricardo.

Ricardo unfortunately had a little bad luck and got a penalty. We gave up a fifth or sixth place today. We need to start to get those points. But bad luck this race. Next we'll go to Watkins Glen and I think we're going to have a good car there, so we'll try to win that one."

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

"We had a difficult race I'd say, especially because of the brake conditions. Also, we had so much pushing. It was even worse than the brakes because you had to stop the car to turn the car. So the big problem was to stop the car. The brakes were not stable. One time it would lock the front up or another time it would lock the rear brakes. And that made me to hit the 99 car...just because of the instability on braking. I am really sorry and want to apologize to those guys for that."

David Brown, Team Manager, Krohn Racing:

"We survived Montreal, more or less intact. The 75 car crew is quite happy. This is their best result of the year since Daytona and best for them in the Lola. It's good to see Tracy looking so happy at the end of the race. He and Ollie did a bloody good job in the race. The 76 was in the Top 6 but was having brake problems and, unfortunately, ran into the 99 car, which resulted in him getting a drive through penalty that put us down to a 12th-place finish. It was too bad for the brake issues because we potentially could have ended up in the Top 4. We'll go on to Watkins Glen with the expectations of a better result."

Oliver Gavin Race Report

Oliver switched from his usual Corvette C6.R to a Pontiac Lola this weekend, sharing the no 75 Krohn Racing car with team owner/driver Tracy Krohn. The event was the Grand Am Rolex Sports Car Series on the Gilles Villeneuve circuit at Montreal.

The pair had a strong race bringing the car home in the top 10, this car's best result to date. Ollie really enjoyed the experience; "That was a lot of fun! It's great to be racing again -you know really battling with people and people trying to battle with you, and a little banging here and there. It was really a great amount of fun.

"I really enjoyed working with the team this whole week. Everybody is going about the same speed. It's very tough to get that little break and to try and get that jump on somebody. I think we're lacking a little bit of straight line speed in places. We still need to work on the car, but I think the team has done a fantastic job this week.

"I really enjoyed driving with Tracy. He's a great guy. It's also been great with Nic and Ricardo. They are great characters and both very fast. I've been learning a lot from both of them. It's great to come and have another challenge. It's been a very refreshing weekend for me!"

Tracy Krohn added, "It was sure nice to have a Top 10. Olly did a great job! The car was a little bit tentative at first because of the brake situation we've had. But after awhile the car settled down. I started running some quicker laps. I turned it over to Olly on the lead lap and he took it from there and improved it several positions and ended up in the Top 10. So it was a really good day for us. Of course, this was not the ideal track for this car at this point of the development. But it's getting better all the time so we're catching up."

Frisselle Racing Report

Frisselle Racing took a thrilling Rolex Sports Car Series race victory in the Montréal 200 on Friday as Brian Frisselle and Mark Wilkins scored a win in the No. 61 Ford-Riley Gold machine by just .064-seconds in the final yards of the two hour race to bring the duo their first Rolex race victory.

The race outing didn't get off to an auspicious start, as the 61 was spun after contact with the championship leading Daytona Prototype on just the second corner of the event, putting paid to the strong 3rd place qualifying effort that Frisselle posted earlier in the day and sending him down the order on the very first lap. But the AIM machine was once again in top form, and when teamed with Frisselles frustration-fueled fast pace, went marching back up the order, setting the fastest laps of the race at that point.

Frisselle made pass after pass before he turned the car over to Wilkins, who kept the forward progress straight through to the closing laps, putting the car in podium position on the penultimate lap, then making a brilliant move on the final front stretch as the leading car sputtered out of fuel to take the lead and set a new record for closest margin of victory in Rolex competition.

"This feels fantastic and is exactly the result this team deserved!" exalted Frisselle. "This win is dedicated to Ian Willis and his family, our thoughts were with him all week. We've been really strong and led the last few races, but just didn't have the luck that we needed to break through. You hate it for the 58 guys running out of fuel like they did, but today was just our day and this feels great. Our Ford was great on fuel and don't think anyone passed more cars than we did today, so it's great to bring them their first win this season. "

The other side of the Frisselle Racing effort also had a strong race outing in the two-hour event, coming home ninth at the checkered flag after running out of laps to make up track position late in the race with the No. 47 Brachs/CDOC Ford-Dallara prepared by Doran Racing. The result marks the second consecutive top-ten for the Burt Frisselle/Ricky Taylor pairing in their first race in the new Brach's livery.

"First thing is that I am really happy for Brian and Mark-they've been knocking on the door for a win all year long and I'm proud of what they accomplished today," said Burt. "We were hoping to be back up in the top five again today, but we just didn't have the track position in the end to do that. But we were fast and I was able to make up ground late in the race. So the result wasn't what we wanted, but I can't help being encouraged about driving this Brach's Ford-Dallara with Ricky because we know that we are capable of some strong results with this package."

Farnbacher Loles Racing Report

Farnbacher Loles Racing came within 600 feet of victory on Friday evening, relinquishing a one-two GT class result just before the finish line in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series race at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montréal. The team's No. 86 and 87 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars led almost all of the two-hour race, but both ran out of fuel on the last lap. Team strategists had gambled on a single pit stop, expecting more caution periods to stretch the cars' fuel, but the race was slowed by only two caution flags for 19 minutes. The team's No. 88 Porsche retired early from the race with a damaged radiator.

Eric Lux of Jacksonville, Fla., started the No. 86 Porsche from the class pole position and held the lead through his stint. He stopped for a driver change during the first caution period, handing off to Leh Keen of Charleston, S.C. A miscue on the pitstop delayed his return to the track, giving the lead to the No. 87 Porsche. Keen worked back from seventh to second with two minutes remaining, but the lack of fuel slowed him to finish fifth.

Bryce Miller of Summit, N.J., drove first in the No. 87 Porsche, maintaining a close second in class behind Lux. He also pitted during the first caution and Dirk Werner of Kissenbrück took the wheel, returning to the track as GT leader. He held the lead until the final moments of the race, when he slowly crossed the finish line in fourth place.

Dave Lacey of Toronto started the No. 88 Porsche from 10th on the GT grid. He gained a lap at the start of the race, then encountered problems with the gearbox and had to pit for repairs. He returned to the track 19th in class, but immediately reported a radiator leak and was forced to park off-track, retiring from the race.

Gregory Loles, team owner: "No regrets. Nine times out of 10 on a track like this, our call would have been right. This track is so tight, it historically has a lot of yellows. You can't assume it will stay green for an hour and 10 minutes – testament is how many teams made the same call. We just fell a little bit short. Obviously, the cars were good, the drivers were great and we'll be ready for next time."

Dino Loles, team owner: "It was another very exciting race in the Grand-Am series, but unfortunately, this one didn't go quite our way at the end. We felt we should have been able to make one stop and hope for some cautions – as had been the pattern in previous years and that far in the race – but we got a little bit unlucky. Hats off to the guys who played it more conservatively. It really worked out for them. But we're very proud of our effort and we're looking forward to [the next race, in] New Jersey, where we'll have a five-car effort."

Leh Keen, No. 86: "We had good cars, both cars were strong and both cars could have won this race. We just needed to last half a lap more with fuel – we were one straightaway away from winning the race. I got the burble at the very end and we were conserving fuel, going half-throttle on the straights. With the way the fuel cell sloshes, if the hairpin [last turn] had been a left-hander, we probably would have been all right. But because it's a right-hander and you're in the turn a long time, the fuel sloshes and starves the car of fuel. Our goal is top-five, so although we could have won today, I'm pretty content with fifth."

Eric Lux, No. 86: "It was an eventful day. This track is very challenging because it's so narrow, it gives you the feeling of a street course, but it's also very high-speed in some areas. Having two classes out there at the same time makes the racing quite exciting and difficult. The team gave us a great car again for the race, as they did in qualifying. It was a two-hour race, not the usual two-hours 45 [-minutes], so there were all kinds of strategies in play. We took the gamble and at the last corner, we ran out of fuel. But it's better to run out of fuel than for something else to happen. You've got to take those gambles sometimes and you don't always come out on top."

Bryce Miller, No. 87: "We had the winning car today, for sure. That showed in the race. It's unfortunate, because if we had just one less lap or one more lap of yellow, we would have won. But we can go to the next race knowing that we can run at the front and that the car is good to win

a race, so that is motivating. This is still a good result and I'm happy that we were able to deliver a top-five finish for our sponsor, IPC/Positron, that was here cheering us on today."

Dirk Werner, No. 87: "It was an amazing finish for the series, but unfortunately, not an amazing finish for us. We were running well the whole weekend, with a very fast car. I think we did everything right. Another stop would have made it, but I think it was the right decision. It seems that this year is not supposed to be ours, but we still have two races to go."

Sun Trust Racing Report

Like most world-class racing facilities, Montreal's Circuit Gilles Villeneuve pays a premium to those race cars and teams that can generate speed. But more so than most, at the legendary Formula 1 layout, with ultra-tight right- and left-hand combinations mixed in with ultra-high speed straightaways, stopping power has as much to do with running the quickest laps as the ability to generate speed.

Such was the case for the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series competitors in Friday's Montreal 200, where Max Angelelli and Michael Valiante found a way to persevere through brake issues of their own in the No. 10 SunTrust Pontiac Dallara of Wayne Taylor Racing to bring home their second consecutive sixth-place finish.

For the team that won the inaugural Rolex Series event at this track a year ago this weekend, sixth place wasn't the most satisfying result, especially considering it was fighting for a podium finish until the latter stages of today's two-hour sprint race. But Angelelli and Valiante did well to record another top-six result despite the limitations on their ability to out-brake competitors into those tight, twisty corners time and again.

"What happened was something that we never experienced before and, unfortunately, it was the kind of problem where, if you have it during the race, you have to keep it and deal with it," said Angelelli, who co-drove to victory here with Jan Magnussen in the No. 10 SunTrust Pontiac Riley last August. "When you finish the race, it's always good. But what we want to see is, obviously, not sixth place. From that aspect, it wasn't a good day. But in the bigger picture, we finished sixth even though we had the problem that we had and we learned a lot, once again. We can only keep learning and keep getting better with this car. Our best days, obviously, are coming."

Angelelli took over the reins of the SunTrust Racing machine just over 40 minutes into today's 69-lap affair after Valiante kept it in relatively close contact with the leaders over his opening 23-lap stint, which began from the fourth spot on the starting grid. Angelelli did some remarkable driving to lead a five-car, nose-to-tail battle for positions fourth through eighth that lasted seven nail-biting tours of the 2.71-mile circuit that annually hosts F1's Canadian Grand Prix. On lap 45, after countless successful efforts to hold off a stubborn Darren Law in the No. 58 Brumos Porsche behind him, Angelelli's brake issues got the better of him and caused him to bobble slightly off-course, dropping him back to seventh and, ultimately, eighth in the order.

From there, Angelelli was able to stay on-pace and picked up two positions before the checkered flag flew on lap 69.

"Handling-wise, the car was working really well," said Valiante, who deftly maneuvered around an early race scare when the No. 61 AIM Autosport entry of Brian Frisselle spun directly in front of him between turns one and two. "It was tough at the start. (Scott) Pruett ran right into the side of Frisselle and spun him out. So I was kind of left with nowhere to go. After the first laps, the brakes started to fade a lot. The car was working, but we had the brake issue. This is one of the hardest tracks on brakes. We tried to come here with the same package that we won with last year to be safe and it just didn't seem to be enough. This track is so, so hard on brakes, you have to get it just right. The new car and the new (Pirelli) tires work the brakes even harder than ever, so it just wasn't enough. If we had brakes this race, we had a shot at winning, for sure. The car was fast enough. Everyone's expectations are to go out and win. But when you introduce a new car, things

are going to happen, especially when you're racing against cars that have been sorted out for six, seven, eight years. They don't have these minor problems quite so much. And, really, all it takes is for one thing to go wrong and you're not going to win the race. You have a flat tire, you're not going to win the race. Today, this was our flat tire. We'll be back even stronger for it."

The Toronto-based No. 61 AIM Autosport entry, which spun in front of Valiante on that opening lap, thrilled the partisan crowd by rebounding to win today's event in the closest finish in Rolex Series history. It came at the expense of the No. 58 Brumos Porsche, which took the white flag in the lead but ran out of fuel just short of the start-finish line on its way to the checkered flag. Frisselle's teammate Mark Wilkins zipped past for the victory with the No. 16 Crown Royal Pontiac of Cheever Racing and drivers Christian Fittipaldi and Antonio Garcia grabbing the runner-up spot just 0.064 seconds later and just ahead of the third-place-finishing Brumos Porsche.

"Today was another example of just how competitive it is in this series," said team owner Wayne Taylor. "We had a fast car, as we've had all along since we introduced the Dallara, and a problem sets us back and sends us home in sixth place. This was an exciting race, a lot going on out there from beginning to end. I'm sure anyone who saw it is a bigger fan of Grand-Am racing than ever. Unfortunately, we weren't racing for the win there at the end. But the guys gave it their best effort. We had a problem that we are getting to the bottom of and we'll move on. Fortunately, we are going to a track next week at Watkins Glen where we have had some of our best days."

Next stop on the Rolex Series tour is next Friday's (Aug. 8) Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen (N.Y.) International, Round 11 of 14 on the 2008 schedule. Friday's event kicks off the annual NASCAR Nationwide and Sprint Cup Series weekend stops at the historic road circuit.



Photo Courtesy Grand-Am.com

TRG Race Report

TRG came into the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Montreal 200 as the defending GT race champions, and for most of the race, it appeared the team had a good shot at repeating the performance.

Unfortunately, the racing gods had other ideas and TRG's Porsches were forced to pit lane in the closing minutes of the two-hour timed event, denying them a shot at a victory. However, the late pit stops did enable two of the four TRG entries to come home with top-10 results.

"We had a great run," said TRG owner Kevin Buckler. "We tried to stretch that fuel as much as we could, and no matter what we would have done, we would have had to come in. It would have been a throwaway. We were hoping for a yellow or anything to slow the field down. It didn't happen, that's the way it goes. We had to come in for fuel, but we had two cars in the top 10 and no accidents. It was a good weekend, but we would have liked to finish better."

Topping the charts for the team was the No. 67 Johnny Love Vodka/TRG Porsche GT3 of co-drivers Tim George Jr. and Andy Lally. George drove the opening stint and turned the No. 67 machine over to Lally in 10th at the 45-minute mark in the race. Lally then worked his way up through the remaining hour and 15 minutes, and was poised for a top-five result. However, the three-time Rolex Series champion was forced to pit lane with about one minute left in the race and he brought the No. 67 machine home in sixth place.

It was the team's eighth top-10 result in 11 races and allowed George to continue leading the MESCO Building for the Future Rookie of the Year championship with two races still remaining on the schedule. It was also Lally's fourth consecutive top 10 and his fifth in six races this year, while it was the third straight top-10 run for George and his eighth top 10 of the year overall.

"It was very interesting at the end," said George. "People started running out of gas. We had cars coasting to the checkered. It was really good. I gave Andy a pretty decent car there. We had a little issue with the rear brake bias in the beginning, but we got that sorted out. I got a little hit from the (No.) 21 (car) and had a couple of GT cars that went by us, but other than that, we brought the Johnny Love Vodka/TRG Porsche to pit lane in pretty decent shape, in the top 10. I've got a nice, solid grip on the rookie lead and that's what we're working on now towards the end of the season."

Coming home two spots behind their No. 67 teammates were Canadian Hima Maher and 2005 Rolex Series GT champion Craig Stanton in the No. 65 Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing/Total R Solutions Porsche GT3 for TRG/Riegel Autosport. It was Stanton's fifth top-10 result in his past seven starts and was Maher's fourth straight top-10 performance. The Calgary, Alberta-resident matched his career-best result of eighth, which he also achieved at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in May and Daytona International Speedway last month.

"This one was the best," Maher said. "We stayed on the lead lap. We got, maybe, 20 laps total in practice yesterday. It was a quick qualifying today and we were thrown into the race. We stayed on the lead lap and did a great fuel strategy. We finished in eighth and on the lead lap. I'm ecstatic!"

Just missing the top 10 were co-drivers Spencer Pumpelly and Ted Ballou in the No. 66 Mitchell Rubber Porsche GT3. Within the final 10 minutes of the race, Pumpelly was actually running second and had the leader in sight. Unfortunately, he came onto pit road with about five minutes remaining in the race for a quick splash of fuel and rejoined the fight in eighth place. With many other cars running out of fuel on the final lap of the race, Pumpelly would have likely scored a top-10 result himself, but the tank ran dry on the final lap and the No. 66 machine was scored in 11th place, one lap down to the class winners.

"We had a good race," Ballou said. "I picked up a few spots at the beginning and handed it over to Spencer. We had a great car. The crew did a great job getting it back together after yesterday. I had an abbreviated drive yesterday, so I didn't drive much. Spencer drove straight to the front and did an incredible job. We deserved better. Unfortunately, we ran out of gas out there. That's the way it goes in racing, but it was a lot of fun. Spencer did a great job."

RJ Valentine and Bryan Sellers came home 16th in the No. 68 CRG/Maxter/Rotax/MBA Group/F1 Air Porsche GT3. Valentine drove the opening stint before turning the car over to Sellers, who suffered terrible luck with two flat tires dropping him several laps back. Valentine, though drove his fastest laps of the weekend in the heat and pressure of the race itself and Sellers turned the fastest lap of the entire GT field during the race.

Next up for the TRG Rolex Series team is the inaugural visit to New Jersey Motorsports Park on Sunday, August 31.



Robin Liddell's Race Report (No. 57 Stevenson Pontiac)

Robin Liddell grabbed his third Grand-Am GT Championship win of the season in dramatic style last night (Fri 1 Aug).

The 34-year-old Scotsman remains third in the championship standings but now just 16-points behind the GT category leaders with just two races remaining.

Co-driver Andrew Davis began the 200-mile race on the streets of Montréal in Canada from third place on the 21 GT car grid and ran fourth for the majority of the opening 35 minutes before the race's first caution period.

Robin took over the wheel of the Pontiac GXP.R from the American just prior to the race re-start after 41mins on the 2.71-mile, 15-turn Circuit Gilles Villeneuve – a North American track unusually new to the Scotsman.

The Stevenson Motorsport team then made a decisive decision to bring third-placed Liddell in for fuel during a second full course yellow period shortly after mid-distance. Resuming in 11th position, Robin had recovered to ninth with 30mins to run and was sixth with five minutes remaining.

But as his rivals slowed to conserve fuel, Liddell was charging, moving up to fourth with two laps to run and started the last lap third. Incredibly Liddell, having suffered heartache in the previous race

when he lost the lead with 11mins remaining due to tyre problems, crossed the finishing line victorious in the GT category – over three seconds ahead of his closest rival.

“It’s going to take me a long while to come back down to earth after this victory – I’m over the moon,” commented Liddell. “I felt pretty crummy about 10 laps from the end because I started to wonder if we’d done the right thing by pitting for fuel.

“But as we got closer to the chequered flag, our rivals were either dramatically slowing to save fuel or coasting to a standstill completely out of gas. The team did an excellent job today with the strategy and during the pit stops.

“This victory now really opens up the championship – bring on the fight!”

Liddell contests the penultimate round of the Grand-Am GT Championship at the New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville, a 2.25-mile road course, on 31 August.

Stevenson Motorsports Race Report

In the Montreal 200 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 race at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montréal, Canada, at least one GT Team Manager made sure his car had enough gas to go the distance. A risky stop for additional fuel during the second caution period led to a late win as the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports – BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R, driven by Andrew Davis and Robin Liddell, passed the leading Porsche on the main straight just a few hundred yards from the finish line as the German marque coasted to a stop out of gas.

Liddell was aboard the Pontiac as it zoomed over the line first in class, after passing a number of cars that had gambled and lost on the game of fuel mileage.

“I feel great now.” Liddell commented at the post race press conference. “I felt pretty crummy about 10 laps from the end because we started to wonder if we’d done the right thing. I’ve seen in races like this, when the time is a little different, a few oddities appear. When I drove through during the end lap, the number of cars that ran out of fuel was pretty amazing. People take gambles that perhaps they wouldn’t normally take. You try to come up with different strategies to win. For some people that plays out and for others it doesn’t. But at the same time, it gives you an opportunity to do a good job.

“I must say the team did an excellent job today.” Liddell continued, “Mike (Johnson) did a great job with the strategy. The guys did a super job in the pit stops. Had it run yellow for long periods, we would have not had that position at the end. To win is outstanding. We’re over the moon. Hopefully we’ll keep fighting for the championship in the last couple of races.”

Team Manager Mike Johnson relayed his concern that, perhaps the late stop for fuel was a mistake. “I knew we would be short of fuel if the race went green, but when the No. 57 and No. 70 (SpeedSource Mazda) were the only cars to come down pit lane, I was worried. With 5 laps to go, I began apologizing to the team that I cost us a good finish, but as the first car came into the pits with three laps to go, I knew we had a chance. We got beat by late yellows at Barber after leading most of the race, and this weekend we won because there wasn’t a late yellow and after having only led for about a half mile. It just goes to show that it’s never over until it’s over.”

Andrew Davis had taken the Pontiac from third on the grid into the opening laps with a pair of pesky Porsches in front. He was able to stay in the front pack of cars throughout his stint before turning the GXP.R over to Liddell.

"I couldn't be more proud of the Stevenson Motorsports team for this thrilling victory." Davis commented, "We worked very hard trying to maximize our progress with the plentiful practice time that we had on Thursday afternoon. The car was working nicely at the end of practice, enabling us to put the No. 57 Pontiac GXP.R up near the front on the time sheets. Despite the progress made, the crew stayed up very late on Thursday night making changes to improve the car further. Heading into qualifying, I was confident that we had a car that was capable of starting up front. We were able to place the car on the inside of the second row for the start of the race, and so began one of the most exciting races that I have been a part of in quite some time."

When the Stevenson car pitted, the pit lane wasn't as busy as you might expect during a caution period. By coming in when they did to add fuel the team positioned themselves to literally run away from the race leaders in the end.

"Mike Johnson made the call during the race to bring us in during a mid race caution period for fuel. It seemed like the right call, but we were surprised to see that most of the front runners opted not to pit. I was quite worried with about five minutes remaining because it looked like those in front were not running out of fuel. However, the last two laps were simply amazing finding us on the top step of the podium!"

"This was a big win for Stevenson Motorsports." Davis continued, "The celebration in the pits was out of control, we were jumping up and down like mad men on the pit lane. We were in complete disbelief of how the race came to us on the final straight."

As a result of the team's success in Canada, Davis has developed a taste for competition outside the United States. "We seem to do really well when the Rolex Series races outside the United States, so hopefully they will add some more international races to the schedule in the future."

The Montreal 200 was the 11th race of the Rolex Series 2008 season for the GT class. It marked the ninth time the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports – BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R has finished in the top ten. In seven of those races, Davis and Liddell have stood on the podium, with three wins.

With this, the third win of the season, Stevenson teammates Robin Liddell and Andrew Davis strengthened their third place standings in the GT Driver's Championship by reducing the gap to second to just six points. And they are now just 16 points out of first. The Stevenson Team also remains in third place in the GT Team Championship standings.

Liddell let the rest of the GT field know the Stevenson Team is out to get the top spot in the championships when he said, "This victory now really opens up the championship – bring on the fight!"

The Grand-Am GT class next moves to the brand new Thunderbolt Raceway located in the New Jersey Motorsports Park complex in Millville, New Jersey. The race date is Sunday, August 31st.

The Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 includes cars competing in two classes, Daytona Prototypes and GT. The #57 Stevenson Motorsports Pontiac GXP.R competes in the GT class against teams running cars from Porsche, Ferrari, Mazda as well as the Ford Mustang Cobra.

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

Ruby Tuesday / Alex Job Racing Report

The Ruby Tuesday Championship Racing Team came up half a lap short from possibly winning its first Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 race of the season at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal.

On the last lap of the race, driver Joey Hand was in second and fighting for the team's first win of the season when his No. 23 Ruby Tuesday Championship Racing Team Porsche Riley ran out of fuel on the back straight. This unfortunate circumstance relegated the team to a 15th-place finish.

"This really hurts," Hand said after the race. "It's like getting punched in the stomach. At the very least, I knew we were on the podium. Had we not run out of fuel, I was set to get Darren [Law] and hopefully win this thing. To that point, the car had been really good. For only getting 10 laps worth of practice, five for Bill and five for me, I don't think anyone would have given us a chance to win.

"I didn't know that we had a fuel issue until five laps to go. The team did not talk to me on the radio because I was in a zone and I was passing people. I know that they didn't want to break my concentration. They wanted me to stay focused. But, with five to go, they told me to start shifting early on the first light and then to switch to map two.

"Just when they said that, I knew I was in trouble because the car stumbled a bit in Turn Five and I thought 'oh no with five to go we are not going to make it.' I milked it as much as I could. I started short shifting and I knew Darren was doing the same because he was not pulling away from me. But, we came up just half a lap shy."

"My heart is broken for the team; it's broken for Alex," Auberlen said. "I thought that this was going to be our day. The car was great. It took some abuse and just kept on going. AJR and Ruby Tuesday have been up front in the last two races with this car. We've got new life. But now, we've got to convert that life into podiums, which we should be doing every weekend. Joey and the Ruby Tuesday team did a great job today."

Auberlen started today's Round 10 of Rolex Series Daytona Prototype competition fifth on the grid. Early in the race, Auberlen was engaged in an epic battle with the No. 16 Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Pontiac Coyote for fourth when its driver made a double move resulting in contact with Auberlen in Turn 10. Unfortunately, the avoidable contact cost Auberlen a position. Frustrated, but undaunted, Auberlen quickly regained his position later in the lap and was back in fifth when the race's first caution came out.

Under yellow on Lap 21, the team brought Auberlen to pit lane for tires, fuel and to put Hand in the car. Once the pit stops cycled through Hand was ninth. Now it was Hand's turn to drive the No. 23 machine back to the front. On lap 53, Hand passed the No. 16 Pontiac Coyote machine in Turn Three for third place. At this point, Hand had the team's first win in his sights, with the No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley and the No. 01 TELMEX/Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley just in front of him.

On lap 56, both the No. 58 and Hand passed the No. 01 machine to take over the top two spots, respectively. From there, it was going to be a shootout to the end with just 13 laps remaining. Unfortunately, during those final laps, the team also knew that they were getting low on fuel.

With two laps to go, Hand was still trying to take the lead when he had to go to reserve fuel. But, unfortunately, the No. 23 machine ran out of fuel on the back straight on the last lap.

"I hope the team stays encouraged after today's race," Team Engineer Greg Fordahl said. "The

performance of the team and the car were fantastic. [In terms of strategy] we rolled the dice hoping for a late yellow or a little bit of help towards the end and we just didn't get it. So, we came up about half a gallon short. It would not have made any difference to our finishing position had we come in for a splash of fuel because we would have ended up in the same place."

Cheever Racing / Crown Royal No. 16 Racing Report

The Crown Royal Cask No. 16 team scored its first podium visit of the year with a second-place finish at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, narrowly missing first by only .064 seconds. The reunited driving team of Christian Fittipaldi and Antonio Garcia steered their No. 16 Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Pontiac Coyote to the best finish of the year for Cheever Racing in Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Daytona Prototype competition.

Aggressive driving early on by Christian Fittipaldi quickly moved the Crown Royal Cask No. 16 machine from its qualifying position of ninth to fourth. An early driver change then positioned the team to take advantage of a full course yellow to make up position and then top off with just enough fuel to finish the race. Antonio Garcia then battled with the leaders for the remainder of the race moving between fourth and second position until the final run for the checkered flag.

Antonio Garcia: "Second place is good, but first would be better... I think without that little drop (of fuel), I could have stayed at the front. It was also really scary. It was really tight between the No. 58 and us. ... I am pleased with the performance of the Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Pontiac... we have come a long way in the development of this new car, It will be good to get back to The Glen with Christian as my team mate and go for a first place podium finish."

"Our fuel and pit strategy played a large part in our success today", stated Team Manager Dave Meehan, "We missed the win because of a fuel pressure spike just as Antonio (Garcia) was pressing for the win. It was just a little bit disappointing because victory was in our grasp... overall our team and our Pontiac powered Coyote has begun to gel and I look forward to a strong finish this year for Cheever Racing and the Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Race Team."

"As the Coyote continues its development process, we continue to get stronger and stronger, said Team Owner Eddie Cheever, "Our Pontiac power plant certainly delivered when we needed it the most and our continuing refinement of the Coyote chassis design is starting to pay off...." Cheever continued, "It was a pleasure to see Christian back behind the wheel of our Crown Royal Cask No. 16 car. Antonio (Garcia) continues to prove that he is the driver to watch in Grand-Am, his precise control of the car and overall driving skills are exceptional."

Christian Fittipaldi added, "It was good to give Crown Royal a strong showing in its home country of Canada. The Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Coyote was strong from the very first lap... It's feels good to be able to contribute to this success, and I am happy to be back with Cheever Racing and competing again in Grand-Am."

GAINSCO / Bob Stallings Racing Report

Reigning Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Champions GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing and drivers Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty salvaged an eighth-place finish from a frustrating weekend and even rougher Montreal 200 race today in which a penalty and numerous contact incidents kept them out of victory lane despite leading twice in the two-hour race.

After qualifying second earlier on Friday, Fogarty stalked early leader Scott Pruett before making a pass for the lead in Montreal's tricky Hairpin Turn on Lap 18. Grand-Am officials later ruled that Fogarty had avoidable contact with Pruett while making the pass and the No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley was assessed a drive-through penalty that dropped the team to third.

"We got hit a lot today," Fogarty said. "The first time between myself and Pruett occurred while I was taking the lead and it worked out great. Apparently the series officials felt otherwise so they decided to give us a drive through. Fortunately, we had built up such a lead by that time that we came back on the circuit in third."

The first caution period of the race came just two laps after the penalty and, along with the other leading Daytona Prototypes, Fogarty ducked into the pits for what would be GAINSCO's only stop of the race. Gurney took the wheel and quick pit work by the GAINSCO team got them out of the pits first. Gurney then passed the No. 3 Southard Motorsports Lexus Riley of Shane Lewis for the lead on Lap 28 soon after green-flag racing resumed.

Gurney's 19 laps in front was the longest lead stretch of the race and the GAINSCO team appeared to be in a position to win when disaster struck once again at the Hairpin Turn with a little over 30 minutes remaining. A lapped GT car spun as Gurney was passing and he was forced into the path of a second GT machine that made heavy contact with the GAINSCO Pontiac Riley. In an instant, Gurney went from leading to a distant seventh place.

"This race was just kind of symbolic of our season so far," Gurney said. "We had a very good car but didn't end up with much to show for it. I struggled with the brakes all day but we were good enough to stay out front. I was managing the gap when I had the lead there for the longest time and I just got caught up in a GT incident where one guy missed the brake zone and the next guy hit me. It was a really hard hit and I actually thought we were out. It was that hard of a hit and the car steered quite a bit to the left after that."

Fogarty was back in the pits watching the drama unfold with the GAINSCO team after they had worked so hard to not only overcome the race penalty but also a practice accident on Thursday. Fogarty was uninjured in the incident but the No. 99 required right front and extensive rear-end repairs after backing into the wall. The GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing crew worked late into the night to get the race car back in top condition, but circumstances once again kept the GAINSCO team from posting a strong result.

"It was really just one of those GT things," Fogarty said. "Wrong place, wrong time and there was nothing Alex could do, and that was that."

The GAINSCO team's race troubles were far from over, however, as yet another contact incident came in Turn 1 when Ricardo Zonta lost his brakes and spun Gurney with just a dozen minutes remaining. Prior to that, Gurney was ripping off a string of fastest race laps while charging back from the GT incident and cleanly passed Zonta to take fifth position. The Krohn Racing driver wasn't as cooperative.

"I tried to get back going again after the incident with the GT cars and we seemed okay but later on I got caught up in an incident with Zonta.," Gurney said. "It was just a really frustrating day for everybody on the team. We made it to the end on fuel but we had the other problems and that was it."

Zonta was given a drive-through penalty for the hit which moved GAINSCO up to eighth at the checkered flag.

The No. 99 GAINSCO Pontiac Riley remains second in the team championship with 258 points. The same number of points also has Gurney and Fogarty with the second highest total in the Rolex Series Driver Championship. Pruett, Memo Rojas and the No. 01 Ganassi team, who finished fifth at Montreal, now have 321 points to lead both championships.

"In 2006 I thought we had a run of bad luck but honestly this year is topping it," Fogarty said. "We have been in a position to win a lot of races and things just aren't going our way. But we have got pace and we are doing the right things but we just have things going wrong, and that can't last forever. I want to start building momentum and carry it through the end of the season straight into Daytona next year. That's kind of where I am setting my sights right now."

Southard Motorsports Racing Report

Southard Motorsports continued to add to its tally of laps led in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series with multiple circuits at the head of the pack in the Montreal 200. However, the program would eventually finish 14th after the race's running did not play into the team's strategy.

Considering the configuration of the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montréal, Quebec, the intense competition in the Daytona Prototype (DP) class and the team's tenth-place starting position, owner/strategist Steve Southard (Powell, Ohio) rolled the dice and outlined a daring strategy to bring the No. 3 Southard Motorsports Lexus-Riley on the first lap of the 200 mile/two-hour race. With the first pit stop complete, drivers Bill Lester (Atlanta) and Shane Lewis (Jupiter, Fla.) could focus on moving through the field. Lewis, who started the race tenth, fought the Powell, Ohio-based car into the lead on lap 23. He held the top spot for five laps before being bumped into second place. The multi-time Grand-Am race winner was able to maintain a top-six position, despite older tires, until pitting for the final time with 50 minutes remaining in the show.

Lester returned the Southard machine from its final pit stop in 17th position. The NASCAR veteran held his attack and kept the tires on the No. 3 fresh in anticipation of all the other top runner's need to make a final stop for fuel. However, a late-race caution period negated the benefits of the strategy leaving Lester just outside the top-10. Despite falling one lap down to the overall leaders with just minutes remaining, as the leaders began to slow to save fuel - several would eventually run out - Lester would regain the lost lap. The red, white and blue prototype crossed under the checkered flag in 14th on the lead lap.

With five laps at the point in Montréal joining their previous laps in position one at the previous two races will give the Southard team additional confidence entering next week's Watkins Glen event on Friday, August 8. The race marks the second time Grand-Am will race on the historic, upstate New York facility. Unlike the first event there, the Six Hours of the Glen, the 200 mile event will be held on the "short course" in conjunction with the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series.

Quotes

Steve Southard, Owner: "Our strategy was a gamble. It was based on our calculations that our Lexus-powered car could not run one hour and 15 minutes without a stop for fuel. Every team has to make a mandatory stop in the first 45 minutes of the race. That would require a second stop before the end of the race. We stopped on the first lap which meant we could make our second stop around the halfway point. We would give up track position but it would come back to us when everyone else made their mandatory stop. That part worked. We then pitted from the fifth position at the second caution, just over one hour into the race. That caution did us in. It obviously allowed most of the rest of the cars enough of a fuel savings to make it to the end. The race stayed green and several cars ran out of fuel starting two laps from the end. If the race had gone one or two laps more our strategy would have worked perfectly. We were happy with the result even though it wasn't what we expected. The crew deserves a lot of credit for a flawless pit stop and the drivers did everything required of them. We can't wait for Watkins Glen."

Shane Lewis, Driver: "Steve and Martha looked at this event and decided to really gamble on the strategy. This was real Las Vegas-type stuff and it almost came-up aces. Really, I was surprised more teams didn't try the same strategy but we thought the gamble was worth it. It almost paid off. The last caution kept it from paying off but it was great to get more laps at the front of the Daytona Prototype field. There is some luck that has helped us and some that has hurt us. This weekend it hurt us but we are getting there."

TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing Report

The TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates (CGRFS) team consistently ran in the top-five positions throughout the entire two-hour timed event at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve (CGV). The team changed their driver sequence as Pruett qualified and completed the first driving stint whereas Rojas completed the final 46 of 69 total laps. With Pruett's first and the team's second pole starting position of the season, he lead the first 17 laps of the event. Rojas' rotation in the driver's seat saw him lead 10 laps as he focused on conserving fuel since the team made one pit stop.

Fuel conservation was the strategic mission of the race as Rojas ran in sixth place on the final lap and gained the fifth place position after one of the front running cars (No.23) ran out of fuel before reaching the checkered flag. Pruett and Rojas have scored fifth place finishes at CGV in their two Rolex Series trips to the track and amassed their first pole position and first laps lead at the track this weekend.

Pruett and Rojas currently lead the Rolex series driver and team championship race with their largest margin of the season with 321 points, 63 points over the No.99 Fogarty/Gurney car (321).

CGRFS Quoteboard:

Scott Pruett: "We tried a different sequence by having me qualify the car. Getting our second pole (position) of the season was a great start to the weekend. I can't say enough about how important it is that we have consistent finishes and race smart races – that is what will win us the championship. So, I'm pleased with a top-five finish today. We picked up points in the championship and we are working hard to ensure that the final four races are successful for the TELMEX team."

Memo Rojas: "I definitely wanted to end the day on the podium, but I knew that the TELMEX team was working hard to conserve as much fuel as we could since we only had one pit stop throughout the entire race. Scott did an awesome job with qualifying in pole position and we had a strong run today. Our focus is on the championship and so picking up an additional three points today was a good thing, but there's always the personal goal to win races."

AIM Autosport Race Report

We won! In the end, there is not much more you can say that has not already been said in the many race reports and media interviews with Brian and Mark. There were in fact, a lot of reports - which tends to happen when you win races, as the closest finish in Rolex Sports Car history was even featured in USA Today. The AIM Autosport victory made the SPEED TV highlight reels in the weekly SPEED Report and was the top highlight on Dave Despain's Wind Tunnel program, also on SPEED TV. Fox Sports even had Mark up at 7:30 a.m. Sunday for an interview on "Race Day on Fox", their satellite radio feed. Even today, three days after that thrilling victory, the AIM Autosport media mailbox is beeping every so often with yet another Google alert about a news story or blog report on the race. Yes, it was an exciting finish, but how we got there is another story indeed.

After suffering some damage while trying to avoid an accident late in the day Thursday, the Exchange Traded Gold No. 61 Ford Riley came to pit lane for qualifying on Friday a bit unproven. The crew had repaired the front suspension and steering components and the car did manage a few laps in the last practice on Thursday, but that was in the wet. Brian reported at the time that there were no major issues with the No. 61 but there would be no opportunity to test any setup changes ahead of qualifying. Brian would have a great run and in the closing laps, place the car on the inside of row two for the start of the race.

Third on the grid was a good place to be, or so it seemed at the start, as Brian launched the Ford-powered Riley into the lead between turns one and two only to be spun around by the 01 car, falling all the way back to last place. Fortunately, Brian got it pointed in the right direction and got underway before the GT class start caught up to him. Still, the No. 61 Ford Riley was now twenty-three seconds back.

The next fifteen laps were... magical. Lap after lap, Brian showed incredible focus and determination as he picked off car after car - three in lap six alone, to make his way up the field. On lap eleven he scored the fastest lap to that point of the race and just five laps later, having just secured seventh place, he improved his time. However, the Exchange Traded Gold No. 61 Ford Riley was now twenty-eight seconds back of the leader. Brian would improve to sixth when the first of the lead pack elected to pit under green. Brian would pit the No. 61 four laps later with the rest of the leaders under the first of only two full



course cautions on the day. Fuel, a fresh set of Pirelli tires and Mark taking over the controls, the team seemed ready to run to the end of the two-hour race.

Mark cycled back on track in seventh position and still under caution, the gap to the leader was down to less than four seconds. Mark seemed to struggle at first when the green flag came out and race engineer Jim Malicki urged him on and gave the go ahead to go to full race mapping for fuel. Another short caution period and when the green came out, Mark took the fight to the cars ahead setting up some incredible passing attempts into the last chicane and there are definitely some paint scrapes along the side of the car. But Mark did not give in and his pace increased. Mark would record the fastest lap of the race - a 1:34.152, on lap fifty-five (although the 59 car would record a 1:34.101 three laps later) as he chased the 01 car. Mark worried the 01 into a mistake and took fourth spot and with just six laps to go, Malicki called for Mark to run in fuel conservation mode. Fourth would match our best result since entering the series. However, as the final lap would prove, racing is a funny game.

The white flag came out on lap sixty-eight and everyone on the AIM Autosport crew seemed happy to be coming home fourth after being spun all the way back to last place. Then the 23 car, in its fight to challenge for the lead, ran out of fuel elevating the No. 61 to the final podium spot. As this writer prepared to walk down to the pit box and join the crew in celebration of the podium, I heard the race engineer calmly say into the radio, "Mark, that is for P2. Go to race map and go get 'em." Looking at the monitors, Mark was right on the 16 car coming through the final chicane and then, just yards from the finish line, the 58 car ran out of fuel. The 16, now sputtering, went left and Mark, pedal firmly planted to the floor, went right, crossing the finish line just .064 seconds - less than half a car length, ahead of second place and victory belonged to AIM Autosport. An incredible victory for the sole Canadian team in Daytona Prototypes to earn its maiden win on Canadian soil. Let me tell you, my feet did not seem to touch the steps down from the media tower to the pit box and it was quite the scene as Mark pulled the No. 61 to the pit and one of the largest crowds in Rolex history went wild.

AIM Autosport has been so close before. In fact, the Exchange Traded Gold No. 61 Ford Riley has lead at least one lap in seven of ten races so far this season. The team only once qualified outside the top five - a seventh at Barber Motorsport Park two weeks ago where they came the closest to a win, leading the race with ten to go when the car suffered a mechanical failure. They have a pole and three front-row starts so far this season and the car has always been quick. And there is a reason for that, because everyone on the team is dedicated to getting the job done and they all feel the heartbreak when things go wrong. Friday night, the entire crew, along with family, friends and the support crew from Roush Yates that builds our Ford engines, celebrated into the wee hours of the morning... and rightly so. But early Saturday morning, that same group of revelers were back at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve to prepare the car for this weeks race at Watkins Glen. Laurels are great, but if you rest on them, it is a lot more difficult to earn some new ones.

Doran Racing Report

The two-car Doran Racing team added to its recent string of successes with one top-10 and a near-miss 11th in Round 11 of the 2008 Rolex Series at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal. The #47 Doran Racing / CDOC / Brach's Candy Dallara Ford co-driven by Burt Frisselle and Ricky Taylor qualified 8th and finished 9th, while the #77 Doran Racing / Kodak Doran Dallara Ford with Memo Gidley and Brad Jaeger at the controls qualified 17th and finished 11th.

This brings the team's top-10 finish count to eight so far this season, including the last five races in a row; Watkins Glen, Mid-Ohio, Daytona, Barber Motorsports Park and Montreal. In addition to 9th at Montreal, the #47 car was 9th in its debut race at Mexico City, 8th at VIR, 7th at Mid-Ohio and 5th at Barber. While finishing just out of the top-10 in Montreal, the #77 car has recorded finishes of 7th in Mexico City, 5th at Watkins Glen and 6th Daytona.

"The Doran team did a great job to give Ricky and I a competitive car for the race, and we're really pleased to be able to score a top-10 finish for CDOC and our new sponsor, Brach's Candy," says Frisselle. "Consistently finishing in the top-10 is a real achievement in a series as competitive as this, and I feel like we keep getting better every race. I can hardly wait to get back to Watkins Glen next weekend, which is a track we know well and where the team has had good results."

Frisselle has been racing Daytona Prototypes in the Rolex Series since 2004, including a podium finish in his first-ever start in the series. He has scored top-10 and top-5 finishes in each of his four seasons of Rolex competition, including a 5th in his first run in the Rolex 24, in 2007. Ricky Taylor is the 19 year-old son of Rolex Series champion Wayne Taylor and, when not in a race car, attends Lake Highland Preparatory School in Orlando, Florida, where he plays on the varsity soccer team. In 2007, Taylor finished second in Skip Barber National Championship with two wins, five poles and five podiums. He won the Skip Barber Southern Series in 2006 with six wins, three poles and 12 podiums.

"I'm a bit disappointed with myself for making some mistakes and costing us some track positions during the race," said Taylor. "The car itself was great, the best we've had all season right off the truck, so that gives us all confidence for the upcoming races. Like any track, finding that last one second of lap time at Montreal is a challenge, but I really enjoyed running at a track that I've been watching F1 races on for so many years."

The #77 Doran Racing entry is co-driven by Memo Gidley and Brad Jaeger. Gidley, the very talented and widely respected American driver who was born in La Paz, Mexico and now makes his home in Novato, California, has made a name for himself as one of the most committed drivers in the paddock, driving and winning in everything from karts to Indy Cars and stock cars to prototypes.

"The Doran team didn't race at Montreal last year, so we started out a bit behind everyone else in not having a good setup to roll off the truck with," says Gidley, whose last race at Montreal was more than a decade ago with the Lynx Racing Atlantic team. "The practice sessions shortened due to rain were another factor, but the Doran team kept working and we made some good gains with the car by the time the green flag dropped. It was just one of those weekends where things didn't quite come together, but it's the mark of a truly professional team to keep working and achieve the best results possible under the circumstances. The next race is at Watkins Glen, where we scored a top-5 finish last time we ran, and we were fast in testing there on the Monday after the race, so I think we're in for a good weekend at The Glen."

Gidley's co-driver is Brad Jaeger, a recent graduate of Vanderbilt University where he was a member of their Formula SAE team, has a racing resume that includes karting, Sports 2000, Skip Barber, F2000, Star Mazda and the Indy Pro Series.

"We struggled with the car all weekend and the Doran team did a really good job of solving most of

our issues and I'm reasonably happy with an 11th-place finish," says Jaeger. "We started out with trouble over the bumps, Montreal is a surprisingly bumpy track in some places, but our big issue in the race was understeer and we couldn't get into the chicanes with enough speed. Still, there was a lot of good, hard racing, and we had a fuel strategy that let us go the distance which some cars couldn't do. The job was to keep the car on the lead lap and in one piece, and we accomplished that."

The two cars the Doran Racing team fielded at Montreal and will campaign throughout the 2008 Rolex Series season look the same, but are different underneath. The #47 car is all-Dallara, while the #77 car is a Doran chassis fitted with Dallara bodywork featuring enhanced aerodynamics and increased downforce. Both cars are powered by 500 horsepower Roush-Yates Ford V-8 engines.

Doran Enterprises is Dallara's official spare parts distributor and approved repair center for that series. In addition, Doran Designs will fabricate certain special parts for the marque. Doran Racing has a successful history of working with Dallara and won the Daytona 24 Hours in 2002 with a Dallara Sportscar LMP1. While Doran Racing has prepared and fielded race cars in a wide variety of series for many years, from Indy cars to NASCAR trucks, the Lebanon, Ohio-based team is particularly noted for its successes in sports car endurance racing, including being the first and only team in U.S. history to win the 24 Hours at Daytona, the 12 Hours of Sebring and the Watkins Glen Six-Hour race in the same year (1998).