



Grand-Am Rolex Series Montreal 200 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, Montréal

Source: Team Race Reports
Photos Courtesy Grand-Am



SunTrust - Wayne Taylor Racing Report

Source: Laz Denes, True Speed Communication

The four-race “Solid Is Lightning Fast” summer tour of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series ended just the way it started – with a stellar victory by Max Angelelli and Brian Frisselle in the No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara of Wayne Taylor Racing during Saturday’s third annual Montreal 200.

This time, however, it wasn’t anything like the blazing hot Fourth of July afternoon at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway, where Angelelli outdueled Alex Gurney in a thrilling charge to the finish line, but a damp and dreary day on the legendary Circuit Gilles Villeneuve Formula 1 circuit, where the SunTrust team outguessed the rest of the competition to score its second victory of the season and thrust itself right back into the Rolex Series title hunt with two races remaining.

The defining moment came with less than 20 minutes remaining in today’s 2-hour event around the 2.708-mile home of the Canadian Grand Prix, which started with teams on grooved rain tires in a slight rain, change to slicks under drying conditions for the lion’s share of the event, and then have to play guesswork as rain came and went and then came back to say over the final 30-plus minutes.

Angelelli took over the reins of the silver No. 10 SunTrust Racing machine – with the words “Solid Is Lightning Fast” emblazoned on the sidepods to promote SunTrust’s line of mobile and online banking products – at the one-hour mark, 35 laps into the race. Frisselle, who started the race, ran in the top-five for the duration of his stint and worked his way up to second by the time he handed the car over to Angelelli, who resumed in seventh place. It was dry at the time, as it had been since teams cycled through a round of green-flag pit stops to change from rain tires to slicks on lap six. Angelelli worked his way up to third by lap 44, with 41

minutes remaining, as he chased the race-leading No. 12 Penske Racing Porsche Riley and the No. 99 Gainsco/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley.

He stayed in the top-three as rain began to fall with 33 minutes left to go and teams began to pit for rain tires on lap 48. The top-three, including Angelelli, came in on lap 50 for rain tires and quickly took their position at the front of the pack. Just three laps later, with the rain having ceased and the track already beginning to dry, teams once again elected to pit one-by-one for slicks, starting with the No. 99 team on lap 54. That left Angelelli in second place behind the No. 12 of Romain Dumas, who then turned the lead over to Angelelli when the Penske team called the No. 12 into the pits for slicks on lap 55.

Angelelli began to ask over the radio for his chance to pit for slicks shortly thereafter, but team owner Wayne Taylor, technical director Travis Jacobson and team manager Simon Hodgson encouraged Angelelli to stay on track as his lap times on rain tires were still significantly faster than those cars on slicks. Finally, just as Angelelli got the call to pit for slicks with 18 minutes remaining, on lap 56, rain began to fall once again – this time for the remainder of the event, as it turned out – and he simply stayed on track and was able to cruise to a 61-second margin of victory while those on slick tires had to once again pit for rain tires.

“It was incredible the way it worked out, just incredible,” said an elated Angelelli after winning his and SunTrust’s 14th career Rolex Series race and his second in the last three events held here. “I was telling the team on the radio that the track was ready for slick tires, but they kept telling me to stay out, stay out. Then, when I saw that it was raining again, I couldn’t help but laugh because I knew all the other guys were out there on slicks. I just want to thank the team for giving me a simply great car and an absolutely great pit strategy. This is just great. We are back in the championship, where we always feel that we should be and we will fight until the last race.”

With the victory, the SunTrust team, which started the day 14 points behind the No. 01 Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley of Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas, is now tied for second in the championship, five points behind the No. 99 Pontiac of Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty. Angelelli crossed the finish line 61 seconds ahead of the No. 12 Penske Porsche, while the No. 99 team finished third, another nine seconds back. Just two races remain on the schedule – at Miller Motorsports Park outside Salt Lake City, and Homestead Miami Speedway.

Meanwhile, for the 25-year-old Frisselle, it was the second consecutive Rolex Series victory at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve and the fourth of his career. He won here last year, co-driving with Mark Wilkins in the No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley, and backed that up with his solid piece of driving in wet and dry conditions over the first 35 laps today.

“I don’t know what’s more exciting, the way we won last year (as the race-leading Brumos Porsche ran out of fuel while approaching the finish line to take the checkered flag, handing the victory over to the No. 61 team), or the way we did it today,” Frisselle said. “I know Grand-Am racing is known for close racing and tight finishes, but I still think today was about as thrilling as it gets for a while there, even though we won by over a minute. When the conditions kept changing and teams had to try and gamble on what to do, that’s excitement. I’ve got to hand it to our guys for making all the right calls. It’s just great to win at Montreal for the second time. I can’t wait to get to Utah and continue this championship chase. There’s still a lot of racing left.”

“I’m absolutely ecstatic – absolutely over the moon,” Taylor added. “It’s one thing to win races, but to win it the way we did was just fantastic. The team was so incredible. The pit strategy was perfect. Brian did a good job in the beginning under really difficult conditions. And, of course, Max did his usual. He was absolutely perfect. The rain worked out very well. I’m very happy for SunTrust and I’m happy to say that we’re right back in the championship fight.”



Stevenson Motorsports Race Report

Source: Andrew S. Hartwell, ashautomobilia.com

Stevenson Pontiac Slides Into Third Win Of 2009 Season Despite slippery track conditions No. 57 Pontiac GXP.R takes commanding win

Despite the cloudy and on again-off again wet conditions in Montreal, the site of the Montreal 200 on the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, the Stevenson team made their own brand of sunshine with their third race win of the season. This was the 11th race of the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No.16,

Andrew Davis started the race in 5th position and he kept the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports / BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R in the front running pack until turning the car over to Robin Liddell.

Davis: "It began to rain while we were sitting on the grid, leaving me with the responsibility of choosing which tire selection would be best. Mike was confident that the weather would pass, and I knew that if I could just hold on for the first few laps that a dry line would form. At the drop of the green flag, it was extremely difficult just trying to keep the car on the track with slick tires on the wet surface. Luckily, our tire decision was the correct one because the track did begin to dry bringing the advantage back to the cars that opted against switching to rain tires."

The track went from wet to dry to wet again, making the choice of tires a difficult one for all the teams. In the end, despite having on slick tires when the rains resumed late in the race, Liddell used every bit of his driving skills to keep the car on the slippery track and well ahead of the second place car at the end.

Liddell: "The conditions were amongst the hardest I have ever driven in", reflected Robin. "The fact that we stayed on 'slicks' was the right call as the showers were off and on but it made the driving conditions treacherous and we were on a knife edge each lap for much of the race."

Team Manager Mike Johnson gambled that, with so many other cars pitting to change to wet tires, a driver of Liddell's caliber could move up to the front if he stayed out on the slicks. His gamble paid off, thanks to Liddell's incredible driving skills on a track that must have felt like driving on ice. Indeed, in the closing laps Liddell found himself sliding through and around corners far too often for comfort.

Liddell: "I had a couple of big moments when the car got completely out of shape but fortunately I held on and got the win. My thanks go to the team for a super job as always and for giving me a car to get the job done today."

Davis complemented his co-driver when he said, "As difficult as the opening stint was, I had an easy time of it compared to Robin. He was forced to adapt to changing conditions throughout his entire stint. He really

put in a stellar performance at the end of the race keeping the car up front in the most treacherous conditions.”

Team Manager Mike Johnson: “We always seem to pull out some miraculous finishes in Montreal and just like last year, we knew we had a good car, but not a very fast one, so our hopes were not that high.”

But those hopes took flight with Liddell’s stirring command of the treacherous conditions and thus a weekend that seemed bleak at the start became a time of shining accomplishment.

Johnson relates the story of the events leading up to the team’s third win.

“The weekend started horribly as we had to change our motor after a handful of laps causing us to miss most of the practice sessions. We were only able to get on track for the last practice session before qualifying. Andrew’s qualifying run was pretty good, but the Porsches and Mazdas definitely had some lap time on us.”

Davis added these comments: “Since track time is at a premium during this event, it certainly put us on our back foot in terms of finding the optimal balance of the car. However, the crew was able to make the change in the shortest time possible, giving us a little time to work on set-up before qualifying.”

Johnson continues his account: “Before the start of the race, a bunch of teams dove in for wets, but we felt it wasn’t wet enough for rain tires and our radar showed the rains would blow through rather quickly. Andrew lost time to the driver’s on rain tires, but as they all had to pit shortly after, we soon moved back to the front.

“Our first stop was AMAZING! At the 40 minute mark we put on four tires, added fuel and made a driver change while most of the competition had problems getting that all done. This quick work gave us a great gap.

“At the yellow flag, we pitted again for four tires and fuel but that decision dropped us back to third when some of the other GT cars took no tires. On top of that Robin spun a few laps later but I was amazed how fast he was able to drive up to the front again. What really amazed me was how he handled what came next.

“With 30 minutes to go, it began raining again, and once again, we chose to stay on slicks while most teams came in for wets. When the track dried back up again we were able to put some distance on the field which was just what we needed, because the rain came back yet again and this time it was much worse then we had seen all day.

“Now the cars on rain tires were catching us, but we had over a minute on them and they simply ran out of time.”

Johnson knew he had two of the best in Davis and Liddell and this race in the rain proved once again how enjoyable it is for him to watch them drive against whatever the odds.

“Watching Robin drive in those conditions was truly a pleasure and our team was fantastic as usual. In a weird sort of way, we joked about probably winning the race since we always seem to do well with adversity. Under pressure is when this team really shines.”

Davis: “It feels great to successfully defend our victory from last season, and I can’t express how proud I am of the team for refusing to give up in the face of adversity. This was a very deserving victory for the entire Stevenson Motorsports organization.”

The next race on the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No.16 will be the 11th of the season with the series moving to Tooele, Utah at Miller Motorsports Park. There is just one more race after Miller to wrap up the 2009 season.



GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Report

Source: Adam Saal

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing and drivers Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty challenged for the victory throughout a slick and slippery race of survival Saturday at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve and reclaimed the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series Daytona Prototype championship leads with a third-place finish in the Montreal 200.

Fogarty and Gurney each led the two-hour sprint race on the 2.709-mile Grand Prix Formula 1 circuit that was run in a mixture of both dry and rainy conditions. GAINSCO and its drivers pitted five different times in the race, usually swapping between dry and wet weather tires depending on the conditions at the time. GAINSCO's final stop came with just over 10 minutes to go when Gurney brought the No. 99 in for a quick change from slicks to rain tires. He returned to the race in fourth place and then charged down the No. 13 Beyer Racing Chevrolet Riley of Ricky Taylor in the rain to grab the final top-three podium spot on the last lap.

"It was pretty eventful out there, really difficult conditions" said Gurney, who battled side-by-side for the lead with the second-place finishing No. 12 Verizon Wireless Penske Racing Porsche Riley of Timo Bernhard in the race's late stages. "Once I got in we had a lot of battling back and forth with the No. 12 car and had to go in and out of the pits several times because of the changing conditions. Our car was pretty good in the wet and it was nice to catch Ricky on the last lap and get him for the podium. Great day for the championship, for sure, and we are back in the lead. Just two races to go, so it's crunch time."

The No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley and Gurney and Fogarty once again lead both the Grand-Am Rolex Series Daytona Prototype Team and Driver Championship standings with 274 points. They are five points ahead of Montreal 200 winners Max Angelelli, Brian Frisselle and the No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara and the No. 01 TELMEX/Chip Ganassi Racing Lexus Riley of Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas, who are tied for second with 269 points. Pruett and Rojas finished 10th in the Montreal 200 after starting on the front row with GAINSCO and Fogarty.

"We're pretty happy with our finishing position and it's a good day for the championship points' battle," said Fogarty, who led 15 race laps, including the first six circuits after starting from the pole. "We are pretty pleased with the pace of the car both in the dry and in the wet, so that bodes well for the remainder of the season."

GAINSCO and its drivers first led the championship standings in May with a victory in the Verizon Festival of Speed presented by SPEEDCOM at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. They reclaimed a co-share of the points lead with the No. 01 team after a series-leading third win of the season in the Porsche 250 presented by Legacy Credit Union last month at Barber Motorsports Park and now have sole possession of first place again with two races remaining on the 2009 schedule. Next up is Miller Motorsports Park in Salt Lake City, Utah, Sept. 19 before the season-ending race at Homestead-Miami Speedway, Oct. 10.

GAINSCO has been on the podium six times in the year's first 10 races and finished in the top four in seven races, including the last five in a row. The team's first win this season was at Virginia International Raceway in April's Bosch Engineering 250.

Round 11 of the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series from Miller can be seen live on SPEED at 5:30 p.m. ET (2:30 p.m. PT) on Saturday, Sept. 19th.

About GAINSCO Auto Insurance

The primary sponsor of the No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Daytona Prototype is GAINSCO Auto Insurance (Amex:GAN), a Dallas, Texas-based auto insurer that distributes policies through a network of thousands of independent agents across Sunbelt states. GAINSCO uses its "Are You Driven?®" motorsports sponsorship and marketing campaign to build brand awareness and advance its distribution strategies. For more information, visit www.GAINSCO.com.

About GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing has been committed to excellence in road racing since its formation in 2001. The team, lead drivers Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty, and the No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley Daytona Prototype won the 2007 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Championships and finished second in the same championships last year. The team is supported by GAINSCO Auto Insurance, powered by Pontiac and partnered with GM Racing, Riley Technologies and Puma. For more information, visit www.GAINSCOracing.com.



Lexus Motorsports Race Report

Source: Lexus Motorsports

After qualifying second on Friday, Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas found themselves chasing changing weather conditions more than their on-track opponents on Saturday on the way to a disappointing 10th-place finish in today's Montreal 200 at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal.

It proved to be "one of those days" for the Ganassi duo as the team made six pit stops in an effort to adjust to the ill-timed on-again, off-again rains that fell throughout the day in Quebec. In comparison, the eventual winning Sun Trust team made just three stops on the day and with the victory, it propelled them into a second-place tie with the #01 Telmex Lexus.

Pruett fell back to third shortly into the race, but managed to maintain that position until the team's second stop when Rojas climbed into the car as the team switched from slicks to rains tires under a passing rain shower. Unfortunately, the changing conditions would force Rojas to pit four more times over the final 23 laps of the race, dropping him to an eventual 10th-place finish.

Notes

- In finishing 10th today, Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas fall back to second-place in the title hunt, five points behind the leading #99 car with just two races remaining.
- Today's result marks the ninth top-10 finish for the #01 Lexus in 10 races this season.



Michael Shank Racing Report

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

The outcome of Saturday's Montreal 200 seemed to change with every sweep of the Doppler radar as Michael Shank Racing battled with the field as well as the weather on Saturday at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve for round ten of the Rolex Sports Car Series championship.

The team emerged from the rainy event with a top ten finish as John Pew and Michael Valiante finished eighth overall as the sister Daytona Prototype of Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri fought home to a thirteenth place class result.

The two-hour sprint event was a challenge for the engineers and drivers alike, as the weather moved back and forth between rainy and dry conditions from the time the cars lined up on the grid ahead of the race to after the checkered flag flew.

"It was a tough day all around," said team owner Mike Shank. "The (race winning) 10 car stopped to pit for rain tires one lap later than we did, and that turned out to be all the difference. It was just impossible to know what was going to happen with the weather even though we had the radar up because it wouldn't make up its mind. We had good pit stops all day long, but just didn't have any luck with the weather. It was disappointing, but now we'll look ahead to being part of the test at Indianapolis next week. "

At the green flag, Patterson started from seventh on the grid, and moved up to sixth but a lap one spin set him back before he emerged from GT traffic to keep moving forward.

Pew's race also had a challenging start, as his wet-weather tires were ideal for the rainy conditions at the green flag, but the following laps saw the track dry out and put the pressure on the rear rubber and made for a challenging opening segment in the No. 6.

"Just some bad luck with the tire choices for us today," lamented Pew, who fortunately was able to avoid teammate Patterson's spin on the first lap. "My stint was really difficult because the wet tires had gone so far off that it was almost as if something was broken at the back of the car. It was very hard to drive, even on the straights so I had to bring it in."

Valiante took the controls from deep in the pack, and was fighting his way forward when another car moved aside under braking, causing contact that the Canadian was deemed to be responsible for as he had to return to the pits for a stop and go penalty. But he charged back and raced his way back on to the lead lap for the final segments of race. After moving up as high as second in the running order, one final pit stop for rain tires to close out the race saw him set another round of fast laps and cross the line in eighth.

"It is a bit frustrating to run in position for a podium so late in the race, but to not be able to convert that to some good points because of the way the weather effected the outcome," said Valiante. "It was really challenging to be out there in the rain with slicks on so I had to come back in for the rains but that cost us a lot of track position today."

In addition to also fending off the constant invitations of the walls that line the 2.71-mile circuit thanks to the inclement weather, No. 60's day was compromised after it was involved in contact from another competitor. The No. 2 entry, which has now created issues by making contact with the orange and black Riley in three of the last four races, once again crashed into the 60 as Negri was fighting his way back onto the lead lap.

The incident brought out the only yellow flag of the day and paid no favors to Negri and Patterson's intentions of moving up from 10th in the championship standings.

"This was a very hard day and it ended up with a disappointing result," said Negri. "But we have to just keep fighting and something good will happen to us, I know it. We have had the speed and keep showing that but need to just have a day that lets us show the speed and have the good luck to go with it. We've won two of the last three races at Miller, so hopefully we can make it three when we got back out there next month."

"It was my mistake on the first lap—there was a bit of a gap and I just went for it and ended up spinning so that was an unfortunate way to start things off," said Patterson. "I am not sure what it is about the No. 2 car that it seems to always end up effecting our race but unfortunately it happened once again today. It was back and forth with the rain and the tire choices were obvious--but only after the fact!"

Michael Shank Racing will return to the team shop outside of Columbus, Ohio before heading West to participate in the Rolex Sports Car Series test at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Thursday.



Miller Barrett Racing Report

Source: Sylvia Proudfoot

Miller Barrett Racing had a great start to the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series race at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montréal on Saturday, but a broken gearshift handle took the young team out of contention. The race was the team's second in a four-race test program this year in preparation for a full-season effort in 2010.

Dave Lacey of Toronto was unable to qualify the No. 48 Marquis Jet / IPC / Total Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car because of gearbox problems on Friday, so he had to start the race from the back of the GT-class grid. Heavy rain made the 4.361-km (2.708-mile) track treacherous, but that didn't deter him. He moved from 13th to fifth in class in the first few minutes of the two-hour race.

As the rain stopped and the track dried, Lacey pitted for slick race tires, but found the car handling wasn't as strong in dry conditions. After 39 minutes, the car's gearshift handle broke, forcing a 21-minute pitstop for repairs. Bryce Miller of Summit, N.J., took over and drove the last hour of the race, using it as a test session to continue the car's development.

Dave Lacey: "We had a good setup for the wet. That showed in the first half hour of the race. But as the track dried, the car wasn't as good and I started losing ground to the leaders. Then the shift linkage broke. Bryce did a great job on his stint. We were dealt a bad card, but we made the best of it and the [lap] times were there at the end. This is a young team, with great days ahead of it."

Bryce Miller: "We experienced a lot of growing pains today, but it's good that we finished the race and got a lot of data. We can use that to continue our growth and continue to learn, so we can close the gap to where we want to be. There is still a long way to go, but we'll keep our heads down and learn everything we can from the next couple of races."

Bryce Miller races with the support of three international sponsors. Marquis Jet is the recognized leader in private jet cards because it's the only program that offers exclusive access to NetJets – the gold standard in private aviation – 25 hours at a time. IPC Information Systems is a leading provider of mission-critical communications solutions to financial services firms. Total Lubricants is the world's fourth-largest publicly traded integrated international oil and gas company.



Beyer Racing Report

Source: Beyer Racing

The Beyer Racing squad came within one lap of achieving the team's first Grand Am Rolex Sports Car Series podium finish in a crazy and exciting wet and dry race that saw Ricky Taylor fighting for the third position until the last lap when he was passed by the championship leading #99 Daytona Prototype.

Canadian Mike Forest made an impressive start from the 12th position on the grid of the Montreal 200 and quickly fought his way to seventh in only one lap as he managed to quickly adapt to the wet conditions. As the track dried the Beyer Racing crew brought Forest in for slick tires on Lap 6 and then he continued with a strong top ten performance until Lap 42 when he handed the wheel of his #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley to teammate Ricky Taylor. Forest was the top finishing Canadian in the field.

After Taylor took over the track was dry, but only a few laps later the rain began to fall and the Beyer Racing engineers made the first of many brilliant calls to bring him in for wet tires on Lap 49. After the rain dissipated many of the leaders decided to pit for slicks but the Beyer crew decided to leave Taylor out which proved to be the smart choice as only a few laps later the rain began to fall again much harder. Taylor found himself within the top three and managed to hold the position until the last lap when he had to give it up but still gave Beyer Racing the young team's best finish of fourth.

Ricky Taylor #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley

"This is a great result for the entire Beyer Racing team, the best result for the team and my best result in my Grand Am career. It had been a tough weekend, we had struggled to get in the top ten but then the rain came and we are right on pace so just a great effort by everybody. We made a lot of pit stops and tire changes and the team performed perfectly, they deserve it.

"During my stint I sort of knew what was going on. I could see when it stopped raining that many cars started pitting for slicks and I could see on the tower that we were gaining positions. I thought we were going to come in for slicks as well but our engineer Dominic Cape made a great call and as soon as it started raining I knew that we were going to be in a great position. When the team told me we were P2 I was really excited, unfortunately our windshield wasn't working and once the Penske car got by I could not see a thing, those last few laps I was almost driving blind so that made it quite difficult."

Mike Forest #13 Lennox Chevrolet Riley

"The conditions at the start were just changing so quickly, we went out on wets at the start and just got shot out of a gun and managed to pick up a bunch of positions. With all the changing conditions I was struggling a bit at first to find speed, the track was changing corner by corner so we lost some time but the team made a great call on strategy to get us back on the lead lap. It was really difficult driving out there for sure.

"It was great to have achieved our best result here in Canada, there is no better place for me to have done it. You don't really think about that until times like now but I'm just very proud to have given the Canadians fan a great result, being the top finishing Canadian means a lot to me.

Jeff Beyer Team Owner

"I am very proud of the whole team. We are a young team and have been working very hard all year and improving every race. This result proves how much effort we've put into this project, I'm very happy. I can't say enough for Ricky and Mike, they did a great job out there in really difficult conditions, and also for our engineer Dominic Cape who made some brilliant calls with tire strategy. We'll keep working and improving and hopefully we can get our first podium before the season is over."

Spirit of Daytona Racing Report

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

Spirit of Daytona Racing made the first Rolex Sports Car Series race finish with the newest specification Coyote chassis on Saturday as Buddy Rice and Antonio Garcia brought the Porsche V8-powered Coyote home 11th in the Montreal 200 for round ten of the Rolex Sports Car Series championship. The result improved on the team's previous best finish of 16th at the Montreal circuit last year.

The race weekend provided the opportunity for Spirit of Daytona Racing to further develop the Coyote on the 2.71-mile Circuit Gilles Villeneuve. The team opened the Montreal 200 race weekend with a series of practice sessions on Friday, which saw the entry firmly in the top-ten in the charts throughout. But a motor issue kept the team from making the most of the day as the team had had to rally to make an engine swap after a crank pressure sensor indicated that a change was needed.

Looking to be ahead of the curve with any motor issues, the team elected to make the change to prevent the issue from becoming a bigger one. The effort was quick enough to get the car back out in time for the final night practice session, but it prevented the team from participating in qualifying.

Starting from the back of the pack in the race, Rice played it cool at the start before moving up through the field and establishing the No. 90 in the top ten. By the one hour mark, the Rolex 24 champ had the No. 90 up to 3rd in the order before turning the controls over to Garcia.

"The car was good—we are not where we want to be as far as pace yet, but we definitely made progress and are moving in the right direction with the car," said Rice. "We also learned a lot about things we can do to improve the car in the rain, just with our wipers and sealing up the cockpit a little bit better. That's just part of learning about this car. We're still working on it and we are not as close as we want to be but this was a good weekend in terms of getting a good direction going."

The strong run ended just shy of the hoped-for top ten after the back and forth rain and dry conditions saw the team pit one extra time for wet-weather tires and fight to take the checkered flag in 11th with Garcia behind the wheel.

"We'd have liked to been up in the top ten today, but these results are a lot less important than the results we want to be getting with this package next year," said team owner Troy Flis. "We lost some track time with the motor change yesterday and that put us behind a little bit. But we made progress, no question. We still have to really unlock what it takes to make this car click with these tires and get into that window where they are working as well as they can together and giving the guys a car that they are comfortable with to go out there and have a lot of confidence with. Fortunately, we'll get the chance to keep working at it again this week."

Spirit of Daytona Racing will not have long to rest, as the team will bring the No. 90 Porsche-V8-powered Coyote to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway to participate in a test at the famed facility this Thursday.



Grand-Am Race Report

Source: JJ O'Malley, Grand-Am Communications

Battling ever-changing and sometimes treacherous weather conditions, Max Angelelli cruised to a one-minute victory in Saturday's Montreal 200 - taking new life in the battle for the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Daytona Prototype championship in the process.

With only two races remaining, Angelelli - who led the final 12 of 67 laps at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve - and co-driver Brian Frisselle are tied for second with Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas, five points behind leaders Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty (274-269).

It was the second victory of the season for the No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara, and second triumph at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve for both Frisselle (who won in 2008) and Angelelli (2007).

Romain Dumas and Timo Bernhard combined to lead 38 laps in the No. 12 Penske Racing Verizon Wireless Porsche Riley and finished second, 1:01.264 behind Angelelli. Prior to Saturday, the combined margin of victory for nine 2009 Rolex Series races was 57.851 seconds.

Angelelli credited SunTrust Racing strategy with giving him the gap on the rest of the field. While many of the contenders were pitting for slick tires on the drying track, Angelelli was told to stay out despite the conditions.

"Then on the lap I was going to come in, it started raining again," Angelelli said. "All the other guys were on slicks and had to come in - and I started laughing."

Gurney took the final podium position from Ricky Taylor on the final lap in the No. 99 GAINSCO Pontiac Riley started by pole winner Jon Fogarty.

Taylor and Canadian Mike Forest scored the best-ever finish for the No. 13 Lennox/Brach's Chevrolet Riley, fourth, followed by Darren Law and David Donohue in the No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley.

Defending Montreal 200 winner Mark Wilkins and new co-driver Burt Frisselle finished sixth in the No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley. Wilkins finished 0.052 seconds behind Law - closer than last year's Rolex Series record margin of victory (0.064 seconds) when Wilkins passed Antonio Garcia and Law in the final yards before the checkered flag.

Pruett and Rojas were among the teams caught out by the changing conditions, finishing 10th in the No. 01 TELMEX Lexus Riley. They entered the race three points ahead of Gurney and Fogarty, while Angelelli and Brian Frisselle were 14 points back.

Despite the on-and-off rain, there was only one brief full-course caution, when Ozz Negri spun on Lap 41 after contact with Rob Finlay. The race's average speed fell to 89.526 mph (144.078 kph).

The biggest incident occurred before the green flag, when NASCAR Sprint Cup Series regular Carl Edwards spun into a guardrail in Turn 11. He and fellow NASCAR star Marcos Ambrose planned to make their Daytona Prototype debut in the Doran Racing No. 77 Aflac/iRacing/Au Vineyards Ford Dallara.

"The tires with these cars take so long to get grip and are so much different than what I'm used to," said Edwards, who qualified seventh. "I worked the tires in as good as I could, and I just got a little too aggressive at a medium speed corner and it swapped. I feel terrible."

Liddell, Davis Repeat Montreal Winners in GT

Robin Liddell passed Andy Lally for the lead and then led the final 18 circuits to give the No. 57 BryanMark Financial/Stevenson Automotive Pontiac GXP.R its second consecutive Montreal 200 Acxiom GT victory and third triumph of the 2009 campaign.

"This was one of the hardest races I've ever run, especially when we were out there in the rain on slick tires," Liddell said. "It seemed we were on a knife's edge, everywhere. At one point, I spun and lost a few positions. Then I had a great battle with Andy Lally. I got by, and all of a sudden we were in the lead. It was a great result. We're over the moon about that."

Lally and NASCAR Nationwide Series regular Brendan Gaughan took second in the No. 66 AXA/South Point Casino Porsche GT3.

"It's all about the team and the guy I drove with," Gaughan said of his Rolex Series debut. "It was unbelievable doing the wet-to-dry thing. But Andy Lally and (car owner) Kevin Buckler kept talking to me and keeping me cool. I did what I wanted to do, and then handed it over to Andy."

Taking third were Crown Royal 200 at The Glen co-winners Emil Assentato and Jeff Segal in the No. 69 FXDD SpeedSource Mazda RX-8.

The competitive GT race had eight different drivers and seven cars taking turns in the lead. Leh Keen led 17 laps from the pole in the No. 87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3, with Dirk Werner getting caught out in the changing conditions to finish sixth. Despite their worst 2009 result since taking eighth in the Rolex 24, the four-time winners padded their lead to 35 points over Kelly Collins, who took 10th in the No. 07 Drinkin' Mate Pontiac GXP.R shared by Paul Edwards. The victory allowed Davis to move into third, 43 points behind the leaders.

Tom Sutherland led a race-high 20 laps in the No. 30 Click-Away Computers/3Dimensional.com Mazda RX-8, but finished eighth after co-driver Dane Cameron was forced to stop to avoid hitting the spinning car of Charles Espenlaub late in the race. Espenlaub led a lap and finished fourth in the No. 40 Dempsey Racing Mazda RX-8 started by Joe Foster, matching the team's best result of the season.

Montreal-born Sylvain Tremblay and Nick Ham both led in the No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8, but finished 12th after a late-race incident. Also leading the GT race was Eric Lux, who placed fifth in the No. 86 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3 shared with Bryan Sellers.

Only two races remain in the season - Sept. 19 at Miller Motorsports Park and Oct. 10 at Homestead-Miami Speedway.



Penske Racing Report

Source: Penske Racing

Penske Racing co-drivers Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas battled uncertain weather conditions and stiff competition as they drove the No. 12 Verizon Wireless Porsche Riley to a second-place finish in Saturday's Montreal 200 at Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve.

Intermittent rain showers wreaked havoc on the team's strategy and ultimately cost the Porsche factory driving duo their first victory in the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series Presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16.

Despite narrowly missing the top of the podium, both drivers were pleased with their performance on the 2.709-mile track. Combined, Bernhard and Dumas led 38 of 67 laps while posting their highest finish of the 2009 season -- their previous best was third place at New Jersey Motorsports Park in May.

Dumas started the event from the third position. Rain showers moved over the 15-turn circuit during the race recon laps and that forced the field into a tire relay as Dumas drove down pit road. The Verizon Wireless machine took on four rain tires before heading to the starting grid.

Five laps after the green flag flew to start the race, the showers moved away from the track and Dumas was back on pit road for race slicks, which set the tone for the event.

Dumas returned to the track in 11th position but quickly moved back to P1 as the rest of the field circulated down pit road. Dumas held off Jon Fogarty in the No. 99 Daytona Prototype, despite several advances from the series leader.

At the 50-minute mark of the two-hour timed event, the Verizon Wireless pit crew prepared for a four-tire stop with fuel and a driver change. But just five minutes later, rain showers once again moved over the track and rain tires were placed alongside the racing slicks for a "game-time" decision.

Dumas drove down pit road for four tires, a full fuel fill and a driver change. He led a race-high 20 laps before turning the Verizon Wireless Porsche over to Bernhard.

As he pulled away from the pits with the slick tires on, Bernhard maintained the lead and ran at the point for 18 more laps.

Bernhard pulled down pit road several times as the Verizon Wireless crew went through the rotation of rain tires and slicks. He relinquished the lead with 19 minutes to go, but held on to finish second as the rain showers set in during the closing stages of the race. With the result, the team remained fourth in the series DP standings.

"Yes, for sure, it was a big day for us," said Dumas, who praised the Grand-Am Series for instituting a rule change to restore the RPM limit on the cars to a maximum 9600. "Thanks to Grand-Am (for the rule change), and the good (Verizon Wireless Porsche Riley) the Penske crew gives us, we able to battle up front. It was a nice race and we had the chance to win. It has been six months since we felt that way. We're happy with a podium but feel we could have won this race, and that makes the entire Penske Racing team feel good."

"Like Romain said, we are very happy to be back on the podium," said Bernhard. "This was our race to win but with the changing conditions -- rain, then dry, then pouring rain, and not drying as well -- it was difficult for the crew to decide what to do. Romain gave me a good car in the lead after his good start, and the changing (conditions) with the rain, hurt us in strategy. It was crazy changing from pouring rain to a dry track, so I am happy to be on the podium, knowing we should have won. We were strong, and that gives us hope for the next race."



Porsche Motorsports Report

Source: Andy Schupack, PMNA

PENSKE PORSCHE RILEY SO CLOSE, YET SO FAR FROM TOP STEP OF PODIUM FARNBACHER LOLES RACING, TRG HAVE GOOD DAYS IN THE RAIN FOR PORSCHE GT

Despite dark and dreary wet weather conditions, Saturday was a good day for Porsche teams competing in the Montreal 200 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal. Porsche works drivers Timo Bernhard (Germany) and Romain Dumas (France) finished second in their #12 Verizon Wireless Penske Porsche Riley and narrowly missed their first victory of the season. Leh Keen (Charleston, SC) and Dirk Werner (Germany) missed the GT podium, finishing sixth in their #87 Farnbacher Loles Porsche 911 GT3 Cup, but padded their Acxiom GT championship points lead to 35 points, a full race's worth of points. And TRG gave Porsche its only podium position in GT.

"Like Romain said, we are very happy to be back on the podium," Bernhard said. "This was our race to win but with the changing conditions, rain, then dry, then pouring rain, and not drying as well, it was difficult for the crew to decide what to do. Romain gave me a good car in the lead after his good start, and the changing with the rain, hurt us in strategy. It was crazy changing from pouring rain to dry track, so I am happy to be on the podium, knowing we should have won. We were strong, and that gives us hope for the next race."

It has been a trying season for the Porsche works drivers in this, their rookie season, of Grand-Am competition. Montreal marks their best finish of the season, and only third podium. "Yes, for sure, it was the big day for us," Dumas said. "Thanks to Grand-Am (rule change restoring RPM limit to max 9600), and the good car the Penske crew gives us, we able to battle up front. It was a nice race and we had the chance to win. It has been six months since we feel that way. We're happy with a podium but feel we could have won this race, and that makes the entire Penske team feel good."

Brian Frisselle (Aspen, Co) and Max Angelelli (Monaco) took the overall victory by 61 seconds over Bernhard and Dumas in their #10 Ford Dallara, thanks to a different strategy that had them stay on rain tires while other frontrunners, include Penske, pitted twice to change from slicks to rains and back to slick tires in the final 30 minutes of a two-race race plagued with rapidly changing weather conditions.

The #58 Brumos Porsche Riley of David Donohue (Malvern, PA) and Darren Law (Phoenix, AZ) had a action-filled path to finish fifth. Donohue had qualified fourth but the team was penalized for being four pounds underweight, and started 15th, at the back of the Daytona Prototypes. Donohue charged through the pack after pitting on the first lap to change tires, and Law completed the drive to the front under trying conditions, yielding a good solid result. "What could have been," Donohue said. "Who knows what could have happened, or where we would have finished without the penalty. But it was an encouraging run for us, and we glad to leave with a fifth."

The other Brumos car, the #59 Porsche Riley started by JC France (Ormond Beach, FL), retired after just 11 laps, suffering rear damage after being hit from behind. Joao Barbosa (Portugal) never got a chance to drive in the race.

Keen started from the GT pole, and led early and often before turning the car over to Werner. But Werner had to make an extra pit stop, dropping him back to 12th, and the team never fully recovered.

“The new tire we just put on had a bad vibration, so Dirk had no choice but to pit and change it.” Keen said. “We had to work on the front left and that put us behind. We weren’t going to take any chances, so all hope for a win was lost, but we finished ahead of the 07 (Pontiac) and that added to our points lead, so we are happy with that. Dirk did a wonderful job in the rain. The whole race was pretty wild and we did pretty dang good and opened up the gap on the 07 car. Sixth place on a day like today is not too bad.

“Coming off the pole and not winning is disappointing, but it was still a pretty good race for us considering the championship. We’re gonna go to Salt Lake City and go for it.”

While GT victory eluded Porsche customer teams, Andy Lally (Newport, NY) and newcomer Brandon Gaughan (Las Vegas, NV) were the highest finishing Porsche GT team, taking third in their #66 TRG Porsche 911 GT3 Cup.

“We had a really good car, and a really good race,” Lally said. “We had some really good dogfights in GT, and it’s been a while since we’ve done that and had that much fun in a race. The weather was horrible, and the changing conditions made it tough, but the TRG crew handled it well and made all the right calls.”

“This was my first time in a Porsche – I had never seen a Porsche or been in a Porsche,” said Gaughan, a NASCAR Nationwide competitor. “It has been a long, long, long since I have been in a sports car. This was a lot of fun and I am very happy to be on the podium in my first race. Andy was a great coach.

“If anybody’s listening, I’d love to race in the Rolex 24.”

The newest Porsche GT team, the #48 Marquis Jets Porsche 911 GT3 Cup of Bryce Miller (Summit, NJ) and Dave Lacey (Canada) retired halfway through the two-hour race with gearbox problems, while the #86 Farnbacher Loles Porsche 911 GT3 Cup of Eric Lux (Jacksonville, FL) and Bryan Sellers (Dayton, OH) finished fifth in GT, just ahead of Keen and Werner.



TRG Race Report

Source: TRG

TRG's Brendan Gaughan and Andy Lally finished second in yesterday's running of the Grand-Am Rolex Series race at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal, Canada. Teammates John Potter and Craig Stanton finished the day ninth.

The weather played havoc with the competition at Montreal's 2.7-mile, 15-turn Gilles Villeneuve island circuit. The on-again-off-again rain had many teams performing as many as six pit stops during the two-hour event trying to keep ahead of the weather.

Gaughan, NASCAR Nationwide Series driver, started the No. 66 South Point Casino/AXA/TRG Porsche in treacherous conditions and managed to put in an excellent stint on slicks. The Las Vegas resident then turned it over to sports car ace Andy Lally who managed to lead several laps during his time at the wheel. A daring call by team owner Kevin Buckler to stay out on slicks during the last rain period had Lally bring the TRG Porsche home in second.

"I wanted to keep the transmission in it and keep it on the track," Gaughan said. "I accomplished all of my goals this weekend with the TRG Porsche. I wanted to run clean, learn and get maximum laps to prepare for the Nationwide race. Getting on the podium and finishing second is a huge bonus. Andy did a great job that last hour in the rain on slicks. It was unbelievable doing the wet-to-dry thing, but Andy and Kevin kept talking to me and keeping me cool. I did what I wanted to do, and then handed it over to Andy."

"We had a great event," Lally said. "We had a great race. At the end of the day the TRG Porsche was super solid and fast. It is not often that we choose to stay out on slicks in the wet, but we did and it worked out at the end. Kevin made some great calls and we brought it home on the podium. Brendan did a great job with such little time in the car. He was consistent and got faster every session. I hope to see him back in a TRG car soon."

John Potter and Craig Stanton soldiered through the changing conditions to finish the race in ninth. The team had the No. 65 Magnus Racing/TRG Porsche GT3 on point all day.

"It was a crazy race," Stanton said. "John did a great job in the opening stint, we sent him out on slicks and he kept it on the track. When I got in it started to rain, dried and then rained again. We were in and out of the pits. John (Bedell, crew chief) and the guys did almost as many pits stops in two-hours as we did at the six-hours of The Glen. It was a good day, we came away with a car in one piece and we are looking forward to Miller Motorsports Park, John's home track."

Kevin Buckler, TRG team owner, has put another first time driver on the podium.

"What a day," Buckler said. "The weather was crazy. Our guys in the pits did a great job with all the tire changes today. Brendan did a fantastic job all weekend. He came on with us to get some extra time for the Nationwide race and he ends up getting on the podium and tasting some champagne in the Grand-Am Series. John Potter and Craig Stanton had a strong outing together in treacherous conditions. John had an unbelievable first stint. It was dry, rained, damp and everything in between, plus a lot of carnage. John was able to steer clear of all the craziness. Craig, as always, was the consummate pro. The crazy weather was tough on the 65 as we had a great plan but we were caught on a late race yellow. We are now headed to John's home track next at Miller Motorsports Park in Salt Lake City, watch out!"

The Grand-Am Rolex Series will travel to Miller Motorsports Park in Salt Lake City, Utah for round 12 to be run on September 19.