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Crown Royal 200 At Watkins Glen Race Report Compilation

Source: Team Race Reports
Photos courtesy Grand-Am and the teams



Grand-Am Race Report

Source: JJ O'Malley, Grand-Am

Ricardo Zonta and Nic Jonsson gave the No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola its second victory of the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 season Friday at Watkins Glen International, winning the Crown Royal 200 at The Glen.

Zonta led the final 21 circuits, holding off Scott Pruett by 3.325 seconds to win the two-hour event on the Watkins Glen 2.45-mile short circuit despite flat-spotting his tires on the final restart.

"We were not happy after qualifying," said Jonsson, who started eighth, the furthest a race-winning car has come from in 2009. "Then we changed the car completely around, using the same setup we used here in the Sahlen's Six Hours. Even though the long course we raced in June is very different from the short course we raced tonight, it worked out."

Zonta and Jonsson finished ninth at Watkins Glen in June, in a race won by Pruett and Rojas. It was the third Daytona Prototype victory for Jonsson - who won the 2005 Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen with team owner Tracy Krohn - and second for Zonta.

"We've had some small problems in the last three races, and we did not qualify well here," Zonta said. "From qualifying to the race we found what was missing with the balance of the car. The race was very difficult. When I got the lead over Scott, I thought I could maintain the gap. But then Scott closed in, and it became very risky with the traffic. But at the end, everything was okay."

The second-place finish gave Pruett and Memo Rojas sole possession of the point lead with only three races remaining in the Daytona Prototype championship. The drivers of the No. 01 TELMEX Lexus Riley, fielded by Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates, took a four-point lead over fourth-place finishers Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty in the No. 99 GAINSCO Pontiac Riley fielded by Bob Stallings Racing (248-244), after entering the event tied for the lead.

"It seemed everyone was out of sequence, and everyone was doing different strategies," said Rojas, who led twice for 22 laps. "We were doing a conservative strategy because of the points. If you gamble, things can go really wrong, and tonight the points worked out for us."

Pruett ran second to Zonta down the stretch, but could not get by for the race lead.

"Ricardo could be absolutely more aggressive," Pruett said. "We just didn't have quite enough for him tonight. Traffic was very interesting down the stretch. We did everything we had to do. In a race like this, every point counts."

Fogarty led the opening five laps from the pole before being passed by Rojas. Timo Bernhard led five laps in Penske Racing's No. 12 Verizon Wireless Porsche Riley before pitting. Other leaders included Brian Frisselle, Ricky Taylor and Mark Wilkins. Taylor led 22 laps in the No. 13 Beyer Racing Chevrolet Riley, while defending race winner Mark Wilkins led six laps in the No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley before finishing seventh, co-driving with Burt Frisselle.

Scott Tucker and Christophe Bouchut gave Supercar Life Racing its first podium finish by placing third in the No. 55 Supercar Life/Edata Solutions BMW Riley, while Bill Lester and Ryan Dalziel placed fifth in the No. 45 Orbit Racing BMW Riley. Rolex 24 At Daytona winners David Donohue and Darren Law took sixth in the No. 58 Brumos Porsche Riley.

Brian Frisselle and Max Angelelli entered the event one point behind the Daytona Prototype co-leaders, but finished 12th after contact with a GT car cut a tire and forced a late-race pit stop. Angelelli and Brian Frisselle are now 14 points out of the lead with 234 points.

Zonta and Jonsson completed 93 laps during the two-hour timed event, averaging 113.210 mph. The race was slowed four times by caution. Three of the cautions waved during the opening 35 circuits, all for debris and a stopped car. From that point, the only caution waved on lap 73 for debris from a chain-reaction incident involving Bouchut, Angelelli and Bryce Miller.

Segal, Assentato Win First GT Race of Season

Jeff Segal held off Dirk Werner by 0.774 seconds to win in the Acxiom GT class, giving the No. 69 SpeedSource FXDD Mazda RX-8 its second victory. The only other victory for that team was in the 2008 Sahlen's Six Hours, when the pair were joined by Nick Longhi.

"Everything that needed to go well did so today, and it was a great race," Segal said. "Last year's victory here was a long time coming. We knew the car was good when the SpeedSource team unloaded it this weekend, and everything went great today."

Werner finished second in the No. 87 Farnbacher Loles Porsche GT3 started by Leh Keen, and the position - which came despite a close call to avoid a spinning Daytona Prototype early - extended the duo's lead to 31

points (279-248) over Kelly Collins in the point standings. Collins finished fifth in the No. 07 Drinkin' Mate Pontiac GXP.R with Leighton Reese, while usual co-driver Paul Edwards missed the race due to suffering a shoulder injury in a recent mountain bike accident.

"We're extremely pleased with today's result, coming out of this race with a podium almost feels like a victory," Keen said. "We were a little bit cautious, and it paid off for me because several incidents took place right in front of me. Dirk was disappointed by not being able to get by the Mazda, but he was held up by lapped traffic."

Dane Cameron and Tom Sutherland gave Racers Edge Motorsports its first-ever podium finish by placing third in the No. 30 3-Dimensional.com/Click-Away Computers Mazda RX-8. Andrew Davis finished fourth in the No. 57 BryanMark Financial/Stevenson Automotive Pontiac GXP.R. Spencer Pumpelly drove multiple laps in that car, substituting for team regular for Robin Liddell, who took ill from food poisoning Friday morning. The team gained two positions late in the race when team manager Mike Johnson gambled on changing only two tires on their final pit stop.

Rolex 24 At Daytona GT winners Justin Marks and Andy Lally finished sixth in the No. 66 TRG Porsche GT3 usually raced by Pumpelly, who did not drive that car due to lack of sponsorship. Kevin Roush led twice for three laps in the debut race for Miller Barrett Racing's No. 48 IPC/Marquis Jet Porsche GT3, but co-driver Bryce Miller was eliminated in the incident that brought out the final caution. Dempsey Racing's Charles Espenlaub also led 11 laps after taking over for Joe Foster in the No. 40 Dempsey Racing Mazda RX-8, but retired while leading with electrical problems.

Craig Stanton led 11 laps in the No. 65 TRG Magnus Racing Porsche GT3 started by John Potter, eventually finishing seventh. It marked the car's first laps led in 2009.

The next stop for the Grand-Am Rolex Series will be the Aug. 29 Montreal 200 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal.



KROHN Racing Team Report

Source: Barbara Burns

Krohn Racing collected their second victory of the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series season at the Crown Royal 200 race at Watkins Glen International in Watkins Glen, New York.

Qualifying driver Nic Jönsson started the No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola from the eighth starting position. Jönsson was served a penalty on Lap 13 following contact with a GT Porsche after moving the Proto-Auto Lola up to the sixth overall position. Good team strategy paid off as Krohn Racing Team Manager/Engineer David Brown called a pit stop and driver change under caution on Lap 25. Ricardo Zonta worked his way up through the field, from as low as ninth position after a final stop for fuel, to the top of the lap charts. Zonta led the final 21 laps of the race, from Lap 73-93, and set the fastest race lap.

Tracy W. Krohn, Team Owner Krohn Racing:

"It was a real slugfest out there. The track is so fast. It's the fastest track we race. The car has lots of down force and you're hoofing through there.

We just seem to have really good fortune at Watkins Glen. I think that's part of it. We expect to do well and as a result I think the mindset is such that we've got to do well. Everybody is stoked up to perform and the team was flawless. The pit stops were perfect. Then driver change went perfect. Ricardo drove well. I thought Nic got a funky call there but hard to tell from the television about contact. It looked like it was a racing incident to me. The end was very exciting. We had a good strategy and it worked out well. Ricardo was very, very strong at the finish. One of the things we did was come in early on the driver change. We are not really trying to get points at this stage. We are trying to win races. I think that was a good call. The guys were all extremely excited. It was one of those perfect races."

Nic Jönsson, Driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola:

"We changed the car and went back to the set up we had in the 6-hour race earlier this year. In practice and qualifying we were struggling with the grip. We decided to go with something we knew was good here a few months ago. We completely transformed the car for the race and had a very good car.

We had a good start and went from eighth to sixth on the first lap. About 25 minutes into the race, Timo (Bernard), I think, and I came up on a slower car. I tucked underneath Timo and the GT car turned in and I had to slam on the brakes to try to save my car. I didn't quite stop enough. I hardly brushed him. It was almost like the air turned him and there were no marks on my car but they assessed a drive through (penalty) on me. It was very hard ruling but we knew we had a good car. David was encouraging on the radio

and said let's do this drive-through and keep running because we are among the quickest cars out there. We stayed on the lead lap and actually gained some time back. We got a yellow and decided to pit, change drivers and do fuel and tires. Ricardo got in and did a fantastic job from there, along with the crew. We had very good pit stops and a little different strategy than most teams. We basically pitted under green on the last stop and went to the finish. We were quick by about a half second. That gave us enough of a cushion when everybody else pitted that we ended up being at the front.

It's been a long time since I've seen such an excited crew and it is understandable. They have done such a fantastic job the last two years with this Proto-Auto Lola. A lot of time, testing and work have gone into this program. There's not one guy or two guys that can be singled out for the credit. It's a complete, pure, true team effort. It's just a fantastic feeling to be able to legitimize this Proto-Auto Lola's competitiveness...that includes in the dry conditions. We've had two wins this year. I think only two other teams have done that."

Ricardo Zonta, Driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola:

"The car was very quick. We had very good strategy. Only problem was to hold Pruett behind. The traffic with the GT cars made it difficult. I had to work very hard to keep my pace. It was so easy to make a mistake. It was very close in the end because of the traffic with the GT cars and the short track. We had to pass cars every lap. That was the problem. I would say when I was by myself with no traffic, I opened up a gap but as soon as I caught up to traffic they started to get closer to me. I think we were the quickest car on the track.

I'm very proud to drive for Krohn. The team has worked very hard so we are glad to win again. We are missing Tracy here to celebrate together."

David Brown, Team Manager/Engineer, Krohn Racing:

"There were moments when a lot of cars stopped very, very early...almost inconceivably early. I was thinking we may have made a mistake because surely they haven't all done this without thinking through. When a couple cars pitted they all seemed to follow the leader. We stuck to our plan and pitted under green and no one else did. We were able to run straight to the end without any fuel issues. Those people that stopped a lot earlier had to actually come in to take fuel. Not only did the strategy work out the way we wanted but the car was fast enough to produce the result as well. Ricardo set the fastest lap. It's not comfortable to have Pruett behind you. We had to work to stay ahead of him. The team did a great job with good pit stops.

Nic got a harsh penalty early in the race but he kept his head and got on with it and had some really good laps after the penalty. That laid the foundation for the rest of the race with Ricardo and off we went to a victory."

Zonta and Jönsson won the 200-mile/2 hour Crown Royal 200 race by a 3.325 second margin of victory over current point leaders Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas in the No. 01 Telmex/Ganassi Lexus Riley.

The next Grand-Am race will be at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve on Saturday, August 29 in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The Grand-Am Rolex Series races in conjunction with the NASCAR Nationwide Series.



MAZDASPEED Race Report

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

Segal Returns to Victory Lane at Watkins Glen

Jeff Segal and Emil Assentato scored their first Rolex Sports Car Series victory of the 2009 season with a strong drive in the No. 69 FXDD Mazda RX-8 on Friday night at Watkins Glen. The Crown Royal 200 win was the second visit to Gatorade Victory Circle at the famed upstate New York circuit for Segal and Assentato, as the two triumphed along with co-driver Nic Longhi in the 6 Hours of the Glen last season.

The Friday night Glen victory followed an intense two-hour battle as the GT Class raced the sprint event alongside the Daytona Prototypes for the first time in three years, making every lap a high speed traffic jam on the 2.45-mile "short course."

Assentato qualified the RX-8 sixth on the grid next to 2008 KONI Challenge Champion and fellow Mazda RX-8 pilot Joe Foster. Assentato had a strong start to the race, moving up to run in the top five before a caution flag slowed the field just shy of the 30-minute mark. SpeedSource elected to keep him behind the wheel to ensure that he was able to score full points for the race.

That decision was vindicated just minutes later as a second caution slowed the field and set the stage for a driver change as Segal took over.

Segal, who also has a Rolex GT class pole and several KONI Challenge podiums to his credit on the track, moved up quickly to fight for the lead with the current GT class championship points leader. But the high-speed circuit is one that he's long favored, and by the end of the shortest race of the Rolex season, Segal was controlling the pace as he moved out to a one-second margin at the checkered flag.

"Everything that needed to go well did so today, and it was a great race," Segal said. "Last year's victory here was a long time coming. We knew the car was good when the SpeedSource team unloaded it this weekend, and everything went great today. Emil drove a great first stint and the SpeedSource guys were spot on with strategy and the stops so it was a team effort all around."

The Daytona Prototype race provided some thrilling moments for the SPEED cameras, but the battle was no less intense in GT.

"I went up the esses side by side at one point with Dirk (Werner/No. 87 driver), and we very nearly touched," said Segal after the podium ceremonies. "But he's a very clean driver and we made it through just fine. It was

very close—there are a lot of guys you wouldn't want to run that close to but we trust each other and it was a really good fight. The car was just so hooked up that I had all the confidence I needed and it was great to come out on top tonight.”

With six top-six results in the last six rounds of Rolex competition, the SpeedSource-prepared Mazda RX-8 has shown typical Mazda speed and reliability for the 2007 KONI Challenge Champion, and Segal is looking ahead to a strong close to the 2009 season as the series stages the final race of the year in his adopted hometown, Miami.

“We had a tough start to the year with a couple of unfortunate results, but we've really been consistent and fast in the second half of the year,” said Segal. “It's great for the points to be racing in the top five race after race, but getting to the top of the podium is so much more satisfying and now I'm just hoping we can do it again before the season ends!”

Segal will return to GT Class race action in three weeks time as the Rolex Series visits Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal on August 26th.

Dempsey Racing's Race Report

Source: Adam Saal

What may have been Dempsey Racing's first Grand-Am Rolex Series GT victory in the No. 40 Mazda RX-8 was literally zapped in an instant last Friday night when electrical failure knocked the team out of the race while leading with just 50 minutes to go in the Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen International.

After a strong opening stint by qualifying driver Joe Foster, Charles Espenlaub – who was subbing for Patrick Dempsey for the second-consecutive race – was leading and pulling away early in the second half of the two-hour sprint on the 2.45-mile Watkins Glen road course. Instead of cruising to the Dempsey team's first win, however, a sudden electrical system failure knocked the No. 40 from the lead and out of the race.

“The Dempsey Racing Mazda has been very reliable up to this point,” said Foster, who was classified 16th with Espenlaub in the race. “We qualified fourth which, after it all shook out, ended up being the highest starting Mazda for the second race. We started fourth, were running in fourth and pitted in fourth and had a fantastic stop. Charles got in the car, took the lead and was pulling away and then we had the electrical failure, and that was it.”

Foster did all of the team's practice and qualifying work as Espenlaub, who was also racing at Mid-Ohio this past weekend, didn't arrive at The Glen until just before Friday night's race.

“We didn't do the short-course test day here after June's six-hour race, so we were a little bit behind on the set up early in the weekend,” Foster said. “We kept throwing stuff at it, and even before the race we changed some things again, and it was obviously good. It's very frustrating for the guys, obviously, because we have improved our game lately in terms of pit stops and we made some gains on the set up this weekend.”

The Dempsey team's performance was even more impressive when you consider it was the group's first race on The Glen short course.

“We had never been to the short course before so it was a learning experience for us,” Foster said. “We were definitely off the pace in the first couple of sessions but our Technical Director Kirt Wightman and the crew got the car fast for the race, and that's all you can do.”

Despite the disappointment at The Glen, Dempsey Racing is in the midst of its top season and recorded its best race weekend ever last month in the Porsche 250 presented by Legacy Credit Union at Barber Motorsports Park. Foster qualified a Rolex Series personal and team-best second in that race and then joined Espenlaub in finishing fourth, another career high for both Dempsey Racing and its drivers.

Dempsey missed both the Barber and Glen races due to professional commitments in California but remains proud of his team.

"Well, we are podium bound for sure," Dempsey said. "It's only a matter of time. I'm proud of our team and the progress we have made in so many areas. This was our first mechanical DNF in the last two seasons with the Mazda RX-8 GT and, as always, we need to learn from this challenge. We will be back strong, for sure. While I've been busy with work, I look forward to get back on track and I am planning on doing at least two more races this season. Our partner El Grado is planning another party in Miami and we are looking forward to that!"

SpeedSource Racing Report

Source: Wayne Nonnamaker

The SpeedSource team returned to the historic Watkins Glen International track to run a 2-hour sprint race on the short course. With only 4 races remaining in the season, the #70 SpeedSource Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8 looked to gain valuable points in the GT Class Championship alongside team car #69 SpeedSource FXDD Mazda RX-8. The shortened race format demanded absolute perfection and concentration from all competitors as heavy race traffic and shortened pit windows complicated the normal racing procedures that crews were used to. As night fell over Watkins Glen, the duo of Emil Assentato and Jeff Segal took the GT Class win in the #69 SpeedSource FXDD Mazda RX-8.

Emil Assentato qualified the FXDD Mazda RX-8 to start the race from the 6th position. While battling with other GT cars early in the race, Emil managed the first stint of the race flawlessly by keeping his racecar free of trouble. The team seized the opportunity to put Jeff Segal in the car with fresh tires and fuel during the second caution period of the race.

After taking over driving duties for the #69 RX-8, Segal concentrated on bringing his car to the finish line. Segal drove his way to the front of the pack in GT before the final pit stop period. An excellent stop by the #69 crew gave Segal the advantage leaving the pits and set him up to challenge for the lead in GT. During the final moments of the race, Jeff overtook the #87 Porsche for the lead and held off any attempts of relinquishing the lead. This victory brings the #69 SpeedSource FXDD Mazda RX-8 to sixth in the points.

"I am extremely happy for the #69 FXDD car and the entire SpeedSource crew," team owner Sylvain Tremblay rejoiced. "The guys work hard to prepare two competitive cars and today's performance shows the results of that labor and dedication."

Nick Ham started the race in the #70 SpeedSource Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8 from 8th on the grid but quickly managed to bring the car into contention for the GT lead. An early caution period stretched Nick's opening stint, allowing him to concentrate on settling into a driving rhythm.

The #70 Mazda RX-8 took the lead in GT before the midway point of the race, however, contact with another car sent the #70 car spinning out of contention and losing valuable championship momentum. Sylvain Tremblay managed to bring the car to the race end in 8th place, salvaging as many points as possible. "I'm bitterly disappointed for the #70 Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8. We finally hit on the right set up for the race and were in perfect position for a podium and probably a win when we were taken out of contention by another driver's error," Nick Ham stated.



Spirit Of Daytona Race Report

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

After getting the Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen off to a promising start with the No. 90 Boy Scouts of America/AMA Porsche V8-powered Coyote on Friday evening, the race ended early for Spirit of Daytona Racing after contact from another Daytona Prototype forced the team to retire from the event.

Buddy Rice opened the two hour race from the back of the pack after the team's qualifying time, which netted fifth on the grid, was disallowed when the recently re-assembled car was ruled to be too wide. But the top-five pace was no problem for the red, white, and blue machine as Rice moved up into the top ten in the early race laps.

The two-hour sprint event was playing out exactly to plan for the team as a full course caution period before the one-hour mark set the stage for a driver change and pit stop as the field circulated behind the safety car.

"The car was pretty good and even though we started in the back we were making up a lot of ground and had set a good pace," said Rice after turning the car over to Garcia. "So it's pretty disappointing to have this take us out tonight because we just need all the laps we can get in this car."

But as the Rolex Sports Car Series field took the green flag for a restart, mayhem ensued in turn one, with another machine getting significantly sideways at the exit of the corner and making hard contact with the side of the Coyote.

While the actual bodywork damage wasn't that significant, the impact sent the car airborne momentarily, and the return to the ground proved to be too much for the transmission to bear. Garcia brought the car back to the pits, but a quick survey by the Spirit of Daytona team forced the decision to retire the car.

"We were all right together there going into turn one, and then all of a sudden I see the car next to me turned sideways, and then he hit me right in the side," said Garcia. "I don't know what happened that he was there like that, but the hit was really hard. Initially, though, I thought the car was going to be fine. But when I was in second gear, there was a lot of noise in the gear box and it was only going to get worse and we lost drive."

"It is a shame because every lap we get with this car is one we can use to evaluate and learn more because we still are now where near 100% with this car yet," continued Garcia. "Our pace was certainly in the top five and even though we are more focused on the development of the car than the results right now, you still want to achieve the maximum possible every time. It is too bad to lose more than an hour of track time today that we could have used to keep learning, but it was a good competitive outing and we learned a lot in practice so now we'll just look forward to doing better in Montreal."

The race, which marked just the second start for the newest-specification Coyote, was another promising outing as the chassis enters the fray of the highly competitive and diverse Daytona Prototype field.

"This race is too short to have done the repair and got back out there so we had to just park it," said team owner Troy Flis. "I hate it, but we know we were a top-five car today and I think a lot of people saw how strong we are. So we'll leave here with a smile on our faces even though we didn't do what we wanted to get done this weekend. For us the big disappointment to lose out on the track time like we did, but we'll get this car fixed, make the most of the time we have before Montreal to regroup so we can head up there and just go for it."



Miller Barrett Racing Report

Source: Sylvia Proudfoot

Miller Barrett Racing led the GT class during the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series race at Watkins Glen International on Friday evening, but a hit from a Daytona Prototype car took the rookie team out of its first race. Bryce Miller of Summit, N.J., and Kevin Roush of Upland, Calif., combined for a strong start in the No. 48 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car sponsored by Marquis Jet, IPC Systems and Total Lubricants.

Roush drove the first stint, starting ninth on the 17-car GT grid. He worked up to lead the class after 82 minutes of the two-hour race. He handed off to Miller, who returned to the track ninth in class after a green-flag pit stop. Caught in a DP-class battle, he was knocked off track with a hit that broke the car's right-rear suspension and took the team out of the race.

Bryce Miller: "I'm really proud of the team. They did a hell of a job to put on such a show today in our debut race. Kevin drove his heart out, driving the car to the front like that. It was fun to watch. We didn't know what expectations to have coming here – it's really been a continuation of our testing and development. To start off like this and to have this as a baseline is a good sign. There are a lot of positive things to walk away with, but it's certainly a big pill to swallow to have gone from that position and not finished. But we'll get over it and look forward to the next races, and hopefully shake some things up here."

Kevin Roush: "With this unique NASCAR coupling [a shared race weekend with two NASCAR series], we didn't get any practice today whatsoever. We found a gearbox problem this morning, so we had to run the spare 'box, and we also ran a different differential, different gears and different suspension setup. We just rolled the dice and came up with a pretty good car. It's heart-breaking we didn't get the finish the team deserved. They did a really great job and the car was a dream to drive. Thanks to Marquis Jet and Paul Miller Porsche for the chance to drive with them. And I couldn't do it without the support of my sponsors Wheel Enhancement and JSI Shipping."



Michael Shank Racing Report

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

Michael Shank Racing rebounded from a challenging start to Friday night's Crown Royal 200 to fight back with both team Daytona Prototype entries and score 9th with the No. 60 Ford-Riley driven by Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri and 11th with the No. 6 Ford-Riley shared by John Pew and Michael Valiante.

The two-hour sprint race at Watkins Glen opened with the No. 6 car suffering a turn one spin in the early laps as Pew was working his way forward after starting deep in the pack. The resulting slow lap around the track and pit stop to replace the flat tire sent the car two laps down, and made for a challenging opening stint for Pew, who had been hoping to score his third Rolex Series podium of the season.

"I went to the brakes, and the car just turned around on me so I'm not really sure what happened," said Pew. "From there, the spin left me with some flat spotted tires and the vibration was really bad and I could barely see going into the bus stop. It was a really frustrating way to start the day! But Michael really put in some fast laps in the second half of the race and we were able to keep our position in the championship, so that was a good recovery by the team considering how things started for us today."

The sister No. 60 also suffered early in the race as Patterson was hit from behind after getting a good start, forcing him into the pits for repairs and also losing significant track position.

"We had a very good start and I got a well-timed call to 'go!' from the spotter so I was able to pick up a couple of positions on the inside," said Patterson. "But the No. 2 car came inside me just like a lunatic-with all four tires smoking, just completely diabolical and he hit me. I know they've had a frustrating season but that's no reason to drive like that and ruin someone else's race. So that was a big set back for us, but the car was otherwise strong-we budgeted that the NASCAR rubber would leave the track very slippery and it was, indeed! But to salvage a top ten from the way we started today is remarkable."

Despite the tough start to the race, the team converted well-executed quick pit stops and a pair of very fast race cars to recover from being shown on the second page on the scoring monitors to steadily move up right until the checkered flag fell.

"We had another podium car today but with Mark getting hit, it just wasn't going to be possible," said Negri. "It's tremendously frustrating to have a car that is that quick, but to have to fight from a lap down before even an hour into the race. The car was so well set-up and I had no problems getting through traffic but we just had too much ground to make up today to be competitive at the finish. It's a frustrating night for everyone. But the team did a fantastic job-pit stop, strategy, and of course a fast car. You have to have that, and a little bit of good luck, and we just didn't today. But we will be ready to go and fight for it again in Montreal for sure."

"The Rolex Sports Car Series is so close and competitive, that to be there fighting for a podium at the finish, you just have to have a weekend where there are no mistakes and everything goes your way," said Michael Valiante. "The car was very fast today. I could run with anybody out there, especially on the second half of the race because the second set of tires was really consistent. Hopefully we can have a little bit of luck and have the weekend go our way when we head up to Montreal."

The eventful Glen sprint race, which once again provided an exciting Rolex Series show for the NASCAR fans on hand as part of the Sprint Cup weekend, is one the team is looking forward to putting in the rear view mirror and start looking ahead to the trip north of the border in three weeks' time.

"If you had asked me before the race if I would be happy with a 9th and an 11th finish, I'd have said 'no way' because we knew we had some fast cars and felt like we could be fighting for podiums tonight," said team owner Mike Shank. "But after the first half hour that we experienced, it was a tremendous result for us to fight back to get that finish, just incredible. And to come out of this weekend with at least a few championship points and to not lose the fourth position we have in the championship with the six car is great. Hopefully we can have a little bit better luck in Montreal."

Michael Shank Racing will return to race action at the famed Circuit Gilles Villeneuve as part of the NASCAR Nationwide Series weekend on August 28-9.



Farnbacher Loles Racing Report

Source: Roger Garbow

The Farnbacher Loles Racing team brought three cars and a championship lead to the Crown Royal 200 at The Glen. Leh Keen started from the pole in the #87 Farnbacher Loles/Shock Doctor Porsche GT3 Cup and at the end, Dirk Werner brought the car home in second place. But considerable drama unfolded in the two hours between the start and finish.

At the start, Leh held the lead and stayed in front through the first round of pit stops, notching a race high 33 laps at the front. Eric Lux started the #86 Farnbacher Loles/Wheel Enhancement Porsche GT3 Cup from the fourth spot and quickly jumped up to second. Eric was running strong in second until the #76 Daytona Prototype hit the #86 and spun him causing the loss of numerous spots. Eric was able to continue on but the car showed signs of the collision. A late race contact caused more damage to the car before Porsche Junior Team driver Marco Holzer got behind the wheel. Holzer would eventually bring the car home in ninth place.

The #84 Dilysi Racing/Children's Tumor Foundation Porsche with John Tancredi behind the wheel started from back of the field and executed a different pit strategy by pitting on lap two to get in the mandatory early stop. John was running his first Grand-Am race and was getting faster with each lap before contact with the wall caused some body damage in the rear. But John continued on, eventually handing off to his co-driver Jim Pace. Tancredi and Pace would finish the race in a respectable 13th position.

Back at the front, Leh continued to soldier on, but it was far from an easy drive. After an early caution, the field came through turn one at the restart and two DP competitors came together directly in front of Keen. Between his fast reactions and a good dose of luck, one of the DPs narrowly missed the Porsche before heavily contacting the inside guardrail. Leh was fortunate to get through unscathed before handing off to Dirk. Dirk drove the last stint and jumped to the lead with 15 minutes left in the race. But lapped traffic caused a jam-up allowing the #69 Mazda to get by. Dirk turned the race's fastest lap trying to run down the Mazda, but at the end had to settle for second. The podium position added to the lead for Leh and Dirk in the Championship giving them a 31-point lead over Kelly Collins who finished in fifth.



GAINSCO / Bob Stallings Racing Report

Source: Adam Saal

A caution-filled Crown Royal 200 Friday night at Watkins Glen International saw GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing and drivers Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty work through some complex pit strategies and heavy traffic to take a hard-earned fourth-place finish. It was the fourth straight top-five finish and fifth in the last six races for the GAINSCO team which remains in the thick of the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series Daytona Prototype Team and Driver Championship standings.

Starting from the pole after setting a new track record Thursday in qualifying, Fogarty led the race's opening five laps but soon fell victim to the heavy traffic that plagued GAINSCO the entire race. The Rolex Series GT class rejoined the faster Daytona Prototypes in the Crown Royal 200 for the first time in two years and quickly became a factor in the race. GAINSCO and several other top teams also tried some tricky pit strategies and the No. 99 alone made three stops within the race's first 50 minutes.

"There was a lot going on," Fogarty said. "Nobody really had a strategy that necessarily was the right one. It was complicated for such a short race and it was a pretty crazy race, really. The GT traffic was also the really difficult thing for me."

No. 01 TELMEX/Chip Ganassi Racing Lexus Riley driver Memo Rojas slipped by Fogarty in traffic to take the race lead on Lap 6 and that team ultimately finished two spots ahead of GAINSCO in second place. The No. 01, Rojas and his teammate Scott Pruett now have a four point lead in the Rolex Series standings over GAINSCO, Gurney and Fogarty, 248 – 244.

"We had several issues today," Gurney said. "The strategy got a little bit messed up because there were so many yellows in the beginning and we ended up having to go on the same strategy as the Ganassi team even though we had made another pit stop. So we came out behind them and lost any advantage that we would have had. When it went green again it seemed like the car was pretty good and I had a little something for the front guys, but as the race wore on, the car got more difficult. We were lacking in straight line speed also, so that made it kind of tough, in addition to just really getting no breaks in traffic – some really bad breaks in traffic pretty consistently. Tough day, but it could have been worse points wise. I am glad we survived it."

GAINSCO ultimately made four pit stops in the two-hour timed race that was slowed by four full-course caution periods that accounted for 13 laps and nearly a quarter of the event. The race's lack of rhythm combined with the traffic to make for a difficult day.

"Neither Alex nor I were getting good breaks in traffic, and it seems like that sort of thing snowballs," Fogarty said. "You get your momentum broken and sometimes it goes your way and sometimes it doesn't. Generally it evens out over the course of a race, but not always. Today it just seemed to be tough for us. We expected that at this track, but I think we got the rough end of it."

GAINSCO also appeared to be giving up a little horsepower to the competition on the fast Watkins Glen 2.45-mile short course.

"We have done everything we can within the rules to maximize our motor," Fogarty said. "The motor is capable of much more if they would allow it. It's tough because we have a great team and we are capable of finishing up front even with that deficiency. Everybody is working hard to go fast but we have to extra risks to try and get the speed out of our car, and we just can't rely on getting down the straightaways. You can never get alongside anybody and that makes it really difficult to pass."

While GAINSCO had its struggles, the team's other championship rival had a much tougher day. The No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara of Brian Frisselle and Max Angelelli finished 12th after a late race flat tire that was the result of an earlier contact incident. After coming into the race just one point behind GAINSCO and Ganassi in the championship, SunTrust is now 14 points out of first and 10 points behind the No. 99 with 234 points.

"Big picture wise, it's really not too bad," Gurney said. "We only lost four points to the 01 and gained quite a bit on the 10 and the other cars. We are still in good shape and still the championship fight is on. We will take it to the next one."

Next up for the Rolex Sports Car Series is the Montreal 200 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal, Quebec, Canada on Saturday, August 29. The race will be run at 2:15 p.m. ET and live coverage starts on SPEED at 2 p.m. ET.

"We were real good at Montreal last year," Fogarty said. "It is a pretty cool circuit and we are going to keep working to improve the car. We are looking forward to getting back up top in the next couple of races."



SunTrust Team Racing Report

Source: Laz Denes, True Speed Communication

For being the shortest race on the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series calendar, Friday night's Crown Royal 200 at The Glen was packed with a season's worth of drama from beginning to end. But one of the teams that appeared destined for a happy ending during the two-hour event – the No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara of Wayne Taylor Racing – was only left wondering what might have been, through no fault of its own, as it had to settle for a 12th-place finish.

SunTrust Racing co-drivers Brian Frisselle and Max Angelelli, who started the day just one point behind the championship co-leaders from Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates and Gainsco/Bob Stallings Racing, did their absolute best to keep the Rolex Series title chase a three-team battle with a valiant driving effort tonight.

Frisselle led 12 laps and turned several of the fastest tours of the 2.45-mile, 11-turn Watkins Glen (N.Y.) International NASCAR road circuit in the early part of the race. He and the SunTrust team stuck to their strategy, deciding to stay on course during the second and third of three early caution periods that came in rapid succession from laps 24 to 35 while the Ganassi and Gainsco teams decided to gamble on fuel and topped off their tanks on the third yellow hoping it would get them to the finish. Frisselle then gave up the lead when he pitted under green on lap 45 to turn the SunTrust Racing machine over to Angelelli and for tires and fuel enough to go the distance. Two laps later, the Ganassi and Gainsco teams also rolled onto pit road for more fuel, having thought the better of gambling with the championship on the line.

And the championship chase was on with just less than an hour to go as the three contenders were running in close quarters in the seventh, eighth and ninth positions with most, if not all, of the cars in front of them having to pit for fuel before the checkered flag flew.

But the beginning of the end for the SunTrust team came on lap 71, with roughly 30 minutes remaining, when Angelelli was swept across the track by Christophe Bouchut in the No. 55 Supercar Life BMW Riley and then was slammed from behind by a GT-class competitor who had nowhere else to go coming out of the high-speed, right-hand turn 7. Bouchut and Angelelli continued, albeit with visible damage to the right-rear of the SunTrust racecar.

Despite the damage, Angelelli was still able to turn solid race laps and, over the next 14 laps, was able to work his way into the top-five along with the No. 01 Ganassi and No. 99 Gainsco cars of Scott Pruett and

Alex Gurney, respectively. Angelelli even made a brilliant pass of Gurney on a lap-75 restart to take fifth place, and then set his sights on catching the second-place car of Pruett over the final 10 minutes.

Just two laps later, however, the right-rear tire on the SunTrust car blew while approaching the same right-left-right combination of turns where the altercation with Bouchut and the GT car occurred on lap 71. Angelelli was forced to pit for a new tire, continued in 13th, and could pick up no more than one position over the final eight minutes to finish 12th.

“How can I describe what happened (in the incident with Bouchut)? He just hit me,” Angelelli said. “And then the GT car hit me from behind and created the problem in the right rear. I don’t know if we had a winning car today, but we definitely were better than the (No.) 99, the (No.) 55, the (No.) 12 (Penske Racing Porsche). I don’t think we could keep the pace of the (No.) 01. They were definitely strong today. I’m just really, really disappointed because we should have definitely been in the top-five. It’s going to be difficult to win the championship, but we have three races to continue the fight. Whatever team can be perfect for the next three races is going to have the best chance to win it. We know we are capable of doing that. We can only hope for the best.”

“It was very unfortunate,” added Frisselle, who won this race a year ago in the No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley. “The SunTrust car today was really good. The strategy wasn’t perfect, but we were still in contention for a great result. Bouchut went off course, and when he came back on, he came on recklessly and pushed Max into the GT car and that’s what led to our losing our tire. It’s really unfortunate that happened. But we’ll put our heads down and see what we can do. It’s not over until it’s over.”

Pruett, co-driver Memo Rojas and the Ganassi team went on to finish second behind the No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola of Ricardo Zonta and Nic Jonsson, which scored its second victory of the season. The Gainsco Pontiac, with Gurney and Jon Fogarty behind the wheel, finished fourth, behind the third-place No. 55 car of Bouchut and Scott Tucker. With the runner-up finish, the Ganassi team moved into sole possession of first place in the standings, four points ahead of the Gainsco team and 14 points ahead of the third-place SunTrust team. Three races remain on the 2009 schedule.

“Another tough day,” said team owner Wayne Taylor. “I don’t know what to say. We’re leading. We’re on a perfect strategy. The yellows put us back a bit. Then the incident with Bouchut – I don’t know what happened but, unfortunately, Max looked like he was in the wrong place at the wrong time and it hurt the right-rear of the car. And then, of course, we lost the right-rear tire and had to come in. I just feel bad. All these guys have worked really hard. The car was fast, yet again. We just have to put it all together. Now we go to Canada.”

TRGTeam Racing Report

Source: Kyle Chura

TRG's Justin Marks and Andy Lally had a strong sixth place finish in today's running of the Grand-Am Rolex Series Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen International. Teammates John Potter and Craig Stanton finished seventh with Josemanuel Gutierrez and Scott Schroeder coming home in 14th.

The Watkins Glen short course produced some exciting racing action. Justin Marks started the No. 66 Construct Corps/CRG/No Fear Energy Drinks/Voodoo Ride/K1 Speed/Gemstone Winery/TRG Porsche GT3 and carved his way up to ninth before handing over to Andy Lally. Lally and team engineer Jeff Braun used some midrace strategy to try and gain track position by pitting for the final time under green. The move produced a couple of spots but not the big jump that was hoped for, Lally had to settle for sixth.

John Potter took the start in the No. 65 Magnus Racing/TRG Porsche GT3 and raced it into the top 10 before handing over to Craig Stanton. Stanton proceeded to post blazing laps on his way to leading the race. The Californian managed to lead 11 laps. The team was out of sequence on pit stops and had to come in for a late race splash and ended the evening in seventh place.

"We led a lot of laps today," Stanton said. "That is just where the 65 car needs to be, right up front. We got some good TV time today. The track was really good and the car was great. I had a fun three way battle for a few laps and took the lead, which was exciting. It was like Friday night at Bristol. I didn't have time to take a drink from my water bottle. We were setup perfect for the last yellow, but I think they threw the green a lap early."

Josemanuel Gutierrez started the No. 68 Cohen Financial/TRG Porsche and put in some fast laps before handing over to co-driver Scott Schroeder. When Schroeder got in the car he experienced some serious vibration forcing him to pit the car for repairs. The team took the 68 back to the paddock to repair the left rear spindle.

"The car was pretty good during my stint," Gutierrez said. "I had a good handling Porsche and the track had a lot of grip. When Scott got in the car he had a vibration and had to come in for a repair which cost us some laps."

"Josemanuel put in a good stint and I was excited to drive," Schroeder said. "When I got in the car had a big vibration with the brakes was happening, which ended up braking a wheel stud. We had to go to the paddock for repairs. The guys did a really good job fixing the car to get us back out there to run some data laps."

Kevin Buckler, TRG team owner, likes the way his team progressed over the weekend.

"We had a tough start to the weekend," Buckler said. "The crew and the drivers really worked well together and the cars really came to life in the race. John and Craig had the 65 car in the lead and were headed for a great finish. As usual John did a fantastic job and so did Craig. They just got caught out of sequence on pit stops. Josemanuel and Scott overcame a car issue to take the checker. They have shown steady improvement throughout the season. I was particularly proud the way they dealt with all of the curve balls this weekend. They didn't get rattled, these guys are pros. Andy and Justin did a great job to get their car to the front and were a factor at the end. We just needed a little help with a caution that never came."

The team will travel to Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal Canada for round 10 on August 29.

Beyer Racing Report

Source: Beyer Racing

The Beyer Racing team once again became one of the key players at the Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen International as Ricky Taylor shared the honor of leading the most laps with defending champion Memo Rojas while driving Beyer Racing's #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley.

Taylor qualified the #13 car a season's best seventh and started sixth after a disqualification in front of him. The Florida native who celebrated his 20th birthday this week held his position and pitted after a caution on Lap 24 to fill up on fuel. He restarted fifth and as his competitors pitted over the next few laps he found himself on the lead by Lap 45. Taylor managed to hold the hard charging and eventual race winner #76 car and went on to lead an impressive race-high 22 laps until Lap 67 when he made his second pit stop and handed off the controls to teammate Mike Forest. Despite a quick stop by the Beyer crew, fueling problems prevented the team from filling up the tank and forced Forest to enter a fierce fight on track and hold position while having to drive with a fuel-saving engine map robbing him of much needed power. Despite the complications Forest quickly got up to speed and even though he had to make an additional pit stop on Lap 85 to get enough fuel to get him to the end he still managed to bring his #13 Daytona Prototype home on the tenth position, the team's fourth top ten finish of the year.

Jared Beyer started the race in his #5 Lennox Chevrolet Crawford car in the 17th position and quickly settled into a fast rhythm. For most of his stint the Texan found himself catching the cars in front of him and slicing through the GT traffic, but having to settle with staying in line and following the slower DP traffic without being able to pass at this fast and narrow road course. Beyer was running tenth when he pitted under caution on Lap 29 and Jordan Taylor got behind the wheel of the #5 car. Taylor, who is the youngest driver in the team at 18 years and who only a few weeks ago was among the quickest drivers on the track at Barber Motorsports Park, made an uncharacteristic mistake and spun which unluckily left his Crawford chassis stuck over a curve and forced him to wait for the safety crew to help him get back on track as he watched the field drive past him. For the remainder of the race he focused on turning quick laps which he did successfully and brought the car home in the 15th position.

The next round of the Rolex Grand Am Sports Car Series will take place at the historic Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal, Quebec on August 28-29. For Canadian Mike Forest the race will be a highlight in the season as he will have the chance to drive his #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley Daytona Prototype for the first time in front of his home crowd.

Ricky Taylor #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley: "It was a great day, a big improvement by the whole team, we've definitely all stepped it up. The team really deserves it they've worked really hard, it's a shame we couldn't make it to the end on fuel because I think we could've had a really strong result.

It's more comfortable to lead now, you can definitely learn more from the fastest guys that have been doing this for many years and I'm just getting more comfortable being up there and enjoying it. Ricardo Zonta was really quick behind me but I managed to stay in front of him for many laps, he was able to get a run on me every once in a while but the Chevrolet engine was really quick down the straight and we managed to stay in front every time."

Mike Forest #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley: "I think this weekend was a step forward, another top ten for us which is definitely a positive. There are still some lessons we can learn from the weekend but at the same time Ricky held down first place for a long time and I was showing speed during my stint. So it's definitely something that we can be happy with and now we just keep learning.

When I jumped in the car I came out straight into a big fight and I had cold tires so I was pushing real hard and locked up a few times but it was getting towards the end of the race so I knew I had to just keep out there fighting, it worked out pretty well I mean we lost a few spots but still ended up in the top ten despite having to do an extra pit stop so overall a good result."

Jared Beyer #5 Lennox Chevrolet Crawford: It was a good weekend for the entire Beyer Racing team. Although we didn't get the results we wanted we ran competitively and consistently throughout the whole race. The crew did a great job preparing the cars as we were quick right off the trailer. We had a little trouble in practice with the brakes but got them fixed and were back out there for the second session.

During the race we got caught behind some slower Daytona Prototypes on the start and it took a little while to get around them and re connect with the front pack. It was quite frustrating being stuck behind the slower cars but it's all part of racing I guess. Overall we are happy and looking forward to the next race.

Jordan Taylor #5 Lennox Chevrolet Crawford: "It was pretty much a disaster of a race for me. Jared did well at the beginning, we went down a lap down but he was able to quickly get it back and he was running pretty good times. Then I got in the car and made a mistake on the caution lap and spun when I was warming up the tires and that pretty much ruined the race because we went two laps down. But in the end we were pretty quick so I think we could've been good if we hadn't had that problem. The car was pretty good, I could run with a bunch of the top guys and keep up with them in traffic so I think we definitely could've finished higher up the grid."

Lexus Race Report

Source: Lexus Motorsports

Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas combined for a second-place finish in tonight's Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen International, allowing the duo to move back into sole possession of the Rolex Sports Car Series points lead.

Starting from the outside of the front row, Rojas moved the #01 Telmex Lexus into the lead on Lap 6 and secured a firm hold on the top spot until pitting on Lap 24. After falling back while pitting, Rojas once again moved into the lead on Lap 29, but at that point, caution flags, traffic and a variety of race strategies would rule the day. Rojas pitted once again on Lap 33, giving up the lead and turning the car over to Pruett, who would resume in eighth-place.

Pruett steadily moved up the grid and after a furious battle with the #12 Porsche, he moved into third-place with approximately 30 minutes remaining. Shortly afterward, a full-course caution came out and the Lexus-powered driver moved into second-place for a last run at the victory. Pruett hounded former Toyota F1 driver Ricardo Zonta the rest of the way, even pulling up next to the Brazilian where the two made side-to-side contact, but he was unable to squeeze by. With the championship in mind, discretion became the better part of valor and he would eventually settle for a hard-fought second.



Penske Racing Report

Source: Penske Racing

Penske Racing co-drivers Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas were relegated to a 13th-place finish in the No. 12 Verizon Wireless Porsche Riley after a podium run in Friday's Crown Royal 200 at The Glen was foiled by a blown tire with less than five minutes to go in the race.

The ill-fated tire proved to be too much to overcome as the Penske Porsche driving duo raced hard without a clutch during the two-hour timed Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series event at the 2.45-mile Watkins Glen International short course.

Bernhard drove the first stint for the team, rolling off in the fifth position. He qualified the Verizon Wireless Porsche in the sixth spot on Thursday, but another competitor's time was disallowed for a rules infraction that was discovered during post-qualifying technical inspection.

During his stint, Bernhard found the clutch had gone out on the Porsche-powered Riley, but the team made the necessary adjustments for departing the pits. As each Verizon Wireless crew member completed his over-the-wall duty, they moved to the back of the Riley to push the car off pit road and effectively restart the Porsche engine.

Bernhard led the race for five laps before turning the wheel over to Dumas.

"The car was different from last night," said Bernhard, referring to Thursday night's practice session, when the Verizon Wireless Porsche posted the third-fastest time. "We made [subtle] changes but the effect is more drastic. I think it is because of the NASCAR practices today."

With Dumas behind the wheel, the Penske prepared Riley remained in the top-five until the closing laps. The Frenchman was running solidly in third place when the tire finally blew, destroying the right side of the car's nose. The blown tire was the result of hard racing several laps earlier, and the tire finally gave way.

Dumas limped the Porsche powered Riley to pit road for service and after quick deliberation, crew chief Bill Vincent replaced only the tire and Dumas was pushed off pit road.

"A little unfortunate again," said Dumas. "We have had a couple of races where we were close to a good result and in the end it didn't work out. It is a pity for the crew, the drivers and everybody. At the other end,

we are trying very hard and it is frustrating to have these things happen. It is not something we could have done anything about. If a tire goes, a tire goes."

The Penske Racing team now stands fifth in the series' Daytona Prototype standings. The Grand Am Rolex Sports Car Series Presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 will return to action on August 29 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal, Canada.

Porsche Motorsports Race Report

Source: Andy Schupack, PMNA

Leh Keen (Charleston, SC) and Dirk Werner (Germany) drove the #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup to a runner-up finish in the Crown Royal 200 at Watkins Glen (NY) International Raceway Friday, but Porsche factory drivers Timo Bernhard (Germany) and Romain Dumas (France) were literally deflated five minutes from the finish and dropped from a DP podium to a misleading 13th place.

With just three races remaining in the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 season, Keen and Werner now have a 31-point lead in the Acxiom GT driver's championship standings. That is almost a full race's worth of points (35 points are awarded to the winners).

"It was a crazy race, but it was a lot of fun for the fans," Keen said. "There was a lot of action out there and bad things could have happened to us at any time. Dirk (Werner) was just awesome at the end. We finished second and we increased our points lead, so it was a great day."

Keen started from the pole, led the first 22 laps and drove for an hour and 15 minutes of the two-hour race on the fast 2.25-mile, 11-turn Watkins Glen short course before turning the Porsche over to Werner. Following the pit stop, Werner was fourth, but began a furious charge. Werner turned in his fastest lap of the race five minutes from the finish and wound up finishing just 0.794 seconds behind the winning Mazda.

"I'm disappointed," Werner said. "The (lapped) cars between me and the #69 car Mazda had nothing to do with the race, but they kept blocking me every time I was ready to make a move. I had to overtake them before I could try to overtake 69. I never got close enough to make a move on him."

"Our car was fast all day - it was just awesome. Our goal was to protect our points lead and we wound up almost winning and adding to the points lead. That is a very good result," he said.

The Penske Porsche factory drivers were a lot more disappointed than Werner. Dumas was running a strong third with less than five minutes remaining when he suffered a flat right front tire that slowed him down and forced him to the pits and dropped him to 13th in the final standings.

"A little unfortunate again," Dumas said. "We have had a couple of races where we were close to a good result and in the end it didn't work out. It is a pity for the crew, us the drivers and everybody. At the other end, we are trying very hard and it is frustrating to have these things happen. It would have been a heartfelt finish for us, and would have been a really good show for all of us. But it is P 13 for us again and we lose points in the championship. It is not anything we could have done anything about. If a tire goes, a tire goes."

It was the second time this season a solid finish has been spoiled by a flat tire for the Penske team. This one, though, really deflated the team's spirits. Through great strategy in working the yellow flags, Bernhard led for five laps early in the race and the duo ran in the top five all day long.

Dumas had a spirited battle with Scott Pruett (Auburn, CA) for 11 laps late in the race before Pruett pushed his faster Lexus Riley past Dumas en route to a second-place finish that helped him and teammate Memo Rojas (Mexico) take over sole possession of the Daytona Prototype points lead.

"The tire exploded," Dumas said, "I think I hit a part (debris) laying on the track. It just happened. It exploded."

"We drove without a clutch the whole race as well, so we had problems. We could have ended with a podium finish and we didn't," he said.

Both Brumos Porsche Rileys finished in the top eight overall. David Donohue (Malvern, PA) and Darren Law (Phoenix, AZ) were sixth in the #58 entry and JC France (Ormond Beach, FL) and Joao Barbosa (Portugal) finished eighth in the #59 Brumos car despite starting from pit lane after the crew repaired a leaking overflow valve on the gearbox cooler.

"That was a rough race for us but we got a pretty good finish anyway, so we'll take it and be happy," Law said. "For a while it looked like we finish much lower, but circumstances went our way at the end and we moved up. It was a positive finish, and we can take confidence from it."

The newest Porsche team was also disappointed. Driving the #48 Miller Barrett Racing Porsche 911 GT3 car, Kevin Roush (Upland, CA) even led three laps before his 2006 Porsche was tagged by a Daytona prototype and slammed into the guardrail. Roush and Bryce Miller (Summit, NJ) would up 15th in the GT standings.

Justin Marks/Andy Lally were the top-finishing drivers in the three-team TRG Porsche effort, finishing sixth.

Grand-Am Official Results

Pos No.	Class	Pic	Drivers	Team/Car	Laps
1	76	DP	1 Jonsson / Zonta	Krohn Racing / Ford Lola	93
2	01	DP	2 Pruett / Rojas	Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates / Lexus Riley	93
3	55	DP	3 Bouchut / Tucker	Supercar Life Racing / BMW Riley	93
4	99	DP	4 Fogarty / Gurney	GAINSCO/ Bob Stallings Racing / Pontiac Riley	93
5	45	DP	5 Dalziel / Lester	Orbit Racing / BMW Riley	93
6	58	DP	6 Donohue / Law	Brumos Racing / Porsche Riley	93
7	61	DP	7 Frisselle / Wilkins	AIM Autosport / Ford Riley	93
8	59	DP	8 Barbosa / France	Brumos Racing / Porsche Riley	93
9	60	DP	9 Negri / Patterson	Michael Shank Racing / Ford Riley	93
10	13	DP	10 Forest / Taylor	Beyer Racing / Chevrolet Riley	92
11	6	DP	11 Pew / Valiante	Michael Shank Racing / Ford Riley	92
12	10	DP	12 Angelelli / Frisselle	SunTrust Racing / Ford Dallara	92
13	12	DP	13 Bernhard / Dumas	Penske Racing / Porsche Riley	92
14	77	DP	14 Gidley / Jaeger	Doran Racing / Ford Dallara	92
15	5	DP	15 Beyer / Taylor	Beyer Racing / Chevrolet Crawford	90
16	69	GT	1 Assentato / Segal	SpeedSource / Mazda RX-8	87
17	87	GT	2 Keen / Werner	Farnbacher Loles Racing / Porsche GT3	87
18	30	GT	3 Cameron / Sutherland	Racers Edge Motorsports / Mazda RX-8	87
19	57	GT	4 Davis / Liddell	Stevenson Motorsports / Pontiac GXP.R	87
20	07	GT	5 Collins / Reese	Team Drinkin' Mate / Pontiac GXP.R	87
21	66	GT	6 Lally / Marks	TRG / Porsche GT3	87
22	65	GT	7 Potter / Stanton	TRG / Porsche GT3	86
23	70	GT	8 Ham / Tremblay	SpeedSource / Mazda RX-8	86
24	86	GT	9 Holzer / Lux	Farnbacher Loles Racing / Porsche GT3	85
25	21	GT	10 Alessi / Weisberg	Battery Tender/ MCM Racing / Pontiac GTO.R	84
26	42	GT	11 Nonnamaker / Sahlen	Team Sahlen / Corvette	84
27	32	GT	12 Hyatt / Westphal	PR1 Motorsports / BMW M6	82
28	84	GT	13 Pace / Tancredi	Farnbacher Loles Racing / Porsche GT3	80
29	68	GT	14 Gutierrez / Schroeder	TRG / Porsche GT3	72
30	48	GT	15 Miller / Roush	Miller Barrett Racing / Porsche GT3	65
31	40	GT	16 Espenlaub / Foster	Dempsey Racing / Mazda RX-8	47
32	90	DP	16 Garcia / Rice	Spirit of Daytona Racing / Porsche Coyote	32
33	2	DP	17 Finlay / Wallace	Childress-Howard Motorsports / Chevrolet Crawford	27
34*	95	DP	0 Bouchut / Tucker	Supercar Life Racing / BMW Riley	0
35*	43	GT	0 Nonnamaker / Nonnamaker	Team Sahlen / Corvette	0

* Withdrew