



American Le Mans Series Northeast Grand Prix at Lime Rock Park

Source: Team Race Reports

Photos by Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com unless otherwise noted



Lime Rock Park Race Report

Source: Renea Topp, Lime Rock Park

Big crowd, great races at Lime Rock Park

It was a beautiful, and very full, racing day at Lime Rock Park for the American Le Mans Series Northeast Grand Prix. A big crowd filled the outside and inside hillside spectator areas and they were treated to another exciting ALMS race.

For the second year in a row, there was a late-race change of the lead. Last year, the Scott Sharp/David Brabham team scored the win with a last-lap pass. This year, they were leading with about 15 minutes to go when their Acura ARX 02a suffered a left-rear puncture – and that handed the lead and the win to the pole sitting team of Gil de Ferran and Simon Pagenaud in another Acura. Finishing an impressive third was the hybrid gas-electric Ginetta-Zytek 09HS LMP1 driven by Johnny Mowlem and Stefan Johansson.

Winning the LMP2 class (fourth overall) were Butch Leitzinger and Marino Franchitti (Dario's brother) in the Lola-Mazda B09 86, ahead of Luis Diaz and Adrian Fernandez in their Acura ARX-01B.

In GT2, Pat Long and Joerg Bergmeister had the measure of the field in their Porsche 911 RSR, besting the Ferrari 430 GT of Jaime Melo and Pierre Kaffer. The Porsche was an outstanding fifth overall.

The special ALMS Challenge class – a fleet of Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars – was won by Wesley Hoagland and Bob Faiata.

In the other races at Lime Rock Park, Simona De Silvestro won the Cooper Tires Atlantic Championship powered by Mazda event, Joel Feinberg took race one and Gary Gibson race two in the Frisby Tires IMSA Lutes series, while in Formula BMW, Gabby Chavez won the first race and James Kowari the second.



Photo courtesy ALMS

Dyson Racing Team Report

Source: Brian Wagner, Dyson Racing

"It was a great day to win at home," Rob Dyson said afterwards. Dyson Racing won their first race with Mazda at their home track of Lime Rock CT, the same track where Dyson Racing's first professional race win came in 1985. Marino Franchitti and Butch Leitzinger took the win in the # 20 BP Lola-Mazda Coupe at the American Le Mans Northeast Grand Prix, leading 166 out of 172 laps. "This was the culmination of a lot of hard work and effort and lot of passion on the part of so many people at Mazda, BP, Lola and AER. We are honored to be part of it," added Dyson. Franchitti set the race's fastest class lap on his way to his first win in the ALMS. "From the moment you join Dyson Racing, you are part of a family," said Franchitti. "We missed giving Rob a win last year for his celebration of 25 years in professional racing, so this is a belated gift. This one is for the passion and the commitment of this incredible team."

This is Leitzinger's fifth career win at Lime Rock. Leitzinger noted that "this means a lot for our team and the guys who put so much pride into their racing. Their friends and family come here and it is fitting that they can share his home win with them."

Chris Dyson and Guy Smith were not able to share the podium with their winning team members. The #16 car was retired an hour into the two hour and forty-five minute race with electrical problems. "Every year we come here and the enthusiasm of the fans is incredible," commented Chris Dyson. "I am happy for Butch and Marino and everybody at Dyson Racing. We are delighted to give BP and Mazda an ALMS LMP2 win, and we really appreciate their passion and commitment to this program."

"Also, to put Lola back in victory lane along with Advanced Engine Research is a real thrill for us as we've all done this before in the ALMS. Winning never gets old."

John Doonan, Manager of Motorsport Team Development for Mazda, commented that "when you combine the Dyson tradition and commitment with the passion for motorsports at Mazda, BP and Castrol, it is a strong combination. When you see the number of media and fans who came out for this race, it is a great statement about what the American Le Mans Series stands for. It was a good day all the way around."



Porsche Motorsports Race Report

Source: Andy Schupack, Porsche Motorsports North America

LONG/BERGMEISTER PICK THEIR SPOTS TO SEIZE ALMS GT2 CROWN AT LIME ROCK

St. Petersburg, Long Beach, Salt Lake City, and now Lime Rock, Connecticut. Those are the four GT2 victories in a row reeled off by the #45 Flying Lizard Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 RSR so far in the 2009 American Le Mans Series.

But while the driving team of Patrick Long (USA) and Joerg Bergmeister (Germany) have made it look easy on the final results sheet, it has been anything but a walk in the park on the race track. If you just look at the final results from the last four races, it looks like we are running away with the GT2 championship, but the reality is that each race has been a struggle, and today was no exception. We ran as fast as we could during qualifying, yet the Ferrari grabbed the pole, and the BMWs were strong. We made a differential adjustment after qualifying, and it didn't feel better during the final warm-up, but it was the right move as our Flying Lizard Porsche was perfect. The pass I made on Kaffer (62 Ferrari) was the result of hard, clean racing by both of us. I knew my car was faster, but, at this track, you have to pick your spots. said Long, who, along with Bergmeister, leads the GT2 championship points with 100, while the Kaffer/Melo Ferrari combo has 75 points.

"Through great pit work and strategy. plus Patrick's strong stint, we gained a good lead over the Ferrari, and it was my job to manage the lead, save gas, and bring the car home in first place. Every lap here is a little different with traffic, and there is no chance to relax. I credit my success here at Lime Rock. four wins in four years. to being with the right co-drivers and right teams. said Bergmeister, who won the GT2 championship with Patrick in 2005 in a Porsche.

Long passed the Ferrari about 25 minutes into the two-hour, 45-minute event, and the Porsche maintained the lead for the rest of the event. The Ferrari lost a lap when it was caught speeding in the pit lane (a stop-and-go penalty, and the leading BMW competitor early in the race, the Milner/Mueller E92 M3, broke a half-shaft. The other BMW, the Hand/Auberlen car, finished third.

Fourth was the #87 Bryce Miller (USA)/Wolf Henzler (Germany) Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, which had to overcome a loose driver seat at the start of the race which put the car back into seventh place at the end of the first lap.

“I don't think I locked down my seat properly on the pre-grid and it moved back on its track enough to make things challenging. It is hard to be pleased with my race performance because I was struggling to reach the steering wheel. Wolf is a champion and [he] did a superb job restoring our car to a respectable position after my seating dilemma. I just can't help to wonder what the result would otherwise have been. It really is a shame and I feel bad about it.” said Miller, who helped Farnbacher Loles win the Rolex Grand-Am GT championship in 2007.

Henzler was also disappointed with the finish, even though a fourth-place finish among this competitive field is respectable.

“We finished fourth which was the best we could do today. Our car was really good, was very fast. Unfortunately, Bryce had a problem with the seat and couldn't do the lap times he was capable of running. And then there was a spin and we had to pit under green, which lost us more time. It was a tough day. said Henzler, who left the track right after the race to fly to Barber Motorsports Park in Alabama to drive a Farnbacher Loles Porsche tomorrow in the Grand-Am race.

Other Porsche GT2 finishers included the VICI Racing team of Johannes Stuck/Richard Westbrook (fifth) and the Flying Lizard entry of Seth Neiman/Johannes van Overbeek (seventh). In the ALMS Challenge class for Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars, Bob Faieta and Wesley Hoagland took their Gruppe Orange entry to victory to score their first-ever ALMS win. Faieta and Hoagland took the victory after the Martin Snow/Melanie Snow Porsche broke a drive shaft late in the race, finishing fourth in the final standings. The Ed Brown/Bill Sweedler Porsche was third, followed Nick Parker/Don Pickering GT3 Cup. The early race leader, Guy Cosmo/John Baker crashed in the first half of the race and could not continue.

“Although we were on the pole, the Snows lead most of the race, and we were the pursuers. Late in the event, I lost my radio, but knew that I had to catch the #57 car. I just drove as hard as I could, and didn't know until the end that they had broken. Even though we were the slowest class, everyone out there was so professional that traffic was not a problem. This was great. said Faieta, who is the two-time defending Patron GT3 Challenge champion in his Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car.

The next event for the American Le Mans Series will be at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on Saturday, August 8, 2009.



Photo by Andrew S. Hartwell / www.asahutomobilia.com

Acura Race Report

Source: Tom Blattler, ACURA ALMS MEDIA RELATIONS

Acura drivers Gil de Ferran and Simon Pagenaud made it three-in-a-row Saturday at Lime Rock Park in a dramatic duel with their Acura rivals, Patrón Highcroft Racing, during the Northeast Grand Prix, the fifth American Le Mans Series race of the year.

De Ferran and Pagenaud, starting on the pole for the fourth time this year, drove their No. 66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a prototype sports car to victory on the famed, tight 1.53-mile circuit in northwest Connecticut after a fierce battle. Racing nose-to-tail throughout the two-hour, 45-minute feature event, the de Ferran and the Patrón Highcroft machines kept the large crowd on its feet in some of the most exciting wheel-to-wheel action this season.

At the checkered flag, Pagenaud held a 43-second margin over David Brabham, but the story of the race was told 30 minutes earlier. Pagenaud held an eight-second lead when Brabham made his final pit stop. The Patrón Highcroft team made a quick stop for a two-tire change and Brabham exited the pits with the lead. The reigning 24 Hours of Le Mans champion then built a five-second advantage and looked to be in position to win his second straight Lime Rock ALMS event.

However, a left-rear tire puncture forced Brabham, who earned Acura's first ALMS overall win last year here, back to the pits for a new tire, and cost the popular Aussie his second win of the season.

Early in the contest, de Ferran held a 10-second lead over Scott Sharp in the Patrón Acura ARX-02a. But Sharp, the Connecticut native, fought back to close the gap to under a second when the drivers handed their mounts over to their co-drivers. Pagenaud and Brabham continued the battle to the finish before late misfortune befell the Patrón Highcroft driver.

In the LMP2 class, the Lowe's Fernandez Acura team was seeking its fifth consecutive division win in 2009 with drivers Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz at the controls. Diaz led early Saturday, but a

shifting problem kept the team from a fifth straight victory. Diaz had to pit for early repairs and Fernandez took over to finish second in the LMP2 class.

The next ALMS race is set for August 8 at Mid Ohio Sports Car Course.

ACURA QUOTES:

GIL de FERRAN (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a): "This win is very good for our team. Coming back from a two-month layoff, we wanted to have a solid race. I give the Patrón Highcroft team a lot of credit for their effort today. They made a tremendous call on the last stop but they had some tough luck. Our XM Acura was strong throughout my stint. I made a mistake and hit the pit speed limiter and got hit by one of the Mazdas. It hurt the car's handling a little, but we had a good pit stop to hold the lead in the middle of the race. I haven't had three wins in a row since 1992 in Formula Three, so this is a great feeling right now. And we are going to Mid-Ohio, which I really like as a racing circuit. We will be ready again."

SIMON PAGENAUD (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a): "It is very exciting to win our third in a row. But it definitely wasn't easy today. The Patrón Highcroft team was right with us. On my final pit stop, we took on four tires because the track surface had a lot of dirt and loose bits on it. It was easy to slide around. But I don't know if I could have caught David [Brabham] in the end before he had his problem. I was afraid of the same thing happening to me with the stuff on the track. Overall, the XM Acura was very fast and it is great to keep our winning streak going. "



Photo by Andrew S. Hartwell / www.asahutomobilia.com

DAVID BRABHAM (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a): "We had talked about making a late stop just for two tires and it was going to work to perfection. Unfortunately, I felt a vibration in the rear and then the whole car just dropped down to the ground in the last turn. I was going flat-out. That could have been scary. But I pitted quickly for a new tire. I think we had a good pace today to race against Gil's team. We just didn't get the luck we needed. I feel good about our team for Mid-Ohio. ."

SCOTT SHARP (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a): “Traffic played such a key role in the race today. Early on in my stint, I was getting really held up by the slower cars. Gil was able to pull away from me. But as the race went on, our Acura was getting better and I was able to close in on Gil. I think I might have been faster late in the run, but the team wanted me to play it safely. So, I waited and pitted pretty close to the de Ferran car. It was tough luck today, because the Patrón Highcroft team made a superb call with strategy. We just didn't get a break when we needed it.”



ADRIAN FERNANDEZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b): “This was our first mechanical problem of the year. We have been very strong all year. Even with the problem, we finished strong and never gave up and I think that speaks well about the team. When you are a few laps down, you try not to take chances and just stay away from trouble. My congratulations to the Dyson team. It is nice for them to win at their home track. We picked some points today towards the championship. We didn't win but we still proved that we are a strong team and that we never give up.”

LUIS DIAZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b): “It was a tough race for us. We didn't have as consistent of a car in the race as we would have liked, but at least we finished. I was struggling with traffic more than the Dyson guys so we need to keep working. At least we were being smart and trying to get some points and that's a good thing. I was struggling quite a bit at the start. We were hoping that we would have a better car with older tires but that didn't happen. On the gearbox issue, it got stuck in sixth gear. We did all the procedures that we could to try to fix that on the race track but, unfortunately, it was not an electrical issue. It was a mechanical issue.”

Fernandez Race Report

Source: Fernandez Racing

Perseverance Pays Off for Lowe's Fernandez Racing at Lime Rock

Lowe's Fernandez Racing rebounded from multiple issues in the American Le Mans Northeast Grand Prix this afternoon to claim a second-place class finish and seventh-place overall result. This is the third consecutive year that misfortune has plagued the team on the challenging Lime Rock circuit, and the final outcome ended a four-race win streak for Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz.

Diaz made a great start from third place on the grid but his stint was hindered early on by handling issues on the #15 Lowe's Acura and he fell to third in class. His problems became further compounded by a gearbox problem which resulted in an early pit stop on Lap 41, 36 minutes into the race, where the team was able to make repairs and return to the track with Fernandez now on board.

It was not a trouble-free run for Fernandez who closed the race. Returning 11 laps down, Fernandez also battled handling issues and had to make an unscheduled pit stop for a tire puncture on the left front and a precautionary front body work change with 80 minutes remaining in the race. He brought the Lowe's machine home six laps down to the #20 Dyson Mazda of Butch Leitzinger and Marino Franchitti who took the class win.

Lowe's Fernandez Racing will return to competition on August 8 with the Acura Sports Car Challenge of Mid-Ohio.

Adrian Fernandez, #15 Lowe's Acura ARX-01b: "This was our first mechanical problem of the year. I can't blame anybody. We have been very strong all year. Even with the problem we had we finished strong and never gave up and I think that speaks well about the team. When you are a few laps down, you try not to take chances and just stay away from trouble. I was following one of the GT cars quite closely and, unfortunately, he moved one of the tires into the chicane. I hit it with my left side and punctured the tire and had to come into the pits early. But for us, really, unless the Dyson guys had a problem, we couldn't get first place. The car had been very good all weekend but when you are not racing with the leaders, you just try to stay out of trouble and that is what we did. It is not the same. We weren't going to gain six laps. That was it.

"My congratulations to the Dyson team. It is nice for them to win at their home track. We picked up some points today towards the championship which is important. We didn't win but we still proved that we are a strong team and that we never give up. I would like to thank my guys, Lowe's and Acura for another great race. I am sure there will be more wins in our future."

Luis Diaz, #15 Lowe's Acura ARX-01b: "It was a tough race for us. We didn't have as consistent of a car in the race as we would have liked, but at least we finished. I was struggling with traffic more than the Dyson guys so we need to keep working. At least we were being smart and trying to get some points and that's a good thing. We were hoping that we would have a better car with older tires but that didn't happen. On the gearbox issue, it got stuck in sixth gear. We did all the procedures that we could to try to fix that on the race track but, unfortunately, it was not an electrical issue. It was a mechanical issue. I had to come in and we lost a lot of time there and we couldn't recover from that."



Bryce Miller's Race Report

Source: Sylvia Proudfoot

Bryce Miller discovered the downside of adjustable car seats when his seat didn't lock into position at the start of the American Le Mans Series race at Lime Rock Park in Lakeville, Conn.

The Summit, N.J., driver started third on the GT2 class grid in the No. 87 Marquis Jet / IPC Systems Porsche 911 GT3 RSR prepared by Farnbacher Loles Racing. He lost track position at the start of the race, but recovered to fourth during his 45-minute stint, then spun as the seat slid back and he strained to reach the steering wheel. He pitted for a driver change and Porsche factory driver Wolf Henzler of Nürtingen, Germany, took the wheel for the final two hours of the race. He returned to the track eighth in class and moved up to finish fourth.

"I don't think I locked down my seat properly on the pre-grid and it moved back on its track enough to make things challenging. It is hard to be pleased with my race performance because I was struggling to reach the steering wheel. Wolf is a champion and [he] did a superb job restoring our car to a respectable position after my seating dilemma. I just can't help to wonder what the result would otherwise have been. It really is a shame and I feel bad about it," Miller said.

"I was happy to be back with Farnbacher Loles and the RSR is a pleasure. The team does its job well and certainly did the job today. I know they deserve a better result for this race, but I'm sure they will get redemption soon. Hopefully, I will still be in good graces enough to be a part of that process."

Farnbacher-Loles Race Report

Source: Roger Garbow, Farnbacher Loles Racing

Henzler and Miller finish fourth for Farnbacher Loles Racing at Lime Rock Park

The Farnbacher Loles Racing team brought a fast car and a new driving duo to Lime Rock Park in Northwestern Connecticut for the annual Northeast Grand Prix weekend. The fifth round of the American Le Mans Series produced dramatic racing, huge crowds and beautiful weather. Only one hour north of the Farnbacher Loles corporate offices made this a home race for many on the team.

New Jersey native Bryce Miller filled in for Dirk Werner in the #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing/Marquis Jet/IPC Systems Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, co-driving with Porsche Factory Driver Wolf Henzler of Nürtingen, Germany. The German set the fastest times in the GT2 Class in the first two practices on the 1.5 mile Lime Rock road course but in qualifying, Henzler was narrowly edged out of a front row starting spot.

Bryce Miller did the opening stint from the third spot on the grid and at the green flag, the car got loose off the downhill to the front straight. Bryce gathered it up but the loss of momentum allowed the two BMWs to get past going into turn one. He fought hard through his stint and was on pace until a late spin knocked him back another spot.

At the 45-minute mark, Miller pitted for tires and fuel and Henzler took over. Henzler fought hard and was able to gain positions on track, but was not able to improve upon fourth due to the gap to the leaders. He turned a 0:55.369 during the stint, which was the second fastest lap of the race. At the finish, the team had to settle for fourth while the drivers thought about the podium that got away.

Bryce Miller knew they were capable of better. "I don't think I locked down my seat properly on the pre-grid and it moved back on its track enough to make things challenging. It is hard to be pleased with my race performance because I was struggling to reach the steering wheel. Wolf is a champion and he did a superb job restoring our car to a respectable position after my seating dilemma. I just can't help to wonder what the result would otherwise have been. It really is a shame and I feel bad about it."

"I was happy to be back with Farnbacher Loles and the RSR is a pleasure to drive. The team does its job well and certainly did the job today."

Wolf Henzler was also disappointed with the finish. "We finished fourth which was the best we could do today. Our car was really good, was very fast. Unfortunately, Bryce had a problem with the seat and couldn't do the lap times he was capable of running. And then there was a spin and we had to pit under green, which lost us more time. It was a tough day."

Guy Smith's Race Report

Source: Guy Smith

Roger Guy Smith endured a miserable return to American Le Mans Series action after a break of over two months when the Yorkshireman posted a non-finish at Lime Rock on Saturday (18 July).

As a result, the 34-year-old from Beverley slips one place to third in the championship standings after missing out on a fourth class podium from five ALMS races staged to date this season.

American co-driver Chris Dyson qualified their BP Lola-Mazda fifth fastest overall, third in LM P2, around the undulating and twisty 10-corner, 1.53-mile Lime Rock circuit near Lakeville in Northwest Connecticut -- the Dyson team's "home" track.

Lying fourth overall and an excellent second in class, Dyson pitted 55-minutes into the 165-minute race with an electrical problem that could not ultimately be rectified for Smith to resume the race.

"It was a great shame," reflected Smith. "We were on course for at least a second in class behind our BP Dyson Racing team-mates if not a victory despite an earlier brush with the overall leader when he suddenly slowed directly in front of Chris [Dyson] only for an electronics gremlin to hit us. The guys spent over 30minutes trying to rectify the problem but to no avail.

"But our team-mates went on to score a fabulous BP Dyson Lola-Mazda maiden LM P2 victory so we know the car is a winner and hopefully it will be the turn of Chris and I to bring it home first in the not too distant future."

Smith has been racing regularly in the ALMS since 2006 and only on one occasion has he posted a result at Lime Rock, a fourth in class two years ago.

Guy must turn his attention to a crucial run of four ALMS races in five weeks beginning at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on 9 August to get his LM P2 title aspirations back on track.



Patron Highcroft Racing Race Report

Source: Patron Highcroft Racing

HEARTBREAK FOR THE PATRON HIGHCROFT HOME TEAM AT LIME ROCK PARK

Patron Highcroft Racing came within 12 minutes of victory after a titanic battle in the latest round of the American Le Mans Series at Lime Rock Park today.

With David Brabham at the wheel, the #9 Acura ARX-02a held a lead of more than eight seconds when a late race pit stop to replace a punctured left hand rear tire ruined the team's hopes of back to back Lime Rock victories.

Brabham grabbed the lead after the team executed a clever second pit stop - electing to change left side Michelin tires only. With the majority of the Lime Rock track featuring right hand turns, the left hand tires receive the toughest punishment.

The shorter pit stop enabled the Danbury-CT based squad to leap frog de Ferran Motorsports' Simon Pagenaud and open up a handy lead with fresh left side tires.

Things were looking strong for the team's second victory of the season before the puncture forced the additional stop.

Scott Sharp started the race for Patron Highcroft Racing and made an initial strong start to beat Gil de Ferran off the final turn, only for race officials to call a non start.

With traffic playing a huge role in the event, the gap between de Ferran and Sharp swung between 10-15 seconds and 100ths of a second.

Both Sharp and de Ferran pitted under the first yellow flag after 71 laps to hand over to their respective co-drivers. Sharp had closed the gap at that stage to be right on the tail of de Ferran.

Despite one attempted pass in turn one through traffic, Brabham was unable to steal the lead until pitting three laps later than Pagenaud and executing the left side tires only strategy.

After five rounds of the 2009 American Le Mans Series, Patron Highcroft Racing leads the LMP1 championship by 13 points.

It was a day of double runner up positions for the Tequila Patron brand at Lime Rock today. Porsche drivers Ed Brown and Bill Sweedler also finished second in the ALMS Challenge class today aboard their Patron Porsche.

The Patron Highcroft Racing squad will now set its sights on the next round of the series at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on August 8.

SCOTT SHARP

"Everyone did what they needed to do today - Brabs did a great job, the team made an incredible strategy call to leap frog us into the lead and from there we had it in hand. "No one expected that with 12 minutes to go we would get a puncture in the left rear and there was no way to fight back from that. "The traffic out there was just crazy. It really is amazing there weren't more yellows. There were clusters of cars everywhere, people going off, dragging mud back onto the track. "There was a lot of bumping and shoving but the bigger shunts I expected didn't happen. "We tightened things up to the de Ferran car this weekend after a bit of a struggle at Salt Lake City. "You hate to give the points away here and the same and Long Beach. That is two races that we should have won. But it is what it is and we now have to set our sights on Mid-Ohio."

DAVID BRABHAM

"Today was a bit of a roller coaster of a day but I am not too disappointed because we did everything we needed to do in this race. "We got ourselves in front and I had the race under control but unfortunately I got a puncture and when the competition is that close you can't afford to have anything like that happen. "Well done to de Ferran Motorsports. They were in position to take advantage of what happened. "The team did a brilliant job and made a great tire choice to get into the lead. We still got second, we still got points and we're still in the lead of the championship so we have to look at all the positives and look at how we can improve going forward. "Salt Lake City we were a little too far off on the set-up of the car. When we arrived here we were pretty close. We had to fine tune things a little - it wasn't 100 percent right for qualifying - but the car was pretty good in the race."



Corsa Motorsports Race Report

Source: Corsa Motorsports

HISTORIC FINISH FOR CORSA MOTORSPORTS LE MANS P1 ENTRY

In a turn of fortune from the trials and tribulations that plagued the debut of the Corsa Motorsports LMP1 hybrid electric racecar, the world's first alternative-fueled such propulsion system, the team ended up with a historic podium finish in the first ever outing for the GZ-09-SH car.

As was typical for the team all weekend, the day started with the car late getting out of the pits for the mandatory warm-up lap exiting the pits a mere three seconds before the pits were closed which would have resulted in the team forfeiting its sixth place starting position and having to start from pit lane. Cool heads prevailed and Johnny Mowlem took up his starting position on the grid.

The green flag dropped at 2:05pm on the debut of the world's first alternative-fueled hybrid/electric propulsion system with Johnny maintaining a firm third position in class and a sixth position overall through his first stint. Just prior to the car's first pit stop on lap 61, the front damper cover came loose on the car and sailed away leaving the aerodynamics less than acceptable but the team decided to forego the installation of a replacement part on the first pit stop to maintain track position on the short 1.53 mile, 10- turn Lime Rock Park track.

On the first pit stop for the crew for the hybrid car, Stefan Johnassen took over driving having had less than ten laps in the car during the team's abbreviated test sessions prior to the race. With the length of the track so short, it took three laps for Stefan to get the Dunlop tires up to temperature and pressure before being able to press the car for more performance. Ahead of Stefan, in addition to the factory two factory LPM1 Acuras, were the factory LMP2 Acura of Fernandez Racing and the two Mazda-backed factory Dyson Lolas. Methodically, Stefan began to reel in the factory teams in front of it, first passing the Fernandez Racing Acura for fifth place overall and then the two Mazda factory cars for fourth and third place overall only trailing the factory LMP1 Acuras. An extended yellow came out as Stefan overtook the position for third overall enabling the team to extend its fuel widow and avoid what was working out to be a need for a splash-and-go pit stop with four laps remaining. Pitting on lap 124, the team was as methodical as Stefan had been in moving the car up the time sheets by fueling and changing tires and getting the car out of the pits and losing only one position to the Intersport Lola. Stefan dodged for position over the next thirty minutes with Jon

Field before taking back the third overall position and in doing so consistently lapping at four seconds per lap over the Lola and firmly securing not only third place in class and a podium finish but third place overall in the race won by Gil deFerran and Simon Pageneaud ahead of the 24 Hours of Le Mans winning driver David Brabham and his teammate Scott Sharp in the Patron Highcroft Acura.

The weekend was the culmination of months of hard work and effort on the part of the Corsa/Ginetta/Zytek partnership to produce the groundbreaking technology that powered the car. The "ultra hybrid", still in its infancy, struggled through the race to produce sufficient power from its battery to offset the 85 kilograms of additional weight the system adds diminishing the car's overall performance only highlighting the need for the team to find and develop improved battery technologies that can deliver the necessary power.

"It was a giant first step" said Corsa Team principal Steve Pruitt "and to be on the podium in our maiden race was even more reassuring that we are headed down the right path that represents the future of the electrification of advanced vehicle technologies. Now that we have given birth to the system competitively, we must now focus on how we track down the big budget factory teams in front of us using the technology that will enable us to do so".

The next race for the team is the Acura Sports Car Challenge at the Mid-Ohio racetrack in Lexington, Ohio. In the intervening time, the hybrid components will be shipped back to the UK for inspection before being returned to the Corsa race shop for final prep.



Risi Competizione Race Report

Source: Risi Competizione

RISI TAKE THIRD CONSECUTIVE ALMS PODIUM FINISH AT LIME ROCK

Risi Competizione finished second in the ultra-competitive GT class at Lime Rock Park today in the fifth round of the American Le Mans Series, earning valuable championship points to maintain a firm hold on second place in the standings. The podium result was tinged with disappointment, however, as a stop/go penalty incurred for a pit lane speed violation -- the result of a malfunctioning pit lane speed limiter -- effectively prevented a charge for victory in the final twenty minutes of the race.

Starting from pole position, Pierre Kaffer held off the hard-charging and fast-paced #45 Porsche of eventual race-winners, Flying Lizard Motorsports, until the 22nd minute of the race when Pat Long barged past, causing slight damage to the exhausts of the Ferrari F430 GT in the process.

Taking advantage of the 2 hour 45 minute race's only Full Course Caution period, Kaffer made Risi's first stop after 72 minutes, handing over the Melo while taking on more fuel and new Michelin tires. There was further disappointment for Risi as they and the rest of the GT2 field lost a lap to the leader under the safety car.

Rejoining in third place in class, Melo did what he does best and went racing...closing down the second placed #90 BMW, passing him some 23 laps later. Despite coming under renewed pressure from the German car, Melo kept the Rosso red Ferrari ahead and set about closing the gap to the class leader. With a splash and go needed by the top two cars in the GT class, there was all to play for in the final thirty minutes until the malfunctioning pit lane speed limiter put paid to Risi's hopes of victory.

Pierre Kaffer said afterwards, "I suppose you shouldn't be disappointed with second, but we all want to win here and we knew we had a good car. It was a really tight race and it was just unfortunate that Patrick [Long] hit me in T1 and put me off line; it was just our bad luck and I don't think he did it on purpose. It was also our bad luck, or their good luck, that they got the wave by and gained a lap on us under the Safety Car. We were 20 seconds behind them then, and lost a position as well to BMW in the pits. It was good motorsport today but if the result had been the other way round we would be happier."

Jaime Melo reflected philosophically on the result: "I'm quite disappointed really but, you know, we tried hard all the way through and just tried to close the gap. It was going okay but then we had the penalty on the final stop and that was that.

"It was a good battle with Joey Hand and although it was close there was no contact. He spun on T1 because there was a Viper on the outside of him and I tried to brake inside but I wasn't side-by-side on turn in. Joey braked later than me and spun.

"I did have a lot of problems overtaking the GT3 cars during the race; they are difficult for us in these events because every single one was closing the door on us."



Photo courtesy ALMS

BMW RAHAL LETTERMAN RACING Report

Source: Bill Cobb, BMW of North America Motorsport Press Officer

BMW RAHAL LETTERMAN RACING TEAM MAINTAINS BMW M3 PODIUM STREAK

Bill Auberlen and Joey Hand raced their No. 90 BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team M3 to a third place GT2 class finish in today's American Le Mans Northeast Grand Prix at Lime Rock Park. The duo completed 166 laps around the Lime Rock circuit to record their first podium and best result of the season. The team has now scored three podiums in the first five races of their inaugural season to keep BMW of North America's perfect record of always finishing on the podium in a race at Lime Rock Park. The No. 92 M3 of Tommy Milner and Dirk Muller finished 10th in class after running as high as third.

Lime Rock fans got exactly what they came for. As the green flag waved, Bill Auberlen moved the No. 90 M3 immediately to third from his fourth place starting spot. Tommy Milner, in the No. 92 M3, moved from fifth to fourth, and then later was able to glue BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team himself to the rear of the second place competitor for the duration of his stint.

The race's only caution flag flew on lap 61 just before the one hour mark and both M3s pitted six laps later. The crew of the No. 90 M3 executed a brilliant stop to send Joey Hand back into the race in second. Dirk Muller hopped into the No. 92 M3 and rejoined the race in fourth place. Hand and Muller raced hard, but a spin by Hand dropped the No. 90 to fourth, promoting Muller to third.

On lap 109 Muller was sidelined for repairs and Hand regained third. Hand needed fuel in the closing stages of the race, and another quick stop by the team kept him in front of the fourth place competitor by some 14 seconds at the checkered flag.

Bobby Rahal, Team Principal: "Today was an eventful day. The No. 92 car was having quite a race. They got hurt on the first yellow because we had gotten lapped by the overall leader and the GT2 class leader had not, losing us an entire lap. Joey and Bill did a great job."

Martin Birkmann, BMW of North America Motorsport Manager: "There is still a gap to the GT2 front runners, but it's getting smaller and smaller. We will continue to whittle it away. We promised

to give our fans a good show and I think for the majority of the race we did exactly that. The team worked very hard to give us our 10th podium in as many times BMW of North America has raced at Lime Rock. I think everyone can feel extremely proud of our result today."

Bill Auberlen, driver No. 90 BMW M3: "It was a dogfight today, but Scott (Roembke) called a perfect race. His strategy was flawless. I came into the pits in fourth and Joey went out in second. He dropped back a little and made it up with a great race and here we are on the podium. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard today. Hopefully you'll see us up on the podium a lot more soon."

Joey Hand, driver No. 90 BMW M3: "As I had hoped, today we were as strong as we have ever been. We fought some adversity but kept the M3 in good position. The crew helped us get two positions in one pit stop! BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team Outrageous! At one point, I ended up somewhere way out in the grass where I shouldn't have been, but somehow got the car back on track. I didn't want to let this team down. Today was a great day for us."



Photo courtesy ALMS

ALMS Race Report

Source: www.americanlemans.com

After a rookie season of near-misses, it's starting to look like de Ferran Motorsports can do no wrong. Simon Pagenaud and Gil de Ferran won again in the American Le Mans Series, their third straight on the year, in the American Le Mans Northeast Grand Prix at Lime Rock Park on Saturday.

Pagenaud crossed the finish line in his Acura ARX-02a 43.776 seconds ahead of David Brabham, who appeared to be on his way to a second straight Lime Rock victory with Patrón Highcroft Racing teammate Scott Sharp. A punctured tire with 13 minutes left ended those hopes.

Pagenaud and de Ferran battled hard against "home" team Patrón Highcroft Racing.

De Ferran and Pagenaud haven't lost since the St. Petersburg street race in early April.

"We started in the middle of last year; not only do we have a steep learning curve in sports cars, but we started a team from scratch," said team owner de Ferran. "We are just over a year old, and we really used these last two months to our advantage. I am quite happy about the evolution of the team. We had a little good fortune today. But it was good. We had a good race."

It was a fantastic battle between the two Acuras. More often than not, things were nip-and-tuck between the two around the tight and twisty track and through the traffic. Patrón Highcroft seemed to be in ideal position to repeat last year's maiden overall victory by taking fuel and left-side tires only during its last scheduled stop. The move allowed Brabham to get out of the pits before Pagenaud, who pitted two laps earlier, came around.

Twenty minutes later, Brabham pitted to replace rear tires and Pagenaud blew by.

"I honestly didn't have the pace to come back on him," Pagenaud said. "I am going to remember this race forever. I think my heart rate was at maximum all race because of the traffic and the ending."

Dyson Racing's Butch Leitzinger and Marino Franchitti gave the team its first Series win since 2005.

Dyson Racing won for the first time in the Series since 2005 as Butch Leitzinger and Marino Franchitti broke a four-race victory streak for Lowe's Fernandez Racing and Acura in the class. Franchitti moved ahead of Luis Diaz five minutes into the race, and the Lola-Mazda coupe gained valuable laps when the Acura pitted to replace its rear shock and also experienced downshift problems.

By the time Adrian Fernandez rejoined the race, Franchitti led by six laps.

"I don't think we could have picked a better place (for the first win in the Lola-Mazda)," said Franchitti, who won for the first time in the Series. "It was a combination of a lot of hard work for both cars I have been so close, either overall or in class, it is really a sweet victory. I'm getting a sore face from grinning."

There wasn't much grinning with about five minutes to go. Leitzinger gave the team a late scare with a brief stall when he had to avoid a spinning GT2 car. The Lola-Mazda's clutch also malfunctioned early in the race, and Leitzinger had to restart the car following pit stops and after the stall on battery power.

"What a fantastic starter motor," quipped Leitzinger, who was part of the team's victory at Mosport four years ago, also in a Lola chassis. "It felt a little destined to win today. When the car spun out in front of me and then we didn't have a clutch, trying to go uphill, I thought it was over. But this is how it was going to go and it really was a great day. Marino did a stellar job. It is the first of many for him. I am very proud to drive with him. We are happy to be a part of his first win."

It was Mazda's first class victory in the Series since Mid-Ohio in 2005 when Guy Cosmo and Jamie Bach won in a Mazda rotary-powered Courage in P2.

Fernandez and Diaz placed second in class Saturday. Gunnar van der Steur and Adam Pecorari placed third in van der Steur Racing's Radical SR9-AER, the first race for the team since St. Petersburg last year.

Jörg Bergmeister won in GT2 for the fourth straight year as he and Patrick Long extended their class victory streak to four races. The Flying Lizard Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, a new tub since its last race at Utah, won by a lap over Risi Competizione's Jaime Melo and Pierre Kaffer – the reigning Le Mans class winners - in their Ferrari F430 GT.

"I think I'm with the right teams and the right teammates," Bergmeister said of his Lime Rock dominance. "The new car was really performing well. I got in the car with an 18-second lead and

tried to maintain that gap. Jaime was pushing really hard before they received a penalty (for speeding in pit lane). Then the guys told me I could take it a little easier.

Porsches reigned in GT classes with Flying Lizard (right) winning in GT2 and Gruppe Orange winning in the Challenge class.

I wouldn't say it's a typical Porsche track. You saw how well the Ferrari was in qualifying and I think it's fairly even here. There are other tracks that are much better for the Porsche. Just before warm-up we made a change with the differential and I think that's why we had such a good car."

Long made what turned out to be the winning pass barely a half-hour in. The two cars ran nose-to-tail from the start and also mixed it up with BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team's two BMW M3s as well. America's lone Porsche factory driver had been pushing Kaffer's Ferrari for a number of laps and was never more than a half-second behind.

The Lizard car also gained nearly a full lap on the wave-by during the race's lone caution period.

"If you read the finishing order over the last few races, it may look like we're walking away with the show. But there are so many cars that are giving us really tough challenges," Long said. "I knew I had a race car that could not only lead the race but pull away as well. The first time we got among the Challenge cars and then through some prototypes, I knew it was going to be fantastic."

BMW Rahal Letterman Racing's Bill Auberlen and Joey Hand placed third in class with their BMW M3, the pairing's first podium of the year.

Bob Faieta and Wesley Hoaglund won the Challenge class in their Gruppe Orange Porsche 911 GT3 Cup entry. They appeared headed for a runner-up finish before the leading Snow Racing Porsche suffered a failed starter on its last stop.

"I lost radio contact and didn't know what was going on. So I just drove as hard as I could," said Faieta, the class pole-winner Friday. "I kept seeing them in the pitlane.

"The track is tight and technical but you couldn't ask for a better race track," he added. The weather was awesome, the track was great. Gruppe Orange put together a great team. Traffic really wasn't an issue. These guys are so professional that they never put me in a bad spot."

The only adjustment the team made to the car was a minor swaybar adjustment Friday. Aside from that, a one-minute penalty for Hoaglund working on the car (he didn't know that was illegal) was the only problem the Gruppe Orange car experienced.

"One of the airjacks didn't work so I tried to pick the car up, not knowing that I couldn't work on it," Hoaglund said. "So a 60-second penalty later, I thought I had given away our first win. But our spotters did a great job; they're an experienced group and really served us well."

ORBIT Racing's Ed Brown and Bill Sweedler were second in class, with a second Gruppe Orange entry of Nick Parker and Donald Pickering in third.

In the MICHELIN® Green X® Challenge, the de Ferran Acura was the winner among the prototype entries for the third consecutive race. The Flying Lizard Porsche won the trophy for GT cars for the second time this season. The revolutionary competition awards teams and manufacturers who have the greatest overall performance with the smallest environmental impact.

The next round of the American Le Mans Series is the Acura Sports Car Challenge at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio. The race is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. EDT on Saturday, August 8. The race will air at 2:30 p.m. ET on Sunday, August 9 on ABC. American Le Mans Radio presented by Porsche and Live Timing & Scoring will be available at Racehub on americanlemans.com. You also can follow the Series on Twitter (almsnotes).



World Class

Lime Rock Park / 1.5 miles
July 17-18, 2009 / Lakeville, Connecticut



ALMS Final Race Report

Pos	Class Pos	Car No	Class	Drivers	No Laps	Diff	Total Time	Best Time	In Lap	Make	Status
1	1	66	P1	(de Ferran)/Pagenaud*	184	----	2:45:14.053	47.791 ‡	141	Acura ARX 02a	Running
2	2	9	P1	Brabham*/(Sharp)	184	43.776	2:45:57.829	48.361	142	Acura ARX 02a	Running
3	3	48	P1	(Mowlem*/)(Johansson	177	7 Laps	2:45:48.474	50.133	122	Ginetta-Zytek 09HS	Running
4	1	20	P2	Leitzinger*/(Franchitti*)	172	12 Laps	2:46:04.942	49.727	25	Lola B09 #6 Mazda	Running
5	1	45	GT2	Bergmeister*/(Long*)	167	17 Laps	2:46:08.141	55.231	156	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
6	4	12	P1	Burgess*/(Mc Murry*)	166	18 Laps	2:45:22.900	52.230	158	Lola B06/10	Running
7	2	15	P2	Fernandez*/(Diaz)	166	18 Laps	2:45:34.399	49.746	117	Acura ARX-01B	Running
8	2	62	GT2	Melo*/(Kaffer)	166	18 Laps	2:45:38.458	55.683	83	Ferrari 430 Berlinetta	Running
9	3	90	GT2	Hand*/(Auberten)	166	18 Laps	2:45:46.919	55.608	135	BMW E92 M3	Running
10	4	87	GT2	Henzler*/(Miller)	165	19 Laps	2:45:32.158	55.369	131	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
11	5	18	GT2	Westbrook*/(Stuck)	163	21 Laps	2:45:29.845	56.019	98	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
12	6	21	GT2	Fambacher*/(James)	163	21 Laps	2:45:36.996	56.383	119	Panoz Esperante	Running
13	7	44	GT2	van Overbeek*/(Neiman*)	159	25 Laps	2:45:17.827	56.104	119	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
14	8	11	GT2	(Feinberg)/Hall*	158	26 Laps	2:45:48.173	58.097	79	Dodge Viper	Running
15	3	19	P2	van der Steur*/(Pecorari)	157	27 Laps	2:45:59.588	52.747	67	Radical SR9	Running
16	9	40	GT2	(Murry*/)(D.Robertson/A.Roberts	153	31 Laps	2:45:32.167	56.663	39	Doran Ford GT-R	Running
17	1	36	Chal	(Hoaglund)/Faieta*	149	35 Laps	2:45:41.796	1:00.296	141	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
18	2	08	Chal	(Brown)/Sweedler*	146	38 Laps	2:45:31.899	1:00.711	96	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
19	3	02	Chal	Parker*/(Pickering*)	144	40 Laps	2:45:47.076	1:00.923	134	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
20	4	57	Chal	(Snow)/Snow*	142	42 Laps	2:36:49.020	1:00.568	81	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Not Running
21	10	92	GT2	Mueller*/(Milner)	142	42 Laps	2:45:28.890	55.668	113	BMW E92 M3	Running
22	5	37	P1	J.Field*/(C.Field*/)(Ducote	138	46 Laps	2:12:33.669	50.687	47	Lola B06/10	Drivetrain
23	4	16	P2	(Dyson*/)(Smith	63	121 Laps	55:26.495	50.108	56	Lola B09 #6 Mazda	Electrical
24	5	47	Chal	Baker*/(Cosmo)	52	132 Laps	56:30.564	1:00.251	43	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Not Running

*Qualifying Driver (Starting Driver)

Margin of victory: 43.776 / Time of race: 2:45:14.053

‡ New race lap record

Fastest Drivers:

Chal	Guy Cosmo
GT2	Joerg Bergmeister
P1	Simon Pagenaud
P2	Marino Franchitti

Green Challenge:

Prototype	de Ferran Motorsports
GT	Flying Lizard Motorsports

Cautions

Laps	Reason
68 - 75	Debris on course

Lap Leaders

Laps	Car
1-141	66
142-167	9
168-184	66

