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## **ALMS – 2009 Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta**

Source: Team Race Reports  
Photos courtesy ALMS and the teams  
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#### **ALMS Report**

**PEUGEOT WINS AT WET PETIT LE MANS AT ROAD ATLANTA**

Victory goes along with Le Mans triumph for French manufacturer

Franck Montagny and Stephane Sarrazin gave Peugeot its first American Le Mans Series victory on Friday, winning a weather-shortened 12th annual Petit Le Mans powered by MAZDA6. Race officials, citing hazardous conditions due to torrential rains that fell at Road Atlanta just past the four-hour mark, called the race at eight hours, 44 minutes running.

Peugeot's two diesel-powered factory prototype coupes finished 1-2 with the pole-sitting 908 HDi of Pedro Lamy and Nic Minassian in second. The first of Audi Sport Team Joest's Audi R15 TDIs placed third, the car driven by Allan McNish and Dindo Capello.

McNish and Capello dominated the race before the rains fell. The two Peugeots got past McNish under yellow when the Scot looped the Audi under wet conditions.

Dyson Racing took its first Petit Le Mans victory with a victory in LMP2 for Marino Franchitti, Butch Leitzinger and Ben Devlin. Their Mazda-powered Lola B09/86 coupe had problems with gear selection early, but the Acura ARX-01b of Lowe's Fernandez Racing's Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz experienced steering issues throughout.

Nevertheless, the duo completed enough laps to clinch the team championship for Lowe's Fernandez and the manufacturer championships for Acura.

Risi Competizione's Jaime Melo, Pierre Kaffer and Mika Salo won in GT2 in their Ferrari F430 GT, the fifth straight endurance victory for the team. A brilliant call by the team made the Ferrari the first GT2 car to take wet tires, and Salo drove past the rest of the field into the lead

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## **Corvette Racing Team Report**

Source: Corvette Racing

### **Corvette Racing Splashes to Fourth and Sixth in Rain-Shortened Petit Le Mans *Corvette C6.Rs Run One-Two Before Early Finish to Rain-Soaked Race***

The torrential rain that has inundated Georgia returned today, forcing officials to red flag the scheduled 10-hour Petit Le Mans after four hours and 50 minutes of racing. With heavy rainfall and runoff continuing to drench the Road Atlanta circuit and no hope of drying the track, the event was declared official at 8:44 on the race clock. When the race ended with the cars parked in the pit lane, Corvette Racing's No. 4 Compuware Corvette C6.R was fourth in the GT2 class, one lap behind Risi Competizione's GT2-winning No. 62 Ferrari 430. The No. 3 Compuware Corvette C6.R was classified sixth, two laps down.

The two Corvette C6.Rs dominated the first three hours of the race, running first and second consistently until a flurry of pit stops mixed the running order just as the heavy rain arrived. Starting with rain tires on a wet track, the Corvettes quickly asserted themselves at the start with Oliver Gavin taking the No. 4 Corvette to second and O'Connell slotting the No. 3 Corvette into fourth on the opening lap. Gavin made a move on the pole-winning Ford GT of David Murry in the Turn 10 chicane on the second lap, but lost grip and fell to fourth. O'Connell immediately applied more Chevrolet pressure to the Ford, taking the lead on the third lap with an inside pass going into the high-speed first turn. On the fourth lap, Gavin passed the championship-leading Flying Lizard Porsche of Patrick Long to take third, and one lap later he overtook Murry in Turn 1 to make it a Corvette Racing one-two in the GT2 class.

"I knew this morning we had a good car in the wet," said O'Connell. "Everyone was being a little tentative at the start, but I felt confident with my Michelins. Olly got in a little too deep and went off trying to pass the Ford GT, so then it was my turn to take care of business."

With a dry line emerging, the Corvette crew made the decision to switch from rain tires to slicks on the first pit stop. Gavin was the first to pit at the 45-minute mark, taking on four slick tires and a tankful of E85R ethanol. O'Connell pitted two laps later and also made the change to dry tires. Following the exchange of pit stops, Gavin emerged at the front of the GT2 class with O'Connell comfortably in second.

"I thought I was being super careful with the Ford, but obviously I wasn't being careful enough and went across the grass in Turn 10," Gavin said. "Fortunately the car wasn't damaged and I got going again and passed the Porsche and the Ford GT. The track was drying and I thought it had to be time for slicks. I could see it was going to be nasty in several turns, but thought that if I could build enough heat in the tires, it should be good for the rest of the track. As soon as I went out on slicks, I knew we'd made the right choice."

The Corvettes made their first driver changes during a full-course caution at 1:34 (62 laps) with Jan Magnussen replacing O'Connell and Olivier Beretta replacing Gavin. A second full-course caution period closed up the field, producing a pack of six GT2 cars representing Corvette, BMW, Porsche, and Ferrari all running within 20 seconds of each other in the third hour. The Corvette team took advantage of the third yellow flag to make another change of drivers at 2:49 (109 laps) with Antonio Garcia taking over the class-leading No. 3 Corvette C6.R and Marcel Fassler getting into the second-ranked No. 4 Corvette C6.R.

Marc Lieb in the No. 45 Porsche took second in the GT2 class on a restart following the fourth full-course caution and then closed to within half a second of Garcia. The two drivers waged a fierce battle until their duel was interrupted by the fifth caution period at 3:33. The Corvettes suffered a setback during their yellow-flag pit stops, ceding track position to Lieb and to Joerg Mueller in the No. 92 BMW. Rejoining the race after the pit stop exchange, Fassler was third and Garcia fourth.

"It was difficult because the two cars in front of me, the Risi Ferrari and No. 87 Porsche, were fighting for position and didn't want to lose a lap," said Garcia. "They were defending their position very hard. I think our pace was faster, so I took it easy and was waiting for an opportunity."

With the weather deteriorating and rain in the air, the No. 62 Ferrari pitted for wet tires just after the four-hour mark under the race's sixth full-course caution. Racing resumed at 4:24, but four minutes later a downpour began. Both Corvettes pitted for rain tires at 4:29, with O'Connell getting back into the No. 3 and Gavin returning to the No. 4. As he completed his out lap, O'Connell aquaplaned off the track in the downhill Turn 12 and was beached in the gravel trap. Quick work by the IMSA safety team had the No. 3 Corvette back on the circuit after losing only one lap. However, the No. 62 Ferrari's timely pit stop resulted in a one-lap advantage on the rest of the GT2 field.

"The rain was unbelievable," O'Connell said. "I came underneath the bridge like I've done a thousand times before and suddenly hit a stream of water. I wasn't pushing hard at all, just trying to get around and catch up with the field. When something like that happens you feel awful for the guys."

"It was quite difficult because the tires were cold running behind the safety car, and as soon as I tried to accelerate the car moved around and it was very tricky to stay on the track," Fassler said. "I was following a BMW, thinking he would show me the grip level, but then he went directly into the pit so I was on my own. Out of the first corner I had a big moment with oversteer. When I saw the rain coming, I was happy to hear the pit call for a driver change."

The downpour intensified, and race officials displayed the red flag, stopping the race at 4:50. The clock continued to run while the cars were parked in the pit lane, and the race was terminated three hours and 55 minutes later.

"It was a very unusual event, and in some respects a disappointing one," said Corvette Racing program manager Doug Fehan. "Rain is a perfect environment to race the GT2 Corvette C6.R – the engineering that has gone into this chassis provides tremendous mechanical grip. Coupled with Michelin's exceptional tires, we certainly would have liked the opportunity to finish the race with a good result. But safety is always paramount at GM Racing, and we applaud the officials in making the decision to call the race. Safety must always prevail."

Corvette Racing's next event is the Monterey Sports Car Championships at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif. The four-hour race is scheduled to start at 2:45 p.m. PDT on Saturday, October 10. SPEED will broadcast the race tape-delayed on Sunday, October 11, at 2:30 p.m. EDT.

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

Source: Tamy Valkosky

### **Lowe's Fernandez Racing Second in Class as Storm Halts Petit Le Mans**

A band of thunderstorms brought an early end to the Petit Le Mans Powered by Mazda6 at Road Atlanta this afternoon. The scheduled 1,000 mile/10-hour endurance classic was red-flagged just shy of the halfway point at 4:15 pm due to persistent heavy rain and intermittent lightning. The race was officially called just after 8:00 pm.

Lowe's Fernandez Racing drivers Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz finished second in class and 21st overall after battling power steering issues which began during Diaz's first stint aboard the #15 Lowe's Acura while he was running first in class and ninth overall. Repairs on pit lane proved unsuccessful and the team returned to the garage to change the steering system. As a result, Fernandez and Diaz fell 29 laps behind the #20 Dyson Mazda which took the class victory.

Their result, however, was enough to clinch team championship honors for Lowe's Fernandez Racing, and engine and chassis manufacturer's titles for Acura. Fernandez and Diaz secured driver championship honors at Mosport in August.

Lowe's Fernandez Racing will head to California next for the ALMS season finale – the Monterey Sports Car Championship – at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on October 10.

#### **Race Results Overall:**

1. Sarrazin/Montagny – LMP1 Peugeot 908
2. Minassian/Lamy – LMP1 Peugeot 908
3. Capello/McNish – LMP1 Audi R15/TDI
- 21. Fernandez/Diaz – LMP2 Lowe's Acura**

**Adrian Fernandez:** "You never want to finish a race like this for the fans, and especially for everyone in this area with all the recent rain and flooding. I feel bad for everyone that may be having problems right now with flooding, and the fans that came here to see us. Nevertheless, we are happy about clinching the team and manufacturer's championships, and I have to say thanks to our great partners at Lowe's, Acura and Michelin.

Unfortunately, we didn't show what we could do today due to the problem with the steering. When I jumped in the car, there was something really wrong. At that time, I was thinking about the safety of myself and the car because it was acting weird. Electric power steering can start doing some funny things. At the beginning, we

thought it was the power steering unit or the rack and after a lengthy change, it wasn't that and we lost a lot of time. Eventually, it turned out to be the wiring harness.

I didn't drive much because of the yellows which is typical of this track unfortunately, but the car felt good in the rain and in the dry. It is a shame that the fans could not see the great finishes that we always have here."

**Luis Diaz:** "We have been facing some type of electrical problem since Thursday. The team did a good job setting up the car but we didn't discover the exact problem until the race. It was a very confusing issue with the heaviness of the steering wheel because sometimes it was good and we thought we fixed the problem but that wasn't the case.

In my stint, I faced a lot of challenges. One was the weather. I started the race very conservative because of the rain. When the track started drying out, I started feeling a little bit more comfortable. We were running three laps ahead of second place and I was still conservative but I started pushing a little bit to see where the car was and, unfortunately, I started having the problem with the power steering. For me, what was happening was confusing because turning to one side it was okay and to the other, it was wrong. I came in and we made some changes and checked everything mechanically. I went back out and the car was fine but then the problem came back.

We put Adrian in the car to learn his opinion and he definitely felt that something was very, very wrong and we had to take the car behind the wall. We would have loved to have won Petit, but it is great to come away with the team and manufacturer's championships. It was shame today with the weather especially for the fans."

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## Risi Competizione Report

Source: Fiona Miller

### **RISI TAKE THE ENDURANCE TRIPLE**

With their GT win at today's rain-shortened 1000 Mile/10 Hour Petit Le Mans, Houston-based Risi Competizione sealed their place in the record books as the team which has best represented Ferrari in GT racing over the last decade.

Today's 8<sup>th</sup> place overall result, in what may well be known in the future as the "Tout Petit Le Mans", tops an outstanding year for Risi. They have taken victory laurels at the 12 Hours of Sebring and the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the Petit Le Mans outcome continues a run of wins at the last five endurance classics, beginning with the 2008 edition of the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

It turned out to be an extraordinary race due to thunder, lightning and rain storms which deluged the track, and the race action was suspended after 4 hours and 49 minutes due to unsafe track conditions. At the time the red flag was shown, Mika Salo's Ferrari F430 GT was leading the GT class with a lap in hand thanks to an inspired early strategy call for wet Michelin tires. The race remained suspended for a further 3 hours and 56 minutes before the checkered flag was shown/called.

Mid race, as the skies darkened and the rain started to fall, the #62 car was the first in the GT class to make the change from slick to wet tires, while under the 6<sup>th</sup> of the seven full course caution periods. This allowed Salo – in increasingly heavy rain – to pass all his competitors, first on the track, and then additionally as they all had to pit for their own wet tires.

Declared a "wet race" prior to the start, Jaime Melo took the Ferrari from its 10<sup>th</sup> place grid position up to 5<sup>th</sup> place in class by the 5<sup>th</sup> lap, and ran strongly in changing track conditions to keep in touch with the two fast-running Corvettes and two Porsches ahead. Pierre Kaffer continued the good work, despite continual pressure from the #87 Farnbacher Porsche and a chasing Corvette which, had it got past, would have put the Ferrari yet a further lap in arrears. Great pit work and strategy by the Risi crew (only one of the team's seven pit stops took place under 'green' racing conditions) ensured that the #62 car headed the GT class as weather conditions took a turn for the worse.

"This race has really been a revelation," said Team Principal, **Giuseppe Risi**, after the race. "I am very, very happy for my team and for Ferrari for us to have our second victory at Petit Le Mans. At the beginning of the race it looked as though we had a real good fight on our hands, but racing is what it is. You can lose a race

on the last lap, or win it, and we made the right call on our tires. The rain was there for everyone to see, but we took a bigger gamble than everyone else by coming in earlier because we were listening to what our driver was telling us. The feedback from him was that people were beginning to slide in front of him and he thought it the right time to change tires. Between our engineer, Rick Mayer, and myself we made the decision to come in.

“I believe it’s fair to say that this result today confirms the quality of this team and shows it to be maybe one of the best GT teams ever.”

Starting driver, **Jaime Melo**, was full of praise for the Risi team and his team mates. “It was kind of a strange race but I think we had a competitive car. I was a bit conservative at the beginning as the track was wet and I didn’t want to take any risks. The car was comfortable in both wet and dry conditions. Even if the race had continued we could have kept up a good pace in these conditions. I need to say thank you to Pierre who did a very good job for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stints and to Mika, who I think drove for only seven laps – five behind the safety car [laughs]! Thank you to the whole crew and for the strategy, everyone has been phenomenal.

“We still have one more race to go and we are now 19 points behind the Flying Lizard Porsche in the Championship and we never give up so we’ll see what happens in the last race.”

**Pierre Kaffer** took the opportunity to thank Ferrari for bringing a revised aerodynamic package to this event which “helped us a lot. The track was drying more and more during my stint and the car was pretty good during the race. It was exciting to drive and I think the GT class was again very exciting for the spectators. We had great battles and I want to thank the whole team who did a great job to help us get where we were, and my team mates. I can always learn something from Mika – he might not have done such a long stint but he made the most important call of the day.”

After good-naturedly taking the teasing about his lack of race laps, **Mika Salo** reminded his team mates of his version of events. “I might not have been in the car very much but if you go around for 4 hours in 6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> position and then I’m in the car for half an hour and I went from 6<sup>th</sup> to the lead, then I think you can take what you want from that! Seriously though, it’s a great team with always a very nice atmosphere. It’s only the third race I’ve done this year and it’s a great atmosphere; everyone is working so hard and is so serious and professional about their racing. I’ve got two team mates who I can trust and who don’t go off and destroy the car – apart from Jaime sometimes [said with a big smile and to much laughter in the media room] – and it’s such a pleasure always to drive for the Risi team.”

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## **Porsche Motorsports Report**

Source: Porsche Motorsport

### **WITH THIRD PLACE FARNBACHER LOLES 911 GT3 RSR FINISH, PORSCHE CLINCHES 2009 ALMS GT2 MANUFACTURERS TITLE IN RAIN-SHORTENED PETIT LE MANS AT ROAD ATLANTA**

#### **Flying Lizard Porsche drivers close in on year-end title; Porsche wins season Michelin Green X Challenge GT manufacturers championship**

After almost four hours of red flag track condition due to lightning and a flooding downpour, the rain-shortened Petit Le Mans presented by Mazda 6 at Road Atlanta was given the checkered flag when the rain refused to quit, but the race ran long enough for Porsche to clinch the GT2 manufacturers title over Ferrari.

It was the third place finish for Dirk Werner and Wolf Henzler (both Germany) in their #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR that gave Porsche a 26-point lead over Ferrari, with only 25 points available at the final event in two weeks at Laguna Seca Raceway.

Despite the less-than-ideal conditions, Porsche Motorsport North America President Paul Ritchie was pleased with the year-long efforts of all the 911 teams. Although they are not in contention for the drivers or team championship this year, Farnbacher Loles Racing, Dirk Werner and Wolf Henzler put forth outstanding efforts today, and earned the podium position that put us over the top for the manufacturer s title, said Ritchie, noting that Werner is in contention in two weeks for the Rolex Grand-Am GT title and Henzler won the ALMS GT2 drivers title last year. Ritchie pointed out that Porsche has now won the manufacturers championship in eight of the 11 years of the American Le Mans Series, and is in contention to clinch its ninth drivers championship in those 11 years.

Speaking of drivers titles, Patrick Long (USA) and Joerg Bergmeister (Germany), along with fellow Porsche factory driver Marc Lieb (Germany) who were running as high as second place in GT2 just before the red flag flew, settled for fifth in their #45 Flying Lizard Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 RSR. Long/Bergmeister retained their driver points lead, however, even though the Melo/Kaffer Ferrari finished first. Long/Bergmeister now have 156 points, while Melo/Kaffer have 137, a 19-point lead with 25 points available for the last event.

Long was philosophical about the finish as he sat in the paddock waiting for the rain to stop. "We ran really well today, and pressured to GT2 leaders for the whole race. I have to offer congratulations to the Ferrari for coming in just at the right time for rain tires. In those last two laps in the rain, they went from fourth to first, and we went from second to fifth as we had to skate into the pits for rains. We are still in the drivers seat for the championship, and we will now turn our attention to Laguna."

Long shared the ALMS GT2 title with Joerg in 2005, and Joerg won it alone in 2006 when Patrick took one race off to drive the Penske Porsche RS Spyder. Then Joerg won with Flying Lizards and Wolf Henzler last year. The #44 Flying Lizard Porsche team car, which ran Ethanol E85 fuel for the first time, finished first in the Michelin Green X Challenge GT competition. The car, driven by Johannes van Overbeek/Seth Neiman/Darren Law (all USA) finished seventh in the GT2 class, was rated the best Green Achievement score from a formula which measures performance efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, and petroleum displacement.

The #44 s win clinched the Michelin Green X Challenge GT manufacturers title for Porsche over Chevrolet (Corvette). Both the #44 and #45 Lizard Porsches, along with the #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche, have a chance to win the Michelin Green X Challenge team title at Laguna Seca in two weeks. The other Porsche 911 GT3 RSR in the event, the Team Falken Tire entry of Bryan Sellers and Dominic Cicero (both USA), finished 11th in GT2 in only its second event.

In the LMP2 class, the Cytosport Porsche RS Spyder, driven by Klaus Graf and Sascha Maassen (both Germany), and team owner Greg Pickett (USA), took its third podium finish in three races by finishing third in class, but the team had quite an adventure on the wet Road Atlanta track. Graf started the car from the pit lane, and quickly carved his way through the field, catching all the LMP2 cars and most of the LMP1 cars, finally passing the eventual overall winning Peugeot to run fourth overall. But then, things started to happen.

“Obviously I don t want a race to end like that weather-wise with these conditions. Everybody wants to race but it s a podium for us and we ll take it. We had a really fast car today and I really enjoyed myself out there, even in the very difficult conditions. I made a little mistake coming out of the pits after switching to slicks but that wouldn t have had that big of an impact except that we then ran in to a technical problem which really took us out of contention to win the race. We found the problem actually which was really difficult so hats off to the engineers, it s not easy to locate the issue. So we fixed it and we brought it back out, but we had lost 48 laps. We ran really strong lap times again after that. I m happy for everybody on the team, it was great to have Sascha (Maassen) on board and I can t wait to get to Laguna Seca,” said Graf.

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## **BMW Rahal-Letterman Racing Report**

Source: BMW Rahal-Letterman Racing

### **BMW RAHAL LETTERMAN RACING TEAM SCORES 2ND PLACE IN RAIN-SHORTENED PETIT LE MANS Braselton, Ga.**

At the mid-point of a very wet Petit Le Mans, the BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team's No. 92 M3, driven by Tommy Milner, Dirk Müller, and Jörg Müller stood 2nd in the GT2 class. Under worsening conditions, the action-packed race was red-flagged after 4 hours, 49 minutes. The running order was frozen and eventually made final, securing the team's seventh podium of the 2009 season.

Dirk Müller set the fastest GT2 lap of the race, with a 1:21.366 minute lap of the Road Atlanta circuit. Earlier in the race, before a punctured radiator slowed its progress, the No. 90 BMW M3 of Bill Auberlen, Joey Hand, and Andy Priaulx was among the fastest GT2 cars. When the red flag fell, the trio was deliberately clawing back toward contention, but was forced to settle for twelfth-place.

Martin Birkmann, BMW of North America Motorsport Manager: "I'd like to dedicate this podium to the crowd of BMW Car Club members and true race fans that spent their Saturday with us in the pouring rain. This was the first race we've started under wet conditions, so we took a very conservative approach. We managed to BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team close the gap to the leaders with good pit calls and fast pit stops. Unfortunately, a mechanical problem dropped the No. 90 M3 out of contention or I think we would have had both M3s on the podium."

Bobby Rahal, Principal, Rahal Letterman Racing: "It's disappointing that the race didn't go the distance as I think we had the pace to win. At least we were able to end up on the podium again with the No. 92 M3, but it is a shame that Bill, Joey and Andy could not join them. This was a very tough race and I am pleased that both M3s are rolling onto the trailer."

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## **Acura Race Report**

Source: Tom Blattler, ACURA ALMS MEDIA RELATIONS, TB Communications

### **PATRÓN HIGHCROFT TEAM MAKES AMAZING COMEBACK; BUILDING A NEW ACURA AND FINISHING SIXTH IN PETIT LE MANS**

Fernandez, Diaz Score Team and Manufacturers' Titles For Lowe's And Acura

On Friday morning, hundreds of parts were strewn around the Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura garage area. A new Acura ARX-02a prototype tub had just arrived at Road Atlanta by special charter from Southern California.

By Saturday evening, drivers David Brabham, Scott Sharp and Dario Franchitti had driven the newly-built No. 9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a sports car to sixth overall in the rain-shortened Petit Le Mans classic, the ninth stop in the 10-race American Le Mans Series.

A brutal practice crash involving Sharp left the primary Acura completely destroyed and the team's LMP1 class title hopes in jeopardy. But a monumental effort by the 20-person Patrón Highcroft crew built a new Acura in roughly 20 hours in the Road Atlanta paddock area.

The sixth-place finish extended to Patrón Highcroft team's point lead to 21 over the de Ferran Motorsports team entering the season finale set for October 10 at Laguna Seca Raceway.

The Patrón Highcroft contingent, with Brabham starting from the pit lane after missing qualifications, might have had trouble maintaining the LMP1 point lead with a lightning-fast Gil de Ferran battling the factory cars of Audi and Peugeot. De Ferran drove his No. 66 XM Satellite Radio Acura ARX-02a to the second overall position by Lap 42. But, seven laps later, de Ferran Motorsports hopes went sliding into the mud, as Gil was hit from behind by Clint Field and his Lola. The de Ferran squad repaired the Acura in only 13 minutes, but the delay hurt the team's chances to gain points on the Patrón team.

The Lowe's Fernandez pair of Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz, seven-time LMP2 class winners this year, did not enjoy another winning effort this time, finishing second to the Mazda of Marino Franchitti, Butch Leitzinger and Ben Devlin. But the podium finish gave the Lowe's Fernandez operation the LMP2 team championship and Acura the LMP2 manufacturers' crown.

Fernandez and Diaz had clinched the LMP2 drivers' title at the Mosport event last month. The Mexican stars will attempt to tie the LMP2 season win record at Laguna Seca. Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas captured eight LMP2 races in 2007 for Penske Racing.

#### **ACURA QUOTES:**

**DAVID BRABHAM (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a):** "We obviously didn't get the chance to try many changes in the warm-up, so it took awhile to get comfortable in the car. Once I played with the traction control, I was able to get the car a lot better during the stint. I was able to move through the field and once I was on slicks, the car felt really good."

**SCOTT SHARP (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a):** "I had a good double stint but I was certainly super conservative. We didn't want to take any risks at all. It was great to get back in the car, and I am so grateful to the guys for all their hard work. To build up a new car so quickly is just amazing, and the car has been perfect all day. It is a real credit to the guys."

**DARIO FRANCHITTI (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-02a):** "The conditions out there were just terrible, probably as bad as I have ever seen. I nearly crashed while following the safety car. You get these rivers running across the track down to the esses. It is unfortunate for the fans. The Patron Highcroft crew is beat up after working all day and night to get the Acura ready. They did a great job."

**ADRIAN FERNANDEZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b):** "You never want to finish a race like this for the fans' sake. Nevertheless, we are happy about clinching the team and manufacturers'. Unfortunately, we didn't show what we could do today due to the problem with the steering. When I jumped in the car, there was something really wrong. So we needed to stop and change the steering unit."

**LUIS DIAZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b):** "We had been facing some type of electrical problem since Thursday. The team did a good job setting up the car, but we didn't discover the exact problem until the race. We would have loved to have won Petit, but it is great to come away with the team and manufacturers' championships."

**GIL de FERRAN (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a):** "This event was very disappointing for our XM Radio Acura de Ferran team. We ran as high as second today and the car felt very good in the early portion of the race. But to get taken out by a car [Clint Field] that was a lap down was ridiculous. That move took us out of contention for a podium here, as well as our championship hopes. ALMS gave him a penalty, but it took us completely out of the race. The first incident caused other problems for the car, too. It was very frustrating to have the race play out that way."

**SIMON PAGENAUD (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a):** "This was a tough race for us today. I really thought the car was going to be able to run with the Audis and Peugeots, especially in the rain. And Gil got the car moving up well. It's a shame that the Field car drove into Gil in the early stages of the race. It basically took us right out of contention. I feel sorry for the fans, too. The rain was really tough on the teams and the fans. They would have seen a tremendous race. Now, we have go to Laguna Seca and win the race."

**SCOTT DIXON (#66 XM Radio de Ferran Acura ARX-02a):** "I feel badly for the team. I made a rookie mistake in the rain. I wasn't able to test with the Acura in the rain. I was just pushing too hard and got the car into the curbing. We had a fast car today but it wasn't in the cards for the de Ferran team today. I really enjoy working with Gil's team and driving the Acura."

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## **Flying Lizard Race Report**

Source: Jennifer Hart, Flying Lizard Racing

The 12th annual Petit Le Mans ended with a damp whimper just before hour nine when the race was called due to rain. Officials had red-flagged the race just before hour five when heavy rain turned the 2.5 mile track into a gigantic skating rink. With cars parked on pit lane under tarps and umbrellas, teams waited out the rain, with the hope that the race would be able to restart. Finally, with night falling and temperatures dropping, officials made the call to end the race around 8 pm ET, after less than 5 hours of racing in what was planned to be a 10 hour or 1000 mile endurance race. Cars finished with the positions that they held at the time of the red flag. The Flying Lizard No. 45 was fifth and the No. 44 seventh. The No. 62 Risi Competizione Ferrari won in GT2. This reduces the No. 45 and team's GT2 championship lead to 19 points heading into Laguna. At Laguna, which is worth 25 points, if the No. 45 finishes tenth or higher, the No. 45 and the team will still win the championship.

The race started under ominous skies and was declared a wet race at the start. Most of the cars started on rain tires, running for the first hour before switching to slicks. In the Flying Lizard No. 45, Patrick Long started fifth on the grid. In the No. 44, Seth Neiman started tenth. Even with a very wet track, it was a clean start for the entire field.

By the one-hour mark, the GT2 lead pack had settled in, with the No. 4 Corvette in the lead, the No. 3 Corvette in P2, the No. 45 in P3, the No. 90 BMW in P4, the No. 87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche in P5 and the No. 62 in P6. With Joerg Bergmeister now in the No. 45 and now on slicks, he worked over his stint to stay with the Corvettes and build a gap to the rest of the GT2 field. Meanwhile, in the No. 44, Seth Neiman had handed the wheel over to Darren Law, who was just settling into his stint when he was hit by the No. 17 Falken Tire Porsche, sending him into the pits for two unscheduled stops for repairs and pushing him back in the field.

By the 90-minute mark, with the track too dry for wets but still damp and misty, cars were flying off track at every corner. Over the next 30 minutes, several yellows in a row reshuffled the GT2 field as the cars pitted for tires, fuel top ups and miscellaneous repairs. Joerg was able to hold on to P3. Nearing the 3 hour mark, at the end of his double stint, Joerg turned the wheel over to Marc Lieb. Out in P4, Marc quickly picked up two positions on a green restart after a caution. Marc had a strong stint, keeping the car in second place, before turning it back to Patrick Long for his second stint.

Soon after taking over the wheel, Patrick pitted under yellow in the No. 45 for fuel and a clean windshield. Just prior to the race going green, the No. 62 made the winning call by pitting for rain tires. Two laps after the green restart, the rain came and the rest of the GT2 field, including the No. 45, had to pit again under green for tires. The tire call gave the No. 62 Ferrari a one lap lead, and when the race was red-flagged at hour five,

the win. The No. 45 finished fifth and in the No. 44, Johannes van Overbeek had moved up to seventh. The No. 44 also won the Michelin® GreenX® Challenge in GT.

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## **Drayson Racing Report**

Source: Tom Moore, Drayson Racing

Drayson Racing had a full baptism of its No. 88 Drayson Racing Lola with Judd Power in a rain-soaked Petit Le Mans today. When it emerged at the end of the rain-shortened race, the Anglo-American team stood 10th in the LMP1 standings having completed 123 laps. The penultimate round of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) hosted the debut of the team's new LMP1 class prototype with drivers Paul Drayson (London/Gloucestershire, UK), Jonny Cocker (Guisborough, Yorks, UK) and Rob Bell (St Helens, UK). Overall, it was a successful premiere for the Dale White (Bozeman, MT, USA) managed programme as the No. 88 ran as high as fourth in the opening hours and owner/driver Drayson finished second in the Founder's Cup.

All was not sunshine however. At the two hour, 45-minute mark, a left-front hub failure resulted in a heavy impact with the Road Atlanta tyre wall. The team rallied but the race was red-flagged for rain at 16:49 (ET) and never restarted.

Each driver showed the potential of the new prototype. Cocker, a two-time British GT Champion, had a strong start gaining from the first lap. Although this was only Paul Drayson's first start in a prototype, his lap times matched drivers who have years more experience. It was this performance which resulted in his achieving second-place in the Founders Cup - awarded to the driver whose primary profession is not racing. Bell showed that adapting to a high-downforce car was a natural transition. Through fast, intelligent driving and pit work, the car ran as high as fourth and steadily in the top-six. However, fate would have it all go pear-shaped when Drayson handed the metallic green racer over to Bell just short of the two hour, 45-minute mark.

As Bell entered Turn Seven, of 12, the left-front wheel separated from the car. With no steering, the two-time Le Mans Series GT2 Champion ploughed into the tyre barrier. The car was pulled from the wall and Bell returned it to the paddock. One hour and 34 minutes later, he pulled the car back out from under the awning to great applause by the large group which watched in the gathering rain. In that time, the team determined the car had no suspension damage but would require a new nose, side pod, left front brake disc, mirror and other bits of bodywork. The loss of the wheel was traced to the bolts which hold the brake rotor to the hub. These bolts had worked loose, interfering with the proper placement of the wheel.

Bell had no more gotten on track, with wet weather Michelin Pilot tyres, than the rain struck with a vengeance. Cars went off in every direction and the No. 88 was not to be spared. At the last corner of the



2.54-mile facility even the deeply grooved tyres could not channel the water quickly enough. Bell spun entering the main straight and made light contact with the wall. He returned to the queue of cars lapping behind the safety car but conditions deteriorated so quickly that event organisers halted the cars in pit lane. The race was red flag for safety and remained so until shortly before 20:30 when it was called an "official" event and the chequered flag flew.

### Quotes

**Elsbeth Drayson, Owner/CEO:** "I am delighted with the performance of the whole team today. It was amazing to see the Drayson Lola-Judd running so high in the rankings against such world class competition. The way the crew rallied to get the car repaired and back on track after the wheel failure was very impressive at such an early stage in our experience with the new car."

**Paul Drayson, Driver/Owner:** "My first event racing a stint in a Le Mans Prototype, in the rain at one of the world's best circuits; it doesn't get any more intense than that. The cornering speeds are incredible. You certainly feel the 4.5g through Turn 12. I absolutely loved it and will always remember the experience. I've learnt a lot this weekend and go into the next race at Laguna totally fired up. What a blast!"

**Jonny Cocker, Driver:** "The car felt nice but obviously still learning at this stage. I keep improving on every lap. I had a good run in the wet, looked after the Michelin tyres pretty good and managed to make up some spaces. Later on in the stint I was able to pass people who had either changed to slicks early or who had worn out their tyres. The weather stopped it for us and we had a bit of the drama with the wheel problem. The car ran perfectly well and we showed we have great potential. For sure, going into Laguna, we have the knowledge we picked-up over this week. I think we'll be looking really good."

**Rob Bell, Driver:** "We came here to do the best job we could. In my case that was more than just driving around. I had to learn the circuit and I had to learn the car. It was a great experience. I am delighted to have been asked and I hope I have delivered to the Drayson team. I was delighted to have added to the team's experience and knowledge of the car. It's good information to help the guys to move forward."

About the on-track incident: "The race itself, for me, was pretty short-lived. We had a problem with the front wheel and it actually came off. It was pretty hairy going towards the tyre barrier. Didn't really know what happened to be honest. It lost all grip and the next thing I know I'm in the barrier. The team did a great job to get the car back on track and then the heavens opened."

**Dale White, Team Manager:** "That was one for the books. I've never been a part of race quite like this one. From our standpoint, we learned a lot and we showed that we can run at the sharp-end of the field. All three of our drivers were running very competitively in difficult circumstances. The crew again proved we have the right people here. The way they came together and attacked the car after the accident, an outsider would never know this was our first race with the car. We'll take the positives to Laguna and study how we can minimise the negatives."

To visit the official web site of Drayson Racing, please go to [www.draysonracing.com](http://www.draysonracing.com) .

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## **Farnbacher-Loles Racing Report**

Source: Roger Garbow, Farnbacher-Loles

The #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR returned to the American Le Mans Series podium today with a third place finish at The 12th Annual Petit Le Mans powered by MAZDA6 at Road Atlanta. The annual 1,000 mile/ 10-hour event ended early after race officials determined that the torrential rain soaked track was unsafe for competition despite several hours of red flag conditions.

Wolf Henzler of Nürtingen, Germany started the #87 in ninth position with rain already falling on the circuit. The Porsche Factory driver passed two cars on the first lap, was running in third position by lap 28, and was able to lead a lap before a scheduled pit stop on lap 33. Henzler handed the Porsche over to co-driver Dirk Werner on lap 61 during a full course yellow.

Werner of Kissenbruck, Germany, took to the track in fourth position and stayed within striking distance of the GT2 class leaders until an untimely safety car period put the #87 one lap down. With Henzler back in the car on lap 107, the Farnbacher Loles Porsche successfully maintained track position and got back on the lead lap during another full course caution on lap 140.

By lap 159, Henzler moved the #87 into third position and handed the car back to Werner just before the sky opened up on lap 165, causing the red flag to be displayed and ultimately ending the race prematurely.

Henzler was happy to be back on the podium today.

“In the beginning it was difficult with it raining, then drying out, then raining again,” Henzler said. “We had a great fight with the #62 Ferrari early on, and we had no major problems throughout the day. We made the right calls with the pit stops, the team did great, and we’re very pleased to be on the podium today.”

Werner echoed his co-driver’s sentiments.

“When the rain started coming down heavily at the end, our decision to wait to pit, and the fast pit stop that helped us beat the #4 Corvette out, was crucial to our podium finish,” Werner said. “I’m very happy with the result. The whole team worked perfectly together to make this happen. All the hard work we had to do as a team after missing the first practice and after the contact with the prototype really paid off today.”

Farnbacher Loles Team Principal, Gregory Loles, was pleased with his team’s third place finish today.

“Obviously, the weather played a major role in the results, but Dirk and Wolf did a fantastic job out there. Congratulations to them and the crew. They worked hard all weekend and the car was good in the race, in spite of the difficult conditions. This result was very important for Porsche as well, since our podium secured the Manufacturer’s Championship. We congratulate them and we’re proud to have been a part of it.”

The next and final round of the 2009 American Le Mans Series Season will be held at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in beautiful Monterey, California on October 10, 2009.

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## **AUDI Motorsports Report**

Source: AUDI Communications Motorsport

***Audi Sport Team Joest's test entry in the 1000-mile "Petit Le Mans" race at Road Atlanta (U.S. state of Georgia) had an unexpected outcome: The American endurance classic had to be red flagged just before half-time due to torrential rainfall. Although Audi had led almost entirely, the two R15 TDI prototypes were only classified in third and fourth positions. Small consolation: The Diesel-powered racing car won the efficiency award "Michelin GreenX Challenge" – a trophy awarded to the most environmentally friendly car.***

The technically innovative Audi R15 TDI had also been the fastest car on race day. At the start in wet conditions, Allan McNish and Marco Werner immediately passed the two Peugeot 908s which started from the front row of the grid, pulling further and further away from their competitors. Then on a drying track, the superiority of the R15 TDI was even more impressive: Only a caution period prevented Allan McNish putting the second of the two Peugeots a lap down after one and a half hours.

In the following hours, drizzle and a total of seven caution periods ensured that the leaders stayed close together. Despite this, Allan McNish and Dindo Capello kept the lead for more than four hours before McNish spun behind the Safety Car on the extremely slippery track at the start of the fifth hour dropping behind the two Peugeot 908s.

When heavy rain started shortly afterwards, Audi Sport Team Joest was quick to react and brought the two R15 TDI cars into the pits for a change to rain tires a lap earlier than the competition from Peugeot. The rain, however, became so torrential that more and more cars spun off the track due to aquaplaning, including the two Audi R15 TDI cars.

When the prototypes could not even follow the Safety Car anymore, the race was red flagged after 4h52m of the scheduled 10 hours. At this point, the two Peugeot 908s were running slightly ahead of the two Audi R15 TDI cars. As the weather did not improve, the race was not re-started with Peugeot declared the winners although less than half of the distance had been completed.

For safety reasons, Audi also voted not to re-start the race although the two Audi R15 TDI cars would have been hard to beat on this day – a positive feeling with a view regarding Le Mans 2010.

## Quotes after qualifying

**Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** "Except for the result, we can draw a positive conclusion. We wanted to use the race to gain experience with the R15 TDI, and we have seen that the car has the basic performance. That was very important for us. We've always been faster or at least on the same level as our competitors in the rain, on a drying track and in dry conditions. Unfortunately, Allan (McNish) spun behind the Safety Car. When the heavier rain started, we brought our cars back into good positions with good strategic decisions. But then the red flag came out. The fact that the race was not re-started was a shame for us but absolutely right for safety reasons."

**Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest):** "We came here to learn and we learnt a lot – among other things that a race can be very crazy ... The early stages were amazing: Allan (McNish) was impressive in the rain. Peugeot had nothing to oppose, surprisingly. But later Peugeot had an awful lot of luck. They were about to be lapped by us when the first yellows came out. It was very unfortunate that Allan spun behind the Safety Car and lost the lead due to this mishap. Nobody could know that this would transform into the final result of the race which was really a shame for us. For me personally, this race has no result and I see us as the moral winners. Until the red flag it was definitely a good show."

**Dindo Capello (Audi R15 TDI #2):** "This was a crazy race. Unfortunately, the weather conditions have destroyed a possible big show, because I think it would have been a great fight with Peugeot until the very end. But we already had to stop before half-time. We had an awful lot of bad luck with the yellow flags and lost the lead just a few minutes before the red flag. That was really bad luck! On the other hand, it was very nice to be back in America, especially at Petit. And it was good to see that we can more than match the pace of Peugeot – unlike at Le Mans."

**Allan McNish (Audi R15 TDI #2):** "Obviously the end – having the race stopped due to bad weather – was very frustrating because we were in such a strong position at the beginning. We had a good and drivable car. I was able to pull quite a gap which was slashed by the yellows. I lost the lead because of a spin behind the Safety Car when the track had very little grip due to the drizzle. We would have had another shot on it when the red flag came out. We still had 650 miles or so of a 1,000-mile race to run. It was sad for everybody but the track conditions made it impossible to continue."

**Lucas Luhr (Audi R15 TDI #1):** "This was a very short-lived pleasure. Since I've only contested three races this year, I obviously would have liked to race for longer. I think we would have had a really good chance here. But safety comes first. It really would have been too risky to re-start the race. Therefore, the decision was entirely reasonable. The outcome of the race is not a happy one for us. But we have to live with that."

**Marco Werner (Audi R15 TDI #1):** "If the conditions would have been a little bit better we would have really been looking for a re-start. We were one lap down, but we would have had a chance to come back onto the lead lap. We had a small advantage over Peugeot under these conditions. On the drying track, our cars were much more gentle to the tires than the Peugeots. We had a clear 1-2 lead at the beginning and a 1-2 victory would have been possible. It's a shame that Audi has been beaten for the first time at Petit. But I don't see it like this: Under real circumstances the result would have been different. This was no real race."

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## Team Cytosport Report

Source: ALMS website

### TEAM CYTOSPORT'S PETIT LE MANS ADVENTURE ENDS WITH THIRD CONSECUTIVE PODIUM

Mother Nature played her part in today's Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta and while in some cases it was advantageous to the Team CytoSport Muscle Milk squad, in others it wasn't. In the end, no matter what Mother Nature wanted, Team CytoSport still claimed its third consecutive podium with a third place finish at the prestigious Petit Le Mans.

The day started with a deluge at the Road Atlanta track and although the rain did slow down throughout the day, it never really ceased. Due to the inclement weather and subsequent track conditions, Team CytoSport decided to have Klaus Graf start the race aboard the #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder instead of Greg Pickett, who had been previously nominated as the starting driver. Per the American Le Mans Series rules, the Muscle Milk crew now had to start the race from pit lane, at the back of the field.

Graf quickly proved he was up to the challenge of driving in the wet and less than ideal conditions. Within four laps the German had moved up to tenth place overall and second in class, exactly where the Muscle Milk team would have started. Graf's spectacular driving wouldn't end there. Three laps later he was eighth overall, first in the LMP2 class and quickly chasing down the LMP1 cars. As a testament to the team's hard work as well as the performance of the Porsche RS Spyder and Michelin tires, Graf made his way by both factory Peugeot cars before his first stop on lap 36.

It was following his stop that things started to go wrong for Team CytoSport. Following a spin coming out of the pits on a semi-dry track with his fresh set of Michelin slicks, Graf encountered a mysterious problem. Having made his way back into the pits, the team started looking at what could be the possible cause of the stalling engine. After some great work from the team, they discovered that somehow water had found itself mixed with the fuel. A problem that was likely caused by all the torrential rain that had fallen on Road Atlanta and the entire Atlanta area.

With just over an hour gone by in the race, the crew brought the car back to the garage area, diagnosed the problem, pumped out the contaminated fuel and returned to pit lane about an hour later. Upon the team's return to the track they were now sitting 39 laps behind the second place LMP2 car of Dyson Racing and 42 laps behind the car of Fernandez Racing.

Once again proving to be up to new challenge, Graf put in another great performance and had made up nine laps on the Fernandez car, that was now second in class, when he handed the car over to Sascha Maassen.

Maassen quickly took over where his fellow German driver left off as he continued making up laps on second place. About an hour into his stint, Maassen with an excellent run had made up another 26 laps on the Fernandez car. With the factory Porsche driver closing in on second place in class, a caution period about four hours into the race halted his progress.

With the rain quickly coming, the Muscle Milk guys made an excellent call by bringing Maassen into the pits for a set of Michelin wet weather tires and a driver change. As expected the rain started falling harder and harder and with Graf back behind the wheel of the Muscle Milk car, Team CytoSport continued to gain on 'P2'. With the rain coming down heavily, cars were sliding off the track, first bringing out the yellow flag and about 10 minutes later the red flag.

The waiting then started. With the cars in pit lane and the drivers back in their transporters staying dry, the teams would wait about four hours before the race was called on account of the weather and the checkered flag fell on the 2009 Petit Le Mans with the Team CytoSport Muscle Milk crew sitting third in class. It was not the way or position in which the team had wanted to close out the race but in the end Team CytoSport scored its third podium finish in as many races this season.

#### **Team CytoSport Muscle Milk Quoteboard:**

##### **Greg Pickett, Owner, driver, #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder**

"I must say I'm a little bit disappointed that with the weather and the all stops and starts and the abbreviated race that I actually wasn't able to get in the #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder. But I'm so proud of my little team and Klaus... Klaus was sensational in the rain. I'm so tickled with him and I'm so tickled with Sascha, he did a tremendous job all week and gave us invaluable input. So to climb up on the podium again is great, that's three straight for us in the three races we've done so far this year. On behalf of everybody at Muscle Milk we just couldn't be more pleased."

##### **Klaus Graf, driver #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder**

"Obviously I don't want a race to end like that weather wise with these conditions. Everybody wants to race but it's a podium for us and we'll take it. The Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder was really fast today and I really enjoyed myself out there, even in the very difficult conditions. We showed a lot of speed and a lot of class to the whole paddock. And in our third race, that's a big accomplishment. I'm really proud of the team and myself. I made a little mistake coming out of the pits after switching to Michelin slicks but that wouldn't have had that big of an impact. We then ran in to a technical problem, which really took us out of contention to win the race. We found the problem, which was really difficult to find, so hats off to the engineers, it was not easy to locate the issue. So we fixed it and we went back out. We ran really strong lap times again after that. I'm happy for everybody on the team, it was great to have Sascha on board and I can't wait to get to Laguna Seca."

##### **Sascha Maassen, driver #6 Muscle Milk Porsche RS Spyder**

"That was the shortest ten hour race I've ever done! Klaus put on a great show in the beginning. It was really fun to watch. Unfortunately we had a little set back with our problem but we kept on going. The guys did a great job to find what was a very unusual problem. In all of my career, I've never had that happen and here we are finishing on the podium. It's great for the Team CytoSport Muscle Milk guys. To be on the podium in every race they've done this year is amazing. I'm just glad that I could be part of it this time and I hope we can work together again in the future."

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## **Dyson Racing Report**

Source: Brian Wagner, Dyson Racing

Dyson Racing won the American Le Mans Series LMP2 class today at the 12th Annual Petit Le Mans Powered by MAZDA6 at Road Atlanta. It was the first Petit Le Mans victory for the team. In addition, it was the first class win for Mazda at the Petit Le Mans, making them the first Japanese manufacturer to have won both the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the Petit Le Mans. The #20 BP Mazda Lola of Butch Leitzinger, Marino Franchitti and Ben Devlin was twenty-nine laps ahead of the second place Lowe's Fernandez entry when the race was stopped four hours and forty-nine minutes into the ten hour race for heavy rain. The win from pole was the second win of the season for the team.

"There were so many different conditions in the first two hours of the race and the car was fantastic in all of them. There was a point in the race where we passed Audis and Peugeots," commented Franchitti. "This is a great win for the team," said Leitzinger. "I have been to all twelve Petit Le Mans, and the year on year increase in the significance of this race has been great to see. Sebring, the Indy 500, and Le Mans – you walk in the gate and you can feel the buzz – and this race has attained that status in a short period of time." "These were some of the hardest conditions I have run in my sportscar career," stated Devlin. "Marino and Butch did a great job and hats off to Chris and Guy for the great drive they put in."

The #16 car of Chris Dyson and Guy Smith was not running for points since they were using the new BP fuel blend of gasoline, ethanol and biobutanol. They finished seventh overall, nine laps ahead of their sister car. Chris Dyson commented on the new advanced biofuel. "We are really encouraged by the cars performance on the biobutonal this weekend. The engine has run flawlessly all weekend. Not only does it have the same, if not better pace than the standard fuel, we are also breaking new ground and it is extremely exciting for us and our partners."

"It is an honor for the team to have won this race," said Rob Dyson. "I have raced a lot of cars that were good and a lot of cars that were bad, but never raced any cars that were unclassified! So this is a one – one finish!"

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## **Falken Racing Report**

Source: John Choi, Falken Tire

On a day of highs and lows, Team Falken's Porsche 911 GT3 RSR had both, as it returned to competition for Petit Le Mans on a rainy day at Road Atlanta.

"Our learning curve has proven to be a bit longer than we anticipated," said Team Falken Manager Rod Everett.

Among the lows were the challenges placed on the team by the weather. Red flags ruled both practice and the race itself, reducing track time. Fortunately, the team had tested earlier at Road Atlanta, and had determined an optimum set up. To offset the lows of daytime practice, the Porsche performed well during the night session practice, recording faster times than three other GT2 teams. Final qualifying placed Team Falken in 11th with Driver Bryan Sellers behind the wheel.

"Fortunately, we were set with tires, both wet and dry," added Everett, "and one of the highs of the weekend for Team Falken was setting the quickest time in the rain during the first hour. That told us our Falken Azenis RT race tires performed well on wet surfaces."

Driver Dominic Cicero worked well with Sellers, as the two ran in the previous ALMS event in which Team Falken competed, and the Porsche advanced to 8th place during the opening laps in the rain. While maintaining their pace when the track dried, Sellers struck the #44 Porsche as he went for a pass and repairs took approximately 40 minutes.

"The accident obviously put us behind, but we were able to get the car back on the track pretty quickly," Everett noted, "which really showed the strength of our teamwork and how adaptable the Porsche is. We regained positions and were in 11th place in our class when the race was first red flagged due to weather conditions, and ultimately called after 4 hours, 48 minutes of competition."

"The GT2 class is now the most competitive in ALMS, and we wanted to be able to show the capabilities of Team Falken among these entrants," said Mark Richter, Senior Manager of Dealer Marketing. "Despite the challenges, including the weather, we felt this was a good experience for Team Falken, and it better prepares us for the season finale at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca."

Team Falken intends to return to ALMS and the GT2 class and will compete throughout the 2010 season

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Road Atlanta / 2.54 miles  
September 23-26, 2009 / Braselton, Georgia

World Class

# ALMS Final Race Report

Class	Car	No	Class	Drivers	No Laps	Diff	Total Time	Best Time	In Lap	Make	Status
1	1	08	P1	(Sarrazin)/Montagny*	184	----	4:48:11.557	1:08.336	89	Peugeot 908 HDI FA	Running
2	2	07	P1	Minassian*/(Lamy)	184	2.011	4:48:13.568	1:08.977	64	Peugeot 908	Running
3	3	2	P1	Capello*/(McNish)	184	3.465	4:48:15.022	1:08.063	59	Audi R15 / TDI	Running
4	4	1	P1	Luhr*/(Werner)	183	1 Laps	4:48:23.649	1:09.456	89	Audi R15 / TDI	Running
5	5	7	P1	Panis/(Lapierre*)/Dumas	181	3 Laps	4:48:42.488	1:10.612	110	Oreca 01	Running
6	6	9	P1	(Brabham)/Sharp/D. Franchitti	180	4 Laps	4:48:20.520	1:11.357	65	Acura ARX 02a	Running
7	1	16	UNC	(Dyson)/Smith	177	7 Laps	4:48:48.476	1:12.575	97	Lola B09 86 Mazda	Running
8	1	62	GT2	(Melo*)/Kaffer/Salo	170	14 Laps	4:48:53.183	1:21.998	122	Ferrari 430 Berlinetta	Running
9	2	92	GT2	D.Mueller*/(Milner)/J.Mueller	169	15 Laps	4:48:16.509	1:21.366	71	BMW E92 M3	Running
10	3	87	GT2	(Henzler*)/Werner	169	15 Laps	4:48:24.484	1:22.081	124	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
11	4	4	GT2	Beretta*/(Gavin)/Faessler	169	15 Laps	4:48:28.296	1:21.785	88	Chevrolet Corvette C	Running
12	5	45	GT2	Bergmeister/(Long*)/Lieb	169	15 Laps	4:48:30.261	1:21.769	49	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
13	1	20	P2	Leitzinger*/(Franchitti*)/Devlin	168	16 Laps	4:48:35.595	1:13.087	69	Lola B09 86 Mazda	Running
14	6	3	GT2	Magnussen/(O'Connell*)/Garcia	168	16 Laps	4:48:50.032	1:21.594	105	Chevrolet Corvette C	Running
15	7	44	GT2	Law/van Overbeek/(Neiman*)	162	22 Laps	4:48:38.463	1:22.627	117	Porsche 911 RSR	Running
16	8	28	GT2	(Sutherland*)/Drissi/Bell	157	27 Laps	4:48:40.024	1:23.438	89	Chevrolet Riley Corve	Running
17	7	37	P1	(J.Field*)/C.Field	152	32 Laps	3:58:18.144	1:11.525	123	Lola B06/10	Mechanical
18	9	21	GT2	Farnbacher*/(James)	152	32 Laps	4:48:21.844	1:22.695	67	Panoz Esperante	Running
19	8	12	P1	Burgess/McMurry*/(Willman)	144	40 Laps	3:56:40.392	1:12.434	123	Lola B06/10	Accident
20	10	40	GT2	(Murry*)/D.Robertson/A.Roberts	142	42 Laps	4:48:26.912	1:21.819	119	Doran Ford GT-R	Running
21	2	15	P2	Fernandez*/(Diaz)	139	45 Laps	4:48:34.276	1:13.873	121	Acura ARX-01B	Running
22	3	6	P2	(Pickett)/Graf*/Maassen	136	48 Laps	4:48:19.403	1:12.222 ‡	54	Porsche RS Spyder	Running
23	11	17	GT2	(Sellers*)/Cicero	136	48 Laps	4:48:36.518	1:24.106	68	Porsche 911 GT3 RS	Running
24	9	66	P1	(de Ferran)/Pagenaud*/Dixon	136	48 Laps	4:48:41.257	1:10.809	89	Acura ARX 02a	Running
25	12	90	GT2	Hand*/(Auberlen)/Priaux	133	51 Laps	4:48:31.858	1:21.860	48	BMW E92 M3	Running
26	13	11	GT2	(Feinberg)/Hall*	129	55 Laps	3:32:22.687	1:23.408	94	Dodge Viper	Accident
27	10	88	P1	Drayson/(Cocker*)/Bell	123	61 Laps	4:48:17.863	1:11.800	54	Lola B06/10	Running
28	11	10	P1	Noda/Balbani/von Moltke	0	184 Laps	----	----	0	Radical SR10	DNS
29	4	19	P2	van der Steur/Pecorari/Pecorari	0	184 Laps	----	----	0	Radical SR9	DNS
30	14	33	GT2	TBA/TBA/TBA	0	184 Laps	----	----	0	Jaquar XKR	DNS

\*Qualifying Driver (Starting Driver)

Margin of victory: 2.011 / Time of race: 4:48:11.557

‡ New race lap record

Race concluded at 8:44:22.872 due to inclement weather conditions

<u>Fastest Drivers:</u>		<u>Cautions</u>		<u>Lap Leaders</u>	
		<u>Laps</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Laps</u>	<u>Car</u>
GT2	Dirk Mueller	69 - 73	Debris on track	1-39	2
P1	Allan McNish	81 - 85	Car 66 off course	40-43	1
P2	Klaus Graf	119 - 121	Car 88 off course	44-151	2
<u>Green Challenge:</u>		123 - 126	Car 20 off course	152-152	08
Prototype	Audi Sport North America	150 - 154	Car 11 off course	153-168	2
GT	Flying Lizard Motorsports	164 - 173	Car 12 off course	169-184	08
		180 - 184	Cars 88, 3 off course		
		184 - 184	Red flag time of 3:54:48.654 due to weather		

Beau Barfield  
Race Director

Lynda Polk  
Chief of IMSA Timing

Martin Kaufman  
Chairman of the Stewards