



## ***ALMS Series Acura Sports Car Challenge At Mid-Ohio***

Source: Team Race Reports  
Photos courtesy ALMS and the teams



### **Acura Racing Report**

Source: Tom Blatter

Gil de Ferran ended an emotional weekend Saturday at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course by sitting on the side of his Acura prototype in tears.

The popular Brazilian racing star won the pole position Friday in qualifying for the Acura Sports Car Challenge and immediately announced he is retiring from driving at the end of the 2009 American Le Mans Series season to concentrate on the management of his de Ferran Motorsports organization.

On Saturday, de Ferran teamed with young French star Simon Pagnaud in driving the No. 66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a sports car to a fourth consecutive overall victory in the hotly contested, two-hour, 45-minute feature on the tough 2.25-mile road circuit.

The de Ferran team led the fourth Acura 1-2-3 finish of the year.

Adding to the emotional victory was the team's return to the venue that saw crewman Keith Jones critically burned during a pit fire in last year's ALMS race. Jones endured third-degree burns and several skin grafts before returning to the de Ferran team in March. As de Ferran crossed the finish line some 8.3 seconds ahead of David Brabham's Patrón Highcroft Acura, the former Indy 500 winner yelled on the team's radio,

"Jonesie, this win is for you." Few members of the de Ferran team could keep a dry eye when Gil jumped from his car's cockpit and Jones hugged de Ferran in victory lane.

Early in the race, Pagenaud held a six-second margin over Scott Sharp in the Patrón Acura ARX-02a. But he extended his advantage when Sharp's car was hit by a slower GT car. The bodywork of the Patrón machine was damaged, forcing Sharp to slow before Brabham took over the driving chores. The de Ferran team never lost the lead after de Ferran began his driving stint on Lap 52.

De Ferran's team also captured the Michelin Green X Challenge for the best fuel economy for a prototype car in the race.

The Lowe's Fernandez Acura team rounded out the top three overall spots Saturday with a sensational LMP2 victory for drivers Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz. Scoring their fifth 2009 class win, the Lowe's team used tremendous pit stop strategy to take the lead and extend its class point lead.

The American Le Mans Series returns to Road America on Aug. 16 for the next ALMS event.

#### **ACURA QUOTES:**

**GIL de FERRAN (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a):** "The final few laps were very emotional for me, knowing it was my final race at Mid-Ohio as a driver and taking the win. Then after last year's pit fire, and thinking of 'Jonesie' [crewman Keith Jones] it was difficult for me to keep everything together. That's why I had the reaction when I got out of the car. I have loved racing here at Mid-Ohio and I wanted to win badly. My mentor, Sir Jackie Stewart, always said to have mind management in the race car. And I had to do it late in the race today. The whole weekend has been emotional with my retirement speech and then winning the pole and the race here. The whole de Ferran Acura team did a tremendous job, including Simon's great drive early in the race."

**SIMON PAGENAUD (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a):** "Our entire team wanted to win this race. After last year's pit incident, we wanted to bring home a win for Jonesie. The weekend went just as planned and the race was outstanding. The XM Radio Acura felt so good to drive and it feels great to take our fourth win in a row. This is a superb team and we are set for many wins now. "

**DAVID BRABHAM (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a):** "Boy, I was driving as hard I could from the time I jumped in the car. Unfortunately, the Patrón Acura wasn't handling like we wanted after Scott got hit by the Porsche earlier in the race. I knew Gil had a good race car today. We worked hard over the weekend to get our car very competitive. I think we made a lot of progress in the handling of the car. Things just didn't fall our way today. But I know we'll have a strong machine for Road America next weekend."

**SCOTT SHARP (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a):** "We had a very good early in the race. I got caught in a little bit of traffic but we were in position to race for the lead. But I was following one of the Corvettes in a corner and one of the Flying Lizard Porsches didn't see me. It ran right into the left side of our Patrón Highcroft Acura and ripped up the bodywork badly. The car never was the same and it was tough to stay with the de Ferran car after that. We need a win at Road America next week."

**ADRIAN FERNANDEZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b):** "Our Lowe's team did a super job with the pit strategy today. They know when to pit to get our Acura back into the lead. Those Mazdas are very fast on the straights. We were faster in the turns with the Acura, but we needed to have a good plan to beat them today. It is exciting to win our fifth race this year. We are hoping to continue winning at Road America, but it won't be easy. "

**LUIS DIAZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b):** "This was a great win for our team. The crew did a terrific job in making that late call on the final pit stop to get Adrian into the lead. This place is very tough to drive with all of the slower traffic and the difficult turns. But we came through with our fifth win in six races. This is a great performance today."

## **de Ferran Motorsports Report**

Source: de Ferran Motorsports

The de Ferran Motorsports duo of Gil de Ferran and Simon Pagenaud continued their flawless form today taking the team's fourth consecutive overall victory in the American Le Mans Series at the challenging Mid Ohio Sports Car Course.

Driving the No.66 XM Radio de Ferran Motorsports Acura ARX-02a the duo led the two hour 45 minute race from green lights to chequered flag in the Acura Sports Car Challenge finishing just over eight seconds clear of second place car, the similar Acura ARX-02a of Patron Highcroft Racing driven by Scott Sharp and David Brabham. It was a clean sweep for Acura at its 'home event' with third place going to the LMP2 entry of Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz in the Acura ARX-01B.

The weekend was always going to be an emotional event as the team returned to the scene of last year's unfortunate refuelling incident which resulted in team member Keith Jones suffering serious burns. It was also the weekend that de Ferran Motorsports team boss, Gil de Ferran chose to announce his retirement from the cockpit (at the end of the 2009 season) to concentrate on developing his team; the result could not have been better.

"This event has certainly been an emotional roller-coaster, said de Ferran. "For me, and the whole team, Mid Ohio holds special significance after the pit fire that occurred last year injuring Keith "Jonesie" Jones.

"In addition to that, I announced yesterday that I will retire from driving at the conclusion of this season. Throughout the weekend, I was trying very hard to keep my emotions in check. Certainly it got harder and harder as we closed in on the chequered flag and the end of the event. This was an important victory for us in many ways. This is my last appearance as a driver in Mid Ohio. After many years of trying, finally winning one here is great. The fans here have been so fantastic over the years and this weekend. To win at a track that is so close to our shop in Indianapolis, as well as so close to so many of my Honda family means a great deal. Finally, I dedicate this victory to "Jonesie".

Simon Pagenaud, de Ferran's talented young co-driver who started the race and set the fastest lap time in his stint echoed de Ferran's sentiments.

"It's a very emotional day today," said the 25-year old French driver. "A year ago, we had the incident in the pits with Keith Jones, now we're back a year later. His recovery hasn't been easy, but he's back at work full-time. It was really important for us to get the win just for him. Also for the team, it really shows how we have all pulled together. I'm so happy to be a part of this team.

"Mid Ohio is also a home event for Honda and I am pleased we were able to put on a good show for all the people that work at the Honda facilities."

Pagenaud was also delighted with the performance of the No 66XM Radio de Ferran Motorsports Acura ARX-02a.

"I don't know how the run looked from the outside" he enthused, "but it got a bit hectic sometimes. Mostly, the car was awesome. The engineers from de Ferran and Acura improved the car all weekend and the changes really suited me. I had a great race and a fantastic time!"

With the taste of victory still fresh all eyes now turn immediately to next weekend and round seven of the American Le Mans Series - 14 -16 August - at the four mile Road America, Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. With Indianapolis-based de Ferran Motorsports' current run of form, it will surely be a prospect to relish.



## Team CytoSport Muscle Milk Report

Source: Team Cytosport

It may have been their first race of the season, but the Team CytoSport Muscle Milk squad came out strong by scoring its first podium finish in its LMP2 class debut in the American Le Mans Series at Mid-Ohio today.

The duo of Greg Pickett and Klaus Graf placed second in class, and fourth overall, aboard their #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder following an impressive run by the German and a comeback from an early penalty.

With the race going yellow on the first lap, the action only truly picked up during the lap 10 restart with team owner and driver Greg Pickett running third in class and fifth overall. While putting in competitive lap times in moist conditions, Pickett made contact with a GT2 car and was sent to the penalty box for a 'stop and go' on lap 24. The penalty cost him one position and relegated him to fourth in class. Soon after, he would enter pit lane again, this time for a driver change, fuel and Michelin tires.

When Graf took the reigns of the Muscle Milk RS Spyder, he exited pit lane fifth in class and 15th overall. It didn't take long for him to make his way back up the field, at times running three seconds faster a lap than his closest competitors. Constantly pushing the car as hard as he could, he found himself in third place in the LMP2 category with less than an hour to go and made his way past the second-place car of Adrian Fernandez a few laps later.

Car Race Mid-Ohio Following his second and final pit stop, Graf was once again running third in class. That's when he entered a heated battle with the #20 car of Marino Franchitti. The German driver kept putting pressure on him and it paid off. Franchitti made contact with lapped traffic and Graf jumped on the occasion and took over second place in class and fourth overall. Despite continuing to put in blistering lap times, the first place car of Fernandez was too far ahead for Graf to catch up, but he did cut the lead down from 49 to 10 seconds in the final 15 minutes of the two hour and 45 minute event.

There won't be much time to celebrate its first podium finish for Team CytoSport as its next challenge comes next weekend at Road America.

**Klaus Graf, Driver #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder:** "I had such a good time out there. Right from the beginning they told me you got to keep pushing and pushing. And he kept telling me every five laps, Klaus, you got to keep pushing. That's what I did the whole race. The Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder was very, very good in the race and the Michelin tires were up to the task in every way. We made the right changes and I really have to thank Greg Pickett for making the decision to buy the car, making the changes to the

team in order to run it the way we run it. Hats off to all the guys on the team, that was unbelievable. I couldn't be happier. I had a really good day."

**Greg Pickett, Owner/driver #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder:** "Obviously we are very pleased. I'm pleased for Porsche, I'm pleased for Michelin, I'm pleased for our brand Muscle Milk and all of our employees and friends and family and fans of both the brand and Porsche. I'm almost speechless, which is a little bit rare for me. Klaus did a spectacular job. He ran many, many laps as fast or faster than the leaders and after it was all said and done if it hadn't have been for my mistake in traffic by nudging a GT2 competitor which got me a penalty, that was really the difference in the race. You're bound to be a little bit rusty but all in all I'm just smiling. It's a good day."

## **ALMS Race Report**

Source: ALMS

Gil de Ferran and Simon Pagenaud went flag-to-flag Saturday to win the Acura Sports Car Challenge at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, their fourth consecutive overall victory in the American Le Mans Series. Team owner de Ferran qualified on the overall pole position, and the pairing won at Mid-Ohio for the first time in their careers.

Pagenaud and de Ferran celebrate their win with team fueler Keith Jones.

The victorious team boss crossed the finish line in the de Ferran XM Acura ARX-02a 8.358 seconds ahead of Patrón Highcroft Racing's David Brabham and the Acura that he drove with LMP1 championship co-leader Scott Sharp.

The emotions of the weekend were just as challenging for de Ferran as the race itself. Team fueler Keith Jones was badly injured in a pitlane fire at Mid-Ohio last year. Winning for the first time at the circuit and on the weekend where he announced he will retire as a driver at the end of the season were tough to overcome.

"Certainly what happened here last year was a huge landmark in my life and to all of our team," de Ferran said, trying to hold back tears. "At the end of the day, you cannot perform if you are a complete mess. You have to keep your emotions in check at all times and be 100 percent rational. This was my most emotional race. Mind management is very important. But crossing the finish line – I couldn't hold back."

But it was a joyful celebration. The former two-time CART champion and Indy 500 winner watched Pagenaud drive a brilliant opening stint against Sharp. The young Frenchman drove the first 77 minutes before handing off to de Ferran, who didn't give up the lead. A quick splash late was all the Acura needed.

"We have had a good weekend," said Pagenaud, who set the fastest race lap for the third straight event. "The crew made good decisions at the right time. It is great to have an improvement over the year. It was a fun race to drive. We managed to save a lot of fuel in my stint. "

"I have been coming to Mid-Ohio for many years," added de Ferran, who saw his team win its fourth straight MICHELIN® GREEN X® Challenge prototype trophy for overall performance as well as fuel and environmental efficiency. "It has been a great reception. It is also great for the championship. We have to win every time out. It is very hard because I have a lot of respect for Patrón Highcroft and their drivers. They are a fantastic team and a great opponent."

Intersport Racing's local tandem of Jon and Clint Field drove their AER-powered Lola B06/10 to a third-place P1 finish. The father-son duo was fifth overall.

Luis Diaz and Adrian Fernandez returned to top of the LMP2 podium with a class victory at Mid-Ohio.

Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz won their fifth LMP2 race of the year and were third overall in the Lowe's Fernandez Racing Acura ARX-01b. The class championship leaders won the race with a short-fill for fuel on the race's final caution period while running second to Dyson Racing's Marino Franchitti.

The Acura was the first car out of the pitlane, beating the de Ferran Acura and receiving a free pass by the safety car, which had to pick up overall leader de Ferran.

"Here on the track with a lot of corners the best place to pass is on the straights. So we needed a good strategy and not get into trouble," Diaz said. "At the end we entered the pits four to five laps after they (Dyson) did. It was a fantastic job by our guys."

Four different cars in class led at one point – the Acura, both of Dyson Racing's Mazda-powered Lola B09/86 coupes and the Team Cytosport Porsche RS Spyder. Dyson's Marino Franchitti and Cytosport's Klaus Graf were locked in a battle for second before contact and a spin broke the Lola-Mazda's suspension and elevated Graf and team owner Greg Pickett to second in class, 10.482 seconds behind the Acura.

"It was fantastic," Fernandez said. "We wanted to keep the tires at the end. We are really proud. It was a great fight with Marino. I was going to make his life difficult. The Acura has been good on fuel mileage and very reliable. I have to believe as a team, as a whole package, it was an impressive performance."

Franchitti and teammate Butch Leitzinger, who won in P2 three weeks ago at Lime Rock, were good enough for third place.

The Flying Lizard Motorsports' duo of Patrick Long and Jörg Bergmeister won their fifth straight GT2 race with an excellent strategic call by the team.

Flying Lizard Motorsports' Patrick Long and Jörg Bergmeister tied a Series record with their fifth straight GT2 victory and spoiled Corvette Racing's GT2 debut in the process. Long and his Porsche 911 GT3 RSR beat Corvette's Johnny O'Connell by 21 seconds. O'Connell drove the new Corvette C6.R with Jan Magnussen.

Their entry did win the GT portion of the MICHELIN® GREEN X® Challenge for the second time this year.

The Porsche made just one pit stop compared with two for the Corvettes. The strategy was risky but was a winning call as the tank of E10 and MICHELIN tires lasted 80 minutes. Long said the Porsche's fuel pressure light came on with less than two laps to go. The American factory driver may have been worried, but the team and strategist Thomas Blam were not.

"When the Corvette came back in during the last caution, I called Thomas and asked him if I missed the call to pit," Long said. "He didn't even answer me but said to get ready for the last restart. Toward the end, I kept asking Thomas 'Do you want me to save fuel?' He told me to keep being smart and safe. So on the next-to-last lap, the fuel light came on as I was going up to the Keyhole. He said no problem, just go to the reserve."

Long also didn't use the Porsche's clutch to shift during most of his run.

"There were some issues," said Bergmeister, who drove the opening stint. "The car was great and the pace we had was phenomenal. One of the Challenge class cars didn't make life easy on us. He blocked me going in Turn 5 or 6. He hit me on the left wheel when I tried to go around him but didn't do any damage. The car was consistent throughout."

BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team's Dirk Müller and Tommy Milner placed third in class with a late pass of the second Corvette sending the duo to its third podium of the year.

The husband-wife duo of Martin and Melanie Snow won their second Challenge race of the season in their Snow Racing Porsche.

Martin and Melanie Snow won their second Challenge class race of the year in their Snow Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race. Martin Snow beat ORBIT Racing's Guy Cosmo to the finish by two laps. The Snows won at Utah and are the only husband-wife team to win a race in Series history.

"It was tough today. You have a complex of corners and you can get crunched up pretty good with the prototypes," Martin Snow said. "Melanie did most of the work today. She did some really good laps even after she got hit by a car early on. She stayed consistent and kept it going. I was just the one on the wall watching her. It was great to see."

Among the more tense moments was the start of the race. Melanie Snow was hit by a prototype in the opening turn and hit Ed Brown's ORBIT Racing Porsche, which went hard off course. He was released from a Mansfield hospital after an observation period, but the incident underscored the difficulty with traffic.

"The biggest thing is to hold your line and let them go around you," Melanie Snow said. "It hinders your driving but it hinders them as well. If it slowed us down, then it slows the other cars down as well."

Cosmo teamed with John Baker for their first podium of the season in the new class. Bob Faieta and Wesley Hoaglund, who won at Lime Rock in the last round, were third.



## **Lowe's Fernandez Racing Report**

Source: Tamy Valkosky, Public Relations, Lowe's Fernandez Racing

Lowe's Fernandez Racing drivers Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz made their third consecutive trip to the Mid-Ohio winner's circle this afternoon. This time, however, it was to take the top step on the podium as the pair claimed the LMP2 class victory and a third-place overall result in the Acura Sports Car Challenge. It was the first ALMS win for the team at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course and their fifth win of the season.

An underdog on top speed going into the race, Lowe's Fernandez Racing combined smart driving with excellent pit strategy to bring home the result. Diaz started the race and, as expected, fell victim to some of the more powerful cars at the start. When he pitted on Lap 53 [80 minutes into the race] he was shown first in class and third overall as pit stops cycled through and his quick laps prior to the stop enabled Fernandez to return to the track ahead of the #20 Dyson Mazda for a time.

The key to the race took place on Leader Lap 80 with 48 minutes remaining. Fernandez was running fifth overall and third in class when the team pitted under caution deciding to short fill on fuel and not to change their Michelin tires. The quick stop allowed Fernandez to come out ahead of the leader on the track. The result was a wave around which gave the team a lap advantage on the #20 Dyson Mazda and #6 Porsche

Spyder. Fernandez managed a strong pace in the closing stages to take the checkered flag 22 seconds ahead of the #6 car.

Lowe's Fernandez Racing will return to competition next weekend with the Generac 500 at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wis., on August 16.

**Race Results Overall:**

1. de Ferran/Pagenaud – LMP1 Acura ARX 02a
2. Brabham/Sharp – LMP1 Acura ARX 02a
3. Fernandez/Diaz – LMP2 Lowe's Acura ARX-01b

**Adrian Fernandez:** "It was good race from all aspects. We are very happy to win this for Acura and Lowe's and also to put on a good show for the fans. We double-stinted the Michelin tires at the end and had a fantastic strategy in the pits which managed to get us out ahead of the race leader and put us a lap ahead of the guys we were fighting with. That was fantastic. It was great work from the team and I am really proud of the guys. Both Luis and I drove smart and it is great to get another win."

**Luis Diaz:** "This has been a great weekend for the team. The guys had a fantastic strategy with Adrian. It was the perfect result for the championship. We knew that it was going to be a tough race for us. I was passed at the start like we thought I would be but we stayed focused and we got a great result – our fifth win for Lowe's and Acura. This was important especially here for both Acura and Honda. It couldn't have been more perfect."



**Dyson Racing Team Report**

Source: Brian Wagner, Dyson Racing

The #20 BP Mazda Lola of Butch Leitzinger and Marino Franchitti led LMP2 from the drop of the flag at today's Mid-Ohio ALMS race to the first pit stop on lap 51 of the 118 lap race. Marino Franchitti was running a strong second in class until 20 minutes from the end when a rear suspension failure caused by contact from a slower GT car ended his race. "Our car was rockin'. The stops were great and we were putting on a spirited battle, but our race was ended early for us," said Franchitti. The two winners of the prior race at Lime Rock finished with a third in class.



The 16 car was second in class at the start of the race when the two Dyson cars got the jump on the pole sitting LMP2 car. The 16 car team took advantage of a twenty minute yellow after the first lap of the race to top up the car with fuel twice to give it a fuel strategy advantage. This put starter Chris Dyson down in 24th position, but he carved his way through the field, setting fastest class lap to that point. He was second in class when he handed the car over to Guy Smith on lap 56. On lap 63, Guy Smith radioed in that "I was coming out of the Carrousel and the car lost boost." The car was driven back to the garage but it as determined the necessary repairs could not be done in time.

"It is too bad. You never want to come away from a race weekend with these kinds of results when you have such fast cars," said Dyson. "We were on pace to add a good result to our Lime Rock win. Both cars had the speed and it is unfortunate what happened to Marino. The slower cars need to race with sufficient awareness and respect for the battles going on at the front of the field. But resiliency produces results and we will regroup and move on to Road America next weekend."

## **Risi Competizione Team Report**

Source: Fiona Miller

The Houston-based Risi Competizione team today retained its hold on second place in the highly competitive GT2 standings of the 2009 American Le Mans Series, despite a disappointing fifth place result today at the Mid Ohio Sports Car Course. The race was won by the Flying Lizard Porsche of Jörg Bergmeister and Pat Long.

Melo drove a storming double stint, particularly in the latter stages of the race, passing two cars in the final twenty minutes of the 2 hour, 45 minute race and setting his fastest lap of the race along the way. However, losing track positions at the beginning of the race, lack of top speed, and going a lap down on the class leader, when the safety car slotted in between the first two GT2 cars and the remainder of the field during the second of the two full course caution periods, effectively put paid to any chance of victory for the Ferrari.

Pierre Kaffer, who was making his debut at the Ohio track, had to contend with low grip levels and a car which was lacking in top speed compared with all its leading competitors. It was a tough baptism for the German on the 2.25 mile road course.

Melo, who, like the rest of the Risi Competizione team, is used to finishing much nearer the top than this, was naturally disappointed with the end result. "Our lack of top speed showed; we have less power than anybody, even though our lap times and consistency on the tires and wasn't bad. The car is at the limit so I don't know where we can find any extra power."

The Brazilian's two passes in the late stages of the race included one on German Wolf Henzler in one of the faster Porsches. "I think he was over taking a Challenge Cup car," said Melo, "and I went inside him. He was very fair about it, didn't shut the door, and let me through so I thank him for that."

Risi Competizione is a Houston-based Ferrari racing team lead by Managing Director Giuseppe Risi. Official team sponsors include Motorola, Boardwalk Auto Group, AdShip, Ferrari Financial Services and Ferrari of Houston.

The next round of the American Le Mans Series will be the Time Warner Cable Road Race Showcase featuring the American Le Mans Series at Road America, Wisconsin on Sunday, August 16. The race is scheduled for 2:05pm CDT and will air live on SPEED TV (from 3:00pm EST) and on MotorsTV - Tape Delayed on Sunday, 23rd August beginning at 5:00 pm (UK) / 5:00 pm CET. The race can also be followed on American Le Mans Radio presented by Porsche and Live Timing & Scoring on [www.americanlemans.com](http://www.americanlemans.com).

## **Porsche Motorsports Race Report**

Source: Andy Schupack, PMNA

Setting an American Le Mans Series record for five GT2 class wins in a row, the #45 Flying Lizard Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 RSR driven by Joerg Bergmeister (Germany) and Patrick Long (USA) expanded their championship lead to 37 points with a dramatic class win at the Acura Sports Car Challenge today at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course.

And, to add icing on the cake for all Porsche enthusiasts, the new Muscle Milk Team Cytosport Porsche RS Spyder, with Klaus Graf (Germany) and Greg Pickett (USA) at the helm, scored a surprise second-place finish in the LMP2 class, narrowly missing a class win.

In the GT2 tussle, there was extra excitement in addition to the normal BMW, Ford, Ferrari and Panoz competition as the Corvette factory team debuted their new cars in the class as well. Although Long and Bergmeister led all but one lap (they lost the lead in the shuffle of pit stops), the drive was anything but easy, according to Bergmeister, who started the Porsche.

"During my stint, I was hit by a Challenge car, and cracked a rear wheel, but was lucky the Michelin tire did not deflate. Then, a car lost an engine in front of me, and I got oil all over my windshield. But Patrick did a great job one hour, 20 minutes to the end without a fuel stop! There is no resting, even with a lead with the Corvettes, BMWs, and Ferraris chasing you," said Bergmeister.

The victory was cemented, however, by a call from Lizard strategist Thomas Blam, who determined that Patrick could save track position by not coming in for fuel during the last yellow flag, gambling that he could make it to the end.

"There were many close calls in the last hour and 20 minutes of the race, including some spins from the Challenge cars, but the fuel call was the key. My fuel light came on during the final lap, but I was confident that Thomas and the crew had made the right call not having me come in for a splash at the end. It was the difference that gave us the win. Our clutch was going away, so I shifted most of my stint without a clutch to make sure we had pressure at the end, but the transmission took the wear and tear - a testament to the strength of our components. Winning five in a row is especially sweet with all the competition from the other factory teams", said Long, the only American Porsche factory driver.

The victory gave them 120 points, while the Kaffer/Melo Ferrari finished fifth (now with 83 points). Porsche now leads Ferrari in the manufacturers points by that same 37-point margin. The Wolf Henzler (Germany)/Martin Ragginger (Austria) Farnbacher Loles Porsche 911 GT3 RSR finished less than a second behind the Ferrari in sixth, while Darren Law/Seth Neiman (both USA) Flying Lizard Porsche was ninth.

In LMP2, Pickett and Graf were fast from the very first test session on Thursday, and gave the factory Acuras and Mazdas all they could handle. An unlucky positioning of the pace car during the last yellow flag cost the RS Spyder a full lap to the winning Acura, and yet Graf finished in second place by only ten seconds after passing both Mazdas during the event.

"I had such a good time out there. I kept pushing and pushing. Right from the beginning they told me you got to keep pushing and pushing. And he kept telling me every five laps, Klaus, you got to keep pushing. That's what I did the whole race. The Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder was very, very good in the race. We made the right changes and I really have to thank Greg Pickett for making the decision to buy the car, making the changes to the team in order to run it the way we run it. Hats off to all the guys on the team; that was unbelievable. I couldn't be happier. I had a really good day," said Graf, former NASCAR driver and SCCA Trans-Am champion.

"Obviously we are very pleased. I'm pleased for Porsche, I'm pleased for Michelin, I'm pleased for our brand Muscle Milk and all of our employees and friends and family and fans of both the brand and Porsche. I'm almost speechless which is a little bit rare for me. Klaus did a spectacular job. He ran many, many laps as fast or faster than the leaders", said Pickett.

## **Farnbacher Loles Racing team Race Report**

Source: Roger Garbow

The Farnbacher Loles Racing team had some new competition in the American Le Mans Series as the Corvette C6.R made its debut at the Mid-Ohio round. While entirely new, the Corvettes appear to be very sorted, right out of the box and have brought some new energy to the already exciting GT2 Class. In Friday's qualifying, Wolf Henzler turned a lap of 1:21.557 in the #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, securing the fifth spot on the grid. With Dirk Werner unavailable, Henzler was co-driving with Porsche Junior driver Martin Ragginger, in the young German's first race with Farnbacher Loles. Ragginger started the car and drove consistently, learning the track and gaining speed as the race unfolded. The opening was marred though by a crash involving one of the Challenge Class cars, which necessitated seven laps to be run under caution.

At the halfway point, Ragginger pitted for fuel and tires from the seventh spot, and Henzler took over behind the wheel. Henzler showed his usual prowess driving the RSR, as well as his skill on the Mid-Ohio course as he battled with both the Panoz of Dominik Farnbacher and the Ferrari of Jaime Melo. A caution on lap 79 bunched the field, but the pace car came out behind the second place GT2 car, enabling the leaders to put a lap on the rest of the field. After the caution, only a half second separated Henzler in sixth place from Melo in fifth. The two drivers proceeded to put on one of the best battles in the race. Over the last 30 minutes, Henzler chased Melo's Ferrari with both drivers turning their fastest laps in the waning minutes. In the end though, Melo held the spot and the #87 had to settle for a less than satisfying sixth place finish.



## **BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team Race Report**

Source: Matt Russell BMW of North America Motorsport Communications Manager

In the most competitive race of the season Dirk Muller and Tommy Milner drove the No. 92 BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team M3 to a third place finish today at the Acura Sports Car Challenge. The duo completed 107 laps in the two-hour-and-forty-five-minute race held at the Mid Ohio Sports Car Course with Muller racing to the podium after a thrilling pass in the closing laps of the race.

Teammates Bill Auberlen and Joey Hand finished eighth after a collision by a prototype car cost them one lap early in the race. Hand set the GT2 class fastest race lap, the first for the team this season.

Almost immediately following the wave of the green flag an early caution slowed the field for the opening 22 minutes of the race. The race began in earnest after the restart with Tommy Milner holding the fourth position in the No. 92 M3. He passed for third on lap 14 as a light rain began to fall, but fell back to fourth as a fierce battle began between positions three through six.

Bill Auberlen started the No. 90 M3 from the rear of the grid following a decision by the team to change tires before the start. The crew elected to pit him for fuel just before the restart so the Californian began the race off pit sequence to the rest of the GT2 class. Just after moving into eighth on lap 19 he was hit by a P1 class car and was forced to the pits for new tires, ultimately losing a lap.

At the one hour mark, Milner had consolidated his hold on fourth, having completed 35 laps. He pitted on lap 50, handing the No. 92 M3 to Dirk Müller. Setting some of the quickest GT2 lap time of the race, Auberlen moved up to sixth as the balance of the GT2 field made their first pit stops. With one hour and thirty-five minutes complete, Auberlen pitted the No. 90 M3. Hand quickly got into the race, setting the fastest GT2 lap (1:21.969) on lap 67.

The race settled in for some 40 minutes, but a late race charge by Müller had him within feet of third place in the final minutes. He made a great move under braking in turn one with five laps to go to bring home the team's fourth podium finish of the season. Hand finished eighth.

**Bobby Rahal, Team Principal:** "Dirk and Tommy did a great job in the No. 92 M3. We had to gamble a little bit with that last stop. We left the tires on eight laps longer than before and they hung in there. Dirk was able to run down Beretta for third, which was great to see. It's unfortunate that Bill got hit, but yet the performance of the car was excellent after that. A good day for our team."

**Martin Birkmann, BMW of North America Motorsport Manager:** "For the second consecutive time we saw a very exciting race. Today provided lots of entertainment for the spectators. That's what they want and expect and we are happy to provide our part of it. The podium was represented by three different makes and the new colors certainly spice things up."

**Dirk Müller, No 92 M3 (third):** "I am really happy for everybody to finish third. It was tough, but we fought a good fight. I tried to stay in the pack and push. The team strategy worked well. We didn't change tires; Dunlop gave me brilliant tires that lasted. Olivier (Beretta) was really quick on the straights, but I pressured him and pressured him and got him under braking in the last corner. I am really loving it."

**Tommy Milner, No. 93 M3 (third):** "I had a good battle with our competition from Maranello for third, and I knew I was faster before the pass. The tires were regaining strength toward the end of the stint, so I just kept my driving clean and tried to position the car to give Dirk the best possible start to his stint. Dirk did a great job pushing to the end to secure the team's fourth podium this season."

**Bill Auberlen, No. 90 M3 (eighth):** "We had a super fast car all weekend. The guys do a phenomenal job. In the race I was catching people then I got knocked out. Joey and I can't wait to go to Road America and turn this thing around."



## **Flying Lizard Racing Team Race Report**

Source: Flying Lizard News

The No. 45 Flying Lizard Porsche started from the pole at the Acura Sports Car Challenge at Mid-Ohio and never looked back, leading GT2 for the entire 2 hour and 45 minute race. This makes five wins in a row for the duo of Joerg Bergmeister and Patrick Long and ties the ALMS record for most consecutive wins. The No. 3 Corvette Racing Corvette, in their inaugural GT2 race, was second, and the No. 92 Rahal Letterman BMW was third: three manufacturers on the GT2 podium. With this finish, Bergmeister and Long extended their lead to 37 points over Jaime Melo and Pierre Kaffer of the No. 62 Risi Competizione Ferrari, which finished fifth. In the No. 44 Flying Lizard Porsche, Darren Law and Seth Neiman, who started from the back of the grid, had a clean race, moving through the Challenge class field to finish ninth in GT2.

The race started under yellow, then on the start, a Challenge car impacted the wall, resulting in a lengthy full-course yellow. On the restart twenty minutes later, Joerg held the lead while the GT2 field fought to define positions while threading through the slower Challenge cars and managing the faster prototype traffic. Once the field sorted itself out, the No. 3 Corvette was in P2, the No. 62 Risi Ferrari was P3, and the No. 92 BMW was P4.

Bergmeister commented, "The racecar was great and our pace was phenomenal today. It looked seamless, but we had some issues over both our stints. It was tough out there with the Challenge cars, they didn't make it easy. One got me going into Turn 5 and hit the left rear wheel. The impact broke the wheel, but luckily I didn't lose any air. Shortly after that, a lot of oil covered the windshield and the visibility was really poor. I was able to finish out my stint and handed the car over to Patrick."

The No. 45 had its scheduled pit stop for driver change to Patrick Long, tires and fuel near the end of the GT2 field scheduled pit stops, but before both Corvettes. With a clean pit stop, Patrick Long was back out, still in the lead. Once all the pit stops had been completed, the No. 45 was P1, the No. 3 Corvette P2 and the No. 4 Corvette P3. The No. 62 Risi Ferrari was P4 and the No. 92 BMW P5. There was a close call for Patrick just after his pit stop as he and two prototypes avoided two spinning Challenge cars on course. The No. 45 was unscathed, and he continued in the lead.

With just under an hour to go in the race, a prototype embedded itself deep in the gravel and the course went full yellow. Patrick was still holding a 12 second lead to the No. 3 Corvette, with the No. 4 Corvette close behind in third and the No. 62 Risi Ferrari in fourth. The pace car split the Corvettes, and the No. 45 and the No. 3 Corvette were the only two GT2 cars on the lead lap. Although the rest of the GT2 field gained some of

the gap back on the wave-by, the yellow gave the No. 45 some breathing room. Late in the yellow, much of the GT2 field pitted for a splash of fuel, including both Corvettes and the No. 62 Risi Ferrari, which also took tires. The No. 45 Flying Lizard Porsche did not pit for fuel, making a strategic call that they could finish the race without refueling. On the green flag, the No. 3 Corvette was caught behind a GT2 pack (who were not on the same lap), and Patrick was able to rebuild a significant gap.

Over the final 45 minutes of the race, Patrick held the lead, increasing the gap to the No. 3 Corvette to more than 20 seconds. The GT2 field continued to shuffle, with the No. 3 Corvette finishing second, the No. 92 BMW third, and the No. 4 Corvette fourth.

Long said, "When I got in the car after Joerg's stint, thought I might have lost clutch pressure. So to be safe, I shifted without a clutch for most of the stint, just to be sure we had enough at the end. Then at Turn 5, I had a NASCAR moment when two challenge cars got together in the Apex and spun into the racing line. With two prototypes on the inside, luckily we all managed to weave through without colliding." He added, "Thanks to the crew for putting together such a fast and consistent racecar for us today."

Chief strategist Thomas Blam commented, "We made a strategic call that we could finish the race without refueling and didn't pit with the rest of the GT2 field during the final yellow. It was definitely on the edge, and we finished the race with the fuel light on, but we were confident in our fuel numbers. It may have not been the deciding factor in the race, but it definitely helped us keep a large gap."

In the No. 44 Porsche, Seth Neiman started from the rear of the grid, as teammate Darren Law had not been able to make the official practice sessions. Seth stayed out of trouble in the incident-heavy race, until getting hit by a prototype, suffering a puncture. He pitted and turned the wheel over to Darren Law. Darren had a great stint, and with a fast racecar gained a position over the next 90 minutes to finish ninth in GT2.



## **Corvette Racing Team Race Report**

Source: Rick Voegelin, Chevy Racing Communications

It was the dawn of a new day for Corvette Racing at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course as the next-generation Corvette C6.R finished second and fourth in the hard-fought GT2 category in the sixth round of the American Le Mans Series. On an overcast and rainy day, the twin Corvettes shined as Johnny O'Connell and Jan Magnussen finished as runners-up in the No. 3 Compuware Corvette C6.R, 21 seconds behind the class-winning Porsche 911 RSR of Patrick Long and Joerg Bergmeister. Oliver Gavin and Olivier Beretta finished fourth in the No. 4 Compuware Corvette C6.R, one lap down after getting caught out by the safety car during a full-course caution.

"It was a really good run and we didn't have any issues," said Magnussen. "It's very difficult in traffic, even more difficult than with the GT1 cars. You really have to be smart and aggressive – this wasn't the race to risk the cars, so I lost a little time being too cautious. The GT2 Corvette C6.R is a fantastic race car, and very easy to drive fast. We still have a few minor things to sort out, but I think we're already there."

O'Connell took over from Magnussen at 1:27 into the two-hour, 45-minute race on the first pit stop for fuel and tires. He stopped again for five seconds of fuel at 2:02, while the class-leading Porsche team gambled on making it to the finish without a second pit stop. They won that bet, and O'Connell settled for second.

"Today was such an impressive debut for the new GT2 Corvettes, but I wouldn't expect anything less from this team," O'Connell said. "We've gained so much experience in GT1 over the years, and Corvette Racing sets the standards for car construction and preparation. It's great to be back, showing what Corvette and Chevrolet are all about."

As the race began under the threat of rain, the first start was waved off by officials. The field got the green flag on the next lap, and Magnussen quickly slotted into second, gaining a position on the No. 62 Ferrari. Farther back in the pack, Gavin was shuffled back to seventh. Gavin then methodically improved his position, gaining the third spot on the 20th lap. By the 22nd lap, the two Corvettes were running nose-to-tail in a familiar formation.

"Those first few laps were frantic," Gavin said. "The first start was waved off, we were forming up again, and it all got rather confusing. A BMW got by me, and then the Ford GT, so I had to hustle my way past them. We had a bit of contact, a little rubbing and banging. I got a few shoves, and I gave them back. GT2 is a great class to race in!"

As the sprinkles continued and the track became damp, the pace never slowed.

"It got a little loose sometimes, but because we had so much heat in the Michelin tires, it wasn't an issue for me," Magnussen explained.

The No. 4 Corvette pitted at 1:26 with Beretta replacing Gavin, and the No. 4 pitted one lap later with O'Connell replacing Magnussen. The decisive moment came at 1:50 when a full-course caution began when the No. 19 LMP2 prototype went off the track. The race leader was between the two Corvettes, which were four seconds apart on the track. Consequently the leading No. 45 Porsche and the second-place No. 3 Corvette gained nearly a full lap on the rest of the GT2 entries when officials began a wave-by to reform the field.

"There was a small gap between the Corvettes, and I could hear the excitement in (crew chief) Dan Bink's voice on the radio when he said, 'Don't let him by! Don't let him by!'" O'Connell recalled. "I already had that figured out, because it's happened to us enough over the years when we lost out on a safety car wave-by."

When racing resumed, a pack of five GT2 cars were fighting furiously for third place, separated by just 3.5 seconds. Beretta's No. 4 Corvette C6.R and the No. 92 BMW driven by Dirk Mueller eventually broke free, and Mueller took the third place on the podium with a pass going into the first turn with five minutes remaining.

"It's not our usual result, but nonetheless today was a great victory for Corvette Racing," said Corvette Racing program manager Doug Fehan. "To come out here with only a few days of testing on two brand-new race cars, run with the leaders, demonstrate our pit stop prowess and race strategy, and finish second is a testament to how hard this team works. I think every fan of sports car racing now knows there is going to be some spectacular GT racing in the American Le Mans Series."

The ethanol-powered Corvette C6.Rs also swept the top two spots in the MICHELIN GREEN X Challenge with the best overall scores among the 26 GT and prototype entries based on energy used, greenhouse gases emitted, and petroleum fuels displaced.

"Not only did we see a tremendous display of great planning and execution today, but also we saw Corvette win the MICHELIN GREEN X Challenge yet again," Fehan said. "That is emblematic of the new General Motors – fast, mean, lean, and green."

Corvette Racing's next event is the Time Warner Cable Road Race Showcase featuring the American Le Mans Series at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wis., on August 14-16. The two-hour, 45-minute race is scheduled to start at 2:05 p.m. CDT on Sunday, August 16. SPEED will televise the race live at 3 p.m. EDT.

Acura Sports Car Challenge of Mid-Ohio GT2 Results:

Pos./Drivers/Car/Laps

1. Bergmeister/Long, Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, 108
2. O'Connell/Magnussen, Chevrolet Corvette C6.R, 108
3. Mueller/Milner, BMW E92 M3, 107
4. Gavin/Beretta, Chevrolet Corvette C6.R, 107
5. Melo/Kaffer, Ferrari 430 GT, 107
6. Henzler/Ragginger, Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, 107
7. Farnbacher/James, Panoz Esperante GTLM, 107
8. Hand/Auberlen, BMW E92 M3, 106
9. Law/Neiman, Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, 104
10. Robertson/Robertson/Murry, Ford GT MK 7,





Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course / 2.258 miles  
August 7-8, 2009 / Lexington, Ohio



World Class

# 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)	118	-:--	2:45:27.326	1:11.105	47	Acura ARX 02a	Running
2	2	9	P1	Brabham*/(Sharp)	118	8.358	2:45:35.684	1:11.497	98	Acura ARX 02a	Running
3	1	15	P2	Fernandez/(Diaz*)	116	2 Laps	2:45:50.497	1:12.155	101	Acura ARX-01B	Running
4	2	6	P2	(Pickett)/Graf*	116	2 Laps	2:46:00.979	1:12.377	105	Porsche RS Spyder	Running
5	3	37	P1	J.Field*/(C.Field)	115	3 Laps	2:46:17.504	1:12.601	102	Lola B06/10	Running
6	4	48	P1	Mowlem/(Johansson)	114	4 Laps	2:46:00.114	1:14.363	98	Ginetta-Zytek 09HS	Running
7	1	45	GT2	(Berqmeister*)/Long	108	10 Laps	2:45:48.254	1:22.219	88	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
8	2	3	GT2	(Maqnussen*)/O'Connell	108	10 Laps	2:46:09.255	1:22.327	86	Chevrolet Corvette C	Running
9	3	92	GT2	Mueller*/(Milner)	107	11 Laps	2:45:51.495	1:22.556	86	BMW E92 M3	Running
10	4	4	GT2	Beretta/(Gavin*)	107	11 Laps	2:45:52.551	1:22.564	82	Chevrolet Corvette C	Running
11	5	62	GT2	Melo*/(Kaffer)	107	11 Laps	2:45:52.889	1:22.011	104	Ferrari 430 Berlinetta	Running
12	6	87	GT2	Henzler*/(Raqqinger)	107	11 Laps	2:45:53.790	1:22.049	104	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
13	7	21	GT2	Farnbacher*/(James)	107	11 Laps	2:46:08.218	1:22.539	68	Panoz Esperante	Running
14	8	90	GT2	Hand*/(Auberlen)	106	12 Laps	2:45:32.409	1:21.969	67	BMW E92 M3	Running
15	9	44	GT2	Law/(Neiman*)	104	14 Laps	2:46:10.841	1:22.873	102	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
16	10	40	GT2	(Murry*)/D.Robertson/A.Roberts	102	16 Laps	2:45:42.508	1:23.759	14	Doran Ford GT-R	Running
17	3	20	P2	(Leitzinger*)/Franchitti	100	18 Laps	2:26:28.732	1:12.763	76	Lola B09 86 Mazda	Accident
18	1	57	Chal	(Me.Snow)/Ma.Snow*	100	18 Laps	2:45:59.608	1:28.887	91	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
19	2	47	Chal	(Baker)/Cosmo*	98	20 Laps	2:45:32.207	1:27.320	83	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
20	3	36	Chal	(Hoaglund)/Faieta*	98	20 Laps	2:45:44.126	1:28.425	91	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
21	4	88	Chal	Lewis*/(Vento)	96	22 Laps	2:45:34.683	1:28.391	94	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Running
22	4	19	P2	van der Steur/(Pecorari*)	80	38 Laps	2:46:43.086	1:19.002	62	Radical SR9	Running
23	5	02	Chal	Parker/(Pickering*)	77	41 Laps	2:14:39.532	1:29.812	38	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Not Running
24	5	16	P2	(Dyson*)/Smith	62	56 Laps	1:33:42.583	1:12.412	53	Lola B09 86 Mazda	Mechanical
25	5	12	P1	(Willman)/Drissi*	40	78 Laps	1:06:10.826	1:20.092	32	Lola B06/10	Gearbox
26	6	08	Chal	(Brown)/Sweedler*	0	118 Laps	-:--	-:--	0	Porsche 911 GT3 Cu	Accident

\*Qualifying Driver (Starting Driver)

Margin of victory: 8.358 / Time of race: 2:45:27.326

**Fastest Drivers:**

Chal Guy Cosmo  
GT2 Joey Hand  
P1 Simon Pagenaud  
P2 Adrian Fernandez

**Green Challenge:**

Prototype de Ferran Motorsports  
GT Farnbacher Loles Racing

**Cautions**

Laps	Reason
1 - 8	Car 08 off course
79 - 83	Car 19 off course

**Lap Leaders**

Laps	Car
1-118	66

Beaux Barfield  
Race Director

Lynda Polk  
Chief of IMSA Timing

Martin Kaufman  
Chairman of the Stewards