

Quick Quay

LONG BEACH, CA April 18, 2009 – “The engine, the drivability of the car, the engineers knowing what the car wants – everything is coming together very well,” commented Butch Leitzinger after he and Marino Franchitti finished third in LMP2 at today’s Long Beach ALMS race. “The package is gelling quite nicely,” said Chris Dyson after he and Guy Smith took second in class in the #16 BP Mazda Lola Coupe. “We are getting our arms around this extremely strong car.”



Guy Smith started the #16 car and led the P2 class for more than half of the race. “I got alongside the Acura at the start and when he braked, I was going to brake later. I know our Mazda engine has good grunt off the line and I used that to complete the pass. I held the gap and pulled a bit on him in traffic. I was able to control the pace and speed up when needed.”

At 100 minutes, this was the shortest race of the year for the ALMS. It put more emphasis on the race’s only pit stop and the team executed both well. Leitzinger came in on lap 40 for fuel, tires and a driver change over to Franchitti. Smith was in one lap latter for fuel and change-off to Dyson, but the #16 crew did not change tires. “We double- stinted our Michelin tires and the tires were consistently fast. I was still gaining on the Acura toward the end.”

Last year’s race was yellow-free and this year’s was closing in on the same outcome until four laps from the end when there was a full-course yellow for a burning car in the run-off in turn one. The driver escaped injury and the race ended under yellow.

“We are starting to get all the pieces together for a competitive season,” Dyson said. “It is great to get a double-podium finish here for Mazda at Long Beach. We had a solid run and had the pace to match the leaders all day. We are very positive about the coming races”

Mazda is the brand choice of road racers across North America. On any given weekend, there are more Mazdas on the road-race-tracks of America than any other brand. You will see MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA **3**, MAZDA **6**, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models because every Mazda has the Soul of a Sports Car.

Pos	Car#	Class	Drivers	Difference	Car Make
1	66	P1	De Ferran/Pagenaud		Acura ARX 02
2	9	P1	Brabham/Sharp	1.016	Acura ARX 02
3	15	P2	Fernandez/Diaz	1 lap	Acura ARX-01
4	16	P2	Dyson/Smith	1 lap	Mazda MZR-R
5	20	P2	Leitzinger/Franchitti	2 laps	Mazda MZR-R
6	4	GT1	Baretta/Gavin	3 laps	Corvette C6
7	37	P1	Field/Field/Ducote	5 laps	Lola B06/10
8	45	GT2	Bergmeister/Long	5 laps	Porsche 911
9	62	GT2	Mello/Kaffer	5 laps	Ferrari 430
10	92	GT2	Mueller/Milner	6 laps	BMW E92