



**Grand-Am Rolex Series Verizon Wireless 250 race  
at New Jersey Motorsports Park – 05/24/09**

**Source: Team Race Reports**

**All Photos © Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com**



**KROHN Racing Report**

Source: Barbara Burns,

Krohn Racing posted their first victory in the Proto-Auto Lola Ford today at the Verizon Wireless 250 at New Jersey Motorsports Park, in Millville, New Jersey. Round 3 on the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series schedule was a race filled with rain from start to finish. The treacherous conditions could not stop the No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola of Nic Jönsson and Ricardo Zonta.

The No. 76 entry was clearly the dominant car on the wet 2.25 mile, 14-turn road course. Jönsson, originally from Sweden and now living in Buford, Georgia, took the lead on lap 14 until lap 35 when he turned the car over to Zonta. Coming out of the pit stop in sixth position, Zonta of Curicuba, Brazil, took his time to climb to the top of the leader board, capturing the top spot on lap 58. He masterfully pulled away from the struggling field to win with a 44.752 margin of victory in the 87 lap race.

## QUOTES:

TRACY W. KROHN, Team Owner/Driver Krohn Racing:

"This is a real boost for Krohn Racing. The car's been good. It is certainly a team effort but it takes two really professional caliber drivers to win under these kinds of conditions. Nic and Ricardo did a fantastic job with the car today. The team has done a great job all year, especially today.

I don't know what the time was we had for driver change and fuel but I know it was really quick. I could tell from the television coverage. They got in and out really quick on the pit stop. Ricardo just ate it up. He was very patient with his moves. I don't think the car has a scratch on it. That's a testimony to real professionalism on a day like today. Normally in the rain you're going to get some kind of collateral damage at least. The car looks good. The team looks good. I appreciate everybody's effort. This is a really professional effort from everybody involved. My only regret is that I'm not there. Wish I could have been there racing today because I know the car is going to be good in the rain.

We dropped one car and I stepped out to focus on what I think is the best business opportunities I've ever seen in my lifetime. We needed a little bit of time to take advantage of that."

NIC JONSSON, Driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola:

"We qualified fourth and the guys got the car put together well. We had rain all day but we had a good car in the rain. I got a good start and got up to P3 in Turn 1. A yellow came out right away for a few laps. I took the lead about 15 minutes in to the race (on Lap 14) and stayed out front. There were some cautions periods and it got pretty treacherous out there. When the rain started coming down harder, it started developing puddles on the track. It was a good move on Grand-Am's part for safety to throw the caution when it got so bad out there.

I was in the lead for 22 laps and able to open up a good gap when we went green again. We pitted about an hour and half into the race. Ricardo got in and he knew what he had to do to make up the laps we lost pitting. He got in there and started charging towards the front. He took the lead from (Max) Angelelli about 45 minutes from the end and never looked back from there. He finished with nearly a 45-second lead.

All victories are special. This is particularly special though because I know how much time and effort the team has spent. Ricardo and I have the easy job of driving the car. The guys back at the shop have had a lot of long days. The engineers have done a tremendous job to develop this car to get it to where it is today. Also thanks to Tracy for allowing us to do this. Obviously without his support we wouldn't have been able to do this. It feels very good to win this first one in the Proto-Auto Lola. I'm very emotional. I've been with Tracy for six years and we won the first one for team together in 2005. Now being able to take the first win in the Proto-Auto Lola and I'm still with the team is very emotional for me. I can't express how lucky I feel to be part of the Krohn Racing team. It's been a long time coming so it's very sweet to be on podium!"

RICARDO ZONTA, Driver No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola:

"It was very heavy rain today. Sometimes, especially when following somebody, you couldn't see anything. The team did a perfect job. The only problem we had was that we lost radio communications completely. I could not communicate with the team about race strategy, so I just kept driving.

I am very happy to have my first victory with the Krohn team and first Grand-Am victory. Now we have to keep it like this. It was perfect for the team, perfect for everybody!"

DAVID BROWN, Krohn Racing Team Manager and Engineer:

"It was very exciting race. Conditions were particularly arduous and treacherous today. We are obviously very happy to record our first victory with the Lola. It was also the team's first victory since July 2006, although we've had several podiums since.

I think it's a great tribute to the hard work of the team to field such a dominant car. It feels very good to have this result for all our efforts. I'd like to congratulate everyone on the team for their efforts, including the drivers who did a great job in treacherous conditions. We also had great support from the Roush engine shop.

We had green flag racing for the last 42 laps. That was about an hour of green flag racing, perfect for getting a fast car to the front. The Krohn car was obviously very fast and able to pull from sixth to the lead. It feels a

lot better having 'broken that duck' (cricket term referring to a score of zero). We are going out to repeat that success at all the following races this year. It's a shame Tracy wasn't here to be able to witness our first victory after so long."

Krohn Racing's last victory was in July 2006 at Barber Motorsports Park with Colin Braun and Jörg Bergmeister, their third that season. The Krohn Racing team went on to capture the Grand-Am Rolex Daytona Prototype Driver's Championship that year. Nic Jönsson's last Grand-Am DP victory was in 2005, with team owner/driver Tracy W. Krohn, at the Six Hours of the Glen in Watkins Glen, NY, also under rainy conditions.



## **Farnbacher –Loles Race Report**

Source: Roger Garbow, Farnbacher Loles Racing

### **Farnbacher Loles takes first and third at Thunderbolt Raceway!**

Starting from the fifth and seventh spots on the grid, the Farnbacher Loles Racing Team was looking to improve on those positions for round three of the Grand-Am Rolex Series at Thunderbolt Raceway in Millville, NJ. The race started in very wet conditions as rain fell throughout the morning and was coming down heavily at the start. The rain had an immediate impact as two DP competitors came together at the start bringing out a full course caution.

While some GT Class cars chose to make a pit stop during the 12-minute caution period, both Farnbacher Loles cars stayed out, moving them to the front of the GT field and in front of a number of DP cars as well.

After the restart Leh Keen held the top spot in the #87 Porsche GT3 Cup followed closely by Eric Lux in the #86. Both drivers showed their prowess in the wet by turning class-leading times. A second early caution period caused a short delay. On the restart, both cars were hit with stop-and-go penalties for jumping the restart. After the stops, Keen dropped to second while Lux dropped to seventh.

At the 45-minute mark, a yellow bunched up the field, and Leh took over the GT Class lead. After the ensuing lengthy caution, Eric took over the second spot behind Leh. Keen's 1:40.363 was the fastest lap of the race to that point, while Eric's 1:41.970 was second fastest in GT. At the 1:20 minute mark, both cars stopped for driver changes during a caution period. Dirk Werner took over for Leh Keen while Bryan Sellers took over for Eric Lux.

At the restart, Werner was in seventh with Sellers in eighth. Werner quickly moved up to fourth with Sellers right behind in fifth. Werner set a new fast race lap of 1:37.838 to move into third, with Sellers in fifth. At the 1:49 mark, Dirk passed Andy Lally to take over the second spot with Sellers making a pass for fourth soon after. Werner again sets fast lap, at 1:37.325.

With 33 minutes to go, Dirk Werner took over the lead, passing Spencer Pumpelly. Sellers was also on the move, closing the gap to third. With 25 minutes left in the race, Sellers was only 1 second behind Andy Lally. Werner meanwhile had opened a 14 second lead over the second place car.

As the race wound down, Sellers was right on Lally's bumper lap after lap. With six laps to go, Sellers got a run on the front straight and out-braked the TRG car into turn one. Bryan made the pass and made it stick. The Farnbacher Loles cars now ran first and third and would hold those positions through to the checkered flag.

After the race, the drivers cherished the podium celebration. "Our team is great in the rain," said Leh Keen. "The atmosphere in the pits was really fantastic, because we all knew we had a car that could win." Dirk Werner was equally enthusiastic, "The conditions and visibility were terrible but the car was great. Once I got by Spencer for the lead, I was able to pull away. The team really deserves this win."

The #86 drivers also had reason to cheer. "The team gave us such a great car," said Eric Lux. "It handled really well in the wet conditions. And the tires were good and consistent throughout my entire stint. I have to thank Greg Loles and the entire Farnbacher Loles team for this finish." Team newcomer Bryan Sellers was also happy with the finish. "This team did such a fantastic job. It says so much about the preparation that we took two of the top three spots including the win."

Team principal Gregory Loles was proud of his team's effort. "These guys showed what this team is made of today. In very difficult conditions, our guys shined. The drivers were amazing and the crew did a phenomenal job on set-up and pit stops. But we have to be realistic - under dry conditions the Porsche has no chance to win against the Pontiacs and Mazdas. Hopefully adjustments will come that will allow the marques to all compete equally."

## **TRG Race Report**

Source: Kyle Chura

### **TRG Finishes Second at New Jersey Motorsports Park Ballou and Pumpelly lead GT points**

TRG's Ted Ballou and Spencer Pumpelly finished second at the Grand-Am Rolex Series Verizon Wireless 250 at New Jersey Motorsports Park. With the finish, Ballou and Pumpelly assume the GT championship points lead. The whole team had a great day with the other three entries finishing in the top ten as well.

The race started under a torrential down pour with the first caution flying before the first lap was completed. Justin Marks in the No. 67 Construct Corp/No Fear Energy Drinks/Voodoo Ride/Kartel Motorsports/K1 Speed/Gemstone Winery/TRG Porsche GT3 put in a brilliant drive and took over the lead on lap 15, sixth overall. Marks led up to lap 21 when he handed the green and black Porsche to co-driver Andy Lally. As the pit stops shuffled through, Lally was able to return to the track in the lead and drove a strong second stint. On lap 47, when he was passed by teammate Spencer Pumpelly who then proceeded to lead 17 laps until his rear tires started to go off and had to settle for second place.

Ted Ballou started the No. 66 AXA/Mitchell Rubber/Wealth Management Strategies/TRG Porsche GT3 from his seventh row qualifying position. Ballou drove extremely well handing the car over to Pumpelly who proceeded to drive to the lead. Pumpelly, coming off a win for TRG in the KONI Sports Car Challenge Series race yesterday, had another strong drive capping his one - two weekend.

"Yesterday, believe it or not, I learned a little bit from the KONI car," Pumpelly said. "We learned about how the car behaves over a stint, usually the cars are not very similar. We took a little bit of a gamble on the setup and it turned out right. Our biggest issue was with our rear tires. That issue is with the life that we get out of them. If I had to do it again, I would have put on fresh rears when we stopped the last time. I think when I took the lead I might have been a little too aggressive with the car and the tires. I was struggling there at the end. It was a great day for TRG. I think we have the points lead back."

Justin Marks started the No. 67 Porsche GT3 and had his best drive of the young season as he took the lead on lap 15. Visual problems out of the windshield did not stop the Californian as he handed co-driver Lally the lead GT car. Lally took to the track and surrendered the lead to Pumpelly, who had clear vision, and was able to hold on to a strong fourth place finish.

"I had some good racing out there today," Lally said. "We didn't have quite everything we needed with the car. I couldn't tell the guys enough to get the perfect setup today. The guys in front of me drove really well. I had a good race with Sellers there at the end. He raced me clean and I gave him everything I had. Justin did an awesome opening stint to lead the race. He is showing his talent. In such a short amount of time he came out here in a down pour and really ran well. The pit stops with the crew were all real good today. Jeff (Braun, crew chief) did a great job on strategy as well."

John Potter started the No. 65 Riegel/Stanton/Cystic Fibrosis Foundation/65 Roses/Magnus Racing/TRG Porsche GT3 from the 13th row. With a strong first stint Potter had the car on the door step of the top ten. 2005 Grand-Am GT champion Craig Stanton took over and soldiered through a foggy windshield, wiping it with one hand and driving with the other to finish eighth.

"The racing Gods made it a dirty trip today," Stanton said. "John Potter did a great opening stint. TRG and the guys did a really great job today. The guys who could see the best had the best race. We couldn't see very well, but we had a fast car. We could have won the race I believe, but the vision was sketchy. So the guys gave me a squeegee and I would have to go into the turn, give it three swipes and then downshift and turn in. We had a great setup. I think we could have driven straight to the front."

RJ Valentine, one of the New Jersey track principals, started the No. 68 Ruby Tuesday/Cabana Cachaca/F1 New Jersey/CRG/Maxter/TRG Porsche GT3 using his years of wet weather racing experience and home track knowledge to drive the car through the field from 17th at the start to run in fifth. Valentine turned the car over to ARCA RE/MAX regular Tim George Jr. who was able to run solid consistent lap times and soldier through extremely tough conditions to finish in the top ten.

"The last four or five laps the line was drying," George Jr. said. "RJ did a great job to start the race. We were a little skeptical about the setup, but it ended up working out really well and it stayed under us the whole time. I came here to get ARCA experience, but I ended up getting rain experience. This race didn't help too much with that, but I was able to get a lot of dry running in the KONI race yesterday. I am proud to pull off a top ten for TRG."

TRG team owner Kevin Buckler is happy to be leaving a soaked New Jersey with the points lead.

"What a drive by all eight of our guys," Buckler said. "Spencer and Ted did a great job. They led a bunch of laps and were there at the end to take second. Justin put in a fantastic drive first stint to lead as well in the 67 and Andy, as usual, was awesome. John Potter and Craig had a very strong run. RJ had the iron man run of the day beating some of the top drivers in the series with great lap times in the rain. We leave here with the points lead and go to Laguna Seca, which is a track we know very well."

Round four of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series will be run at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on May 17.

TRG was founded in 1993 and has been competing at the top level of motor racing ever since. The team has the most wins of any team in the Grand-Am Rolex Series with 27, including the 2005 and 2006 Rolex Series GT championship trophy to go along with wins at the Rolex 24 (three) at Daytona and the 24 Hours of Le Mans. TRG's young KONI Sports Car Challenge Series team has logged three wins and recorded eight podium finishes in their first three seasons of competition.

TRG is a manufacturer and distributor of high-performance racing parts. The group specializes in engine and chassis tuning as well as full service professional race car preparation. The company also provides electrical and mechanical engineering services, driver development and arrive-and-drive opportunities. TRG is based in Petaluma, Calif., near its home track of Infineon Raceway in Sonoma. The company's NASCAR operation is based in Mooresville, North Carolina with a new state-of-the-art facility coming on-line at New Jersey Motorsports Park in late 2009.

## **Stevenson Motorsports Race Report**

### **Stevenson Motorsports Splashes To Top Five Finish At New Jersey**

*'Clear vision' Porsches rule in the wet, but Stevenson car is top Pontiac finisher*

The rains came down hard at New Jersey Motorsports Park for the third round of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16. Despite having to replace the front window due to an inability to see through it in the pouring rain, the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports / BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R, driven by Andrew Davis and Robin Liddell, persevered and finished fifth in the GT class.

At the start the rains that had been threatening to pick up in intensity delivered mightily on that threat. Two Daytona Prototypes came together before the first turn – due in full measure to the impossible conditions – and that accident immediately sent the race into yellow. Once the debris had been cleared, the rain continued to pelt anything and everything in sight.

Andrew Davis qualified the No. 57 Pontiac second and right from the start he knew he and the rest of the Stevenson team were in for a difficult run.

"I was pleased to qualify the Stevenson Motorsports BryanMark Financial Pontiac GXP.R on the front row for the race," said Davis, "especially since it looked like the race would be a wet one. The first lap seemed a bit compromised in terms of visibility out of the windshield, but that is expected with the amount of rain coming down and the spray thrown out by the cars ahead. The race was quickly slowed by the first caution, and that's when I realized that we had a serious problem with both the outside and inside of the windshield. Once the race was restarted, visibility was next to nothing! It became very difficult to stay on the track and out of the back of the cars ahead."

At one point, the race was run under yellow because of standing water on several sections of the circuit. This caution period ran for nearly a half hour. Eventually the rain lessened a bit but it was too late to prevent rooster-tail sprays off of each car which made it next to impossible for the car following to see ahead. In the end, Porsche race cars took the top four spots in the GT class.

The Pontiacs, and other front-engine cars like the Mazda's and Corvettes, were handicapped by an inability to defog the windows, making visibility extremely difficult. Team Manager Mike Johnson explains how the Pontiacs came to have difficulty keeping the interior of the front window clear, a problem the Porsche drivers did not have to contend with.

"In the Pontiac GXP.R's that we and the Banner team race, the base of the windshield actually hangs over the engine. There is a metal firewall that is underneath the base of the windshield that basically cooks the water that collects in the car. You can't really get a blower to it because of both the distance to the base of the windshield and the fact that if you put a hose down there the driver's would not be able to see. We did

everything we possibly could, stopping often during the extended yellow period. We tried shampoo and soap and shaving cream and a rag on a stick. We even added two more blowers but we just weren't getting anywhere.

"There was so much water in the car, and the car gets so hot that the window just gets all covered in steam and there was nothing we could do to keep the glass clear for the drivers. We finally decided to put in a brand new windshield but while it looked like a great fix it really just gave Robin 15 minutes of clear driving before it too fogged right back up."

Liddell: "The Stevenson team did a great job by replacing the windscreen and getting me back out still on the lead lap. The new windscreen made a big difference allowing me to set some decent times but 10 laps or so later, the situation became very bad again while the wiper started to fail in the closing stages."

Davis: "The guys did an excellent job of getting the change done without losing a single lap, and that effort gave Robin a little better view of the treacherous conditions. We were able to fight our way back up to a top five finish in the end, so we certainly feel lucky to come away from the event with some good points."

The Stevenson Pontiac led the rest of the Pontiacs home with their fifth place finish. The other Pontiacs in the race finished as follows: No. 32 PR1 Motorsports – 12<sup>th</sup> / No. 07 Banner Racing – 15<sup>th</sup> / No. 21 MCM Racing (GTO.R) – 17<sup>th</sup>.

Johnson had nothing but praise for his drivers and team after this turbulent regatta on the Millville plains.

"The guys were just driving off of taillights. They did an amazing job to stay error free and bring the car home. I think that we had a fantastic car in the wet and that we managed the vision issues, as a team, better than anybody else other than the Porsches. They have the engine in the back and their windshields sit in a more vertical position and I think there is a benefit to that. All in all we were happy to come out of there with a top five finish. We have been consistent this year and we have been fast. We were just .074 off the pole speed which was our closest to capturing a pole yet. Last year after three races we had a 9<sup>th</sup>, a 24<sup>th</sup> and a 1<sup>st</sup> and now we have a 6<sup>th</sup>, a 1<sup>st</sup> and a 5<sup>th</sup> so from a points and momentum standpoint we are feeling pretty good. We know we have a fast car and as a team we deal with adversity very well."

Liddell came away from this race with some consolation taken by the plight of the other Pontiac teams.

"The positive to take away from this is the fact that we bagged some points in what was a very tough race and we fared better than the 'works' Pontiac, which with similar problems as us, finished outside the top ten."

Johnson too feels there was a net gain after the rain pain.

"It was a disappointment for everyone and the fans as well, because in weather like this you don't get to see the true performance of the cars. I have to say though that the crowds for the last two races have been fantastic and I think Grand-Am is doing a great job of promoting the racing, and we love being in this series."

The fourth round of the 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Series will take place on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at MAZDA Raceway - Laguna Seca in California.

## **Team Sahlen's Report**

Source: Wayne Nonnamaker, Press Officer - Team Sahlen

Every year there is one of those weekends where it seems that the rain keeps coming and coming, with no end in sight. The 2009 New Jersey ROLEX weekend was one of those. And the biggest onslaught of rain seemed do come during the 2 hour and 45 minute span of the ROLEX race.

Team Sahlen had just previously raced the prior weekend at Virginia International Raceway. The crew had worked Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday to prepare the Corvettes for the race weekend.

"The Corvettes ran perfectly all weekend. I am proud of the crew for putting in the long hours at the shop. It certainly paid off with both #42 and #43 Corvettes running every single lap of practice, qualifying and the race." - states Crew Chief Mike Thomas

For 2009, New Jersey Motorsports Park decided to utilize the chicane system for turn 3 vs. the sweeper turn that was in place for turn 3 in 2008. This was due to the fact that all the ROLEX cars were getting airborne over the back straight rise. Although the length of the track did not change, lap times were off from last year and no new track records were set.

In Qualifying, Joe Nonnamaker placed the #43 in 11th place and Joe Sahlen slotted in at 16th on the grid. Surprisingly the Qualifying session was in the dry

For the start of Sunday's premier event, a wreck at the front of the DP race saw the GT race get yellow flagged before even taking the green flag. The first 1/2 of the race saw continual green/yellow/green/yellow action. During this sequence, Team Sahlen did an excellent job of pit strategy to place Wayne Nonnamaker in 3rd Place with enough fuel to the end.

"We had a set up on the Corvette that was for a damp to drying track. Unfortunately, the track got more and more wet. If the track had dried, I am sure we would have been in contention for a podium slot."

In the end, both the #43 & #42 finished 13th and 14th respectively in the race. Both Corvettes finished without going off track, or even a scratch on the cars.

"Thankfully New Jersey has a spotter's tower. We placed a crew member for each car with a radio on top of the tower for the entire race. It worked amazingly well. Seeing as how you could barely see out the front and could see nothing out the back of the car, this is what brought us to cars home in one piece. And this is so very important with a race at Laguna in two weeks." - states Will Nonnamaker

The actual time in the race shop for the Corvettes is actually only 5 days, due to the long drive to California. The race at Laguna Seca is on Sunday, May 17th, 2009, and will be televised live on SPEED TV.

The 2009 Team Sahlen ROLEX GT Campaign is support by HRPWorld.com, Cool Shirt, HAWK Performance, Forgeline Wheels, TheRaceSite.com, TheRaceMarket.com, Grassroots Motorsports Magazine, Holliday Canopies, Alcon, CM Racing, Genesis Technologies, Endurance Karting and Corsa Performance

## **Speed Source Motorsports**

Source: Wayne Nonnamaker, Press Officer – SpeedSource Engineering

The SpeedSource Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8 arrived at New Jersey Motorsports Park looking to post a solid run. Early practice sessions proved that the team had a worthy entry to compete with the points leaders. The dawn of race day opened with a cold and wet weather forecast that would last to race end. In a rain soaked race that included over an hour under yellow flag conditions the SpeedSource Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8 ended up in eleventh position.

Starting in the third spot things looked promising for Nick Ham in the beginning of the race, however windshield fogging in the early going made it very difficult for Ham to navigate the track. "After a few laps the windshield started fogging up and it was impossible to see where the corners were," said Ham; "It seemed the faster you went the worse it got. In these conditions I'm glad the car is in one piece and we can move on to Mazda Raceway."

Ham managed to complete his stint behind the wheel and turned the car over to co-driver Sylvain Tremblay at the 1-hour mark. Quick thinking by the SpeedSource crew during the driver change pit stop temporarily decreased the interior fogging on the windshield. Unfortunately, conditions on track did not improve much for Tremblay after getting into the car. After only a few laps the wiper blade on the car had become loose and further vibration caused the blade to fall off. "It was impossible to see out of the windshield," Tremblay



commented. "There were times when the interior fogging on the windshield and the misting from traffic was so bad that I could not see where I was on track. We are just happy that both cars completed the race safely and are looking forward to a strong showing at Mazda Raceway."

The team currently sits 25 points behind first place in the championship hunt. Look for the SpeedSource Castrol Syntec Mazda RX-8 to return to the action at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on Sunday, May 17th 4PM EST on SPEED.

## **Childress-Howard Motorsports**

Source: Jackie Bodfish, Childress-Howard Motorsports

### **Tough Day for Gentleman Jack Team at NJMP**

Competing at a race track for the very first time provides a number of obstacles for any race team. Add wet weather and a race car that had never run in the rain and you end up with the tough weekend the No. 2 Gentleman Jack team had last weekend at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

Electronic and mechanical issues during the first half of the race forced the Childress-Howard Motorsports team to settle for a 28<sup>th</sup>-place finish. The team is currently 12<sup>th</sup> in the point standings after two of 12-race 2009 Grand-Am Rolex Series season.

Intermittent rain during the first day of practice found the Childress-Howard Motorsports team trying to figure out the lay of the land half the time in the rain and the other half with a dry track. Co-driver Rob Finlay, who shares the driving chores with Andy Wallace, had previously competed at NJMP in the Koni Series but not a single crew member had ever stepped foot on the property before then.

The decision was made by crew chief Catherine Wallace and others to go with the setup used the previous week at Virginia Motorsports Park. Unfortunately, it didn't work and the team made major changes after each practice session to get the car's handling dialed in before qualifying.

The Gentleman Jack team made a massive change prior to qualifying. Things still weren't great but Finlay ran a respectable fast lap of 1:16:836 seconds at an average speed of 105.419 mph on the 10-turn, 1.9-mile circuit. The lap was good enough for the 13<sup>th</sup> spot on the pre-race grid.

"We gave Rob a pretty bad car for qualifying but he still did a pretty respectable job, all things considered," said Catherine Wallace. "We learned some more about the car from subsequent practice runs and felt like we didn't have too bad a car going into the race."

The warm-up for the race was wet as was the rest of the afternoon. Visibility was almost nonexistent when Finlay took the green flag and immediately had to deal with a fogged up windshield and water leaking into the race car. The water then got into and wiped out the electronics.

The electronics issue as well as a problem with the clutch put the team in the garage for repairs. A yeoman effort on behalf of the Gentleman Jack team got the No. 2 Pontiac Crawford back on the track though down a number of laps to the leaders. The continued problem with the misting up of the windshield made it so Finlay couldn't see.

"My dad went back into his history of motor racing to figure out a solution," said Catherine Wallace. "We tried Dawn dishwasher detergent but it didn't work and then we finally rubbed the inside of the windshield with a sliced potato."

The driver change put Andy Wallace at the controls at about the one-hour mark. He was able to start running up to the Gentleman Jack team's capabilities and were running laps as fast as the leaders. Unfortunately, the damage was done as it related to position on the track.

"We know the car was there," said Andy Wallace. "It was just one of those miserable days where nothing seems to go according to plan."

Despite the issues, Finlay earned valuable points toward the Jim Trueman Award and is now just 83 points behind leader J.C. France.

## **SunTrust Racing Report**

Source: Adam Saal,

Despite cold temperatures and extremely wet conditions, Max Angelelli and Brian Frisselle delivered a solid runner-up finish for SunTrust Racing in Sunday's Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series Verizon Wireless 250 at New Jersey Motorsports Park (NJMP) in Millville.

Nic Jönsson and Ricardo Zonta in the No. 76 Krohn Racing/Ford/Lola won the 2-hour, 45-minute event by 44.752 over Angelelli and Frisselle in the No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara of Wayne Taylor Racing.

The 87-lap race endured an odd flow with 28 of the first 43 laps conducted under full-course caution thanks to heavy rain and two accidents that slowed the first half of the event. However, once the green flag dropped on lap 44, the race was without caution until the end.

Frisselle, who qualified fifth on Saturday and drove the first stint on Sunday for the SunTrust team, led laps 11-13 and kept the car in the top-five for much of his time behind the wheel despite heavy rains and a windshield that fogged up at the beginning of the race.

"The conditions were really tough," Frisselle said. "We had a little bit of a fogging issue at the start, which made it 10 times worse. I was just so tentative because I couldn't see. It was the worst time I've ever had trying to see out of a race car. I couldn't see anything. As the fog from the inside of the cockpit wore off, it was still very bad, but nothing like it was the first five laps. Once that cleared, the car showed its capability and we started running the same lap times as the leader."

Frisselle gave way to Angelelli at the 45-minute mark, but the early part of the Italian's stint was spent under caution as Grand-Am officials kept the race under caution from laps 32-43 due to wet track conditions.

Once the race went green on lap 44, it took Angelelli only six laps to take the lead, and he held the point from laps 50-57.

However, Zonta got past Angelelli on the front stretch on lap 58 and never looked back throughout the final 30 tours of the wet circuit.

While disappointed in missing out on the victory, Angelelli was quite pleased with the runner-up result in terms of the season-long championship.

"I'm personally very happy," Angelelli said. "We took the best we could from this weekend, where fast cars like the (No.) 59 (Brumos Porsche Riley, 30th) and the (No.) 01 (Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley, 21st) had problems. By finishing second, we made a lot of ground in the championship, and that's what counts."

The SunTrust team climbed back to fourth in the championship with the runner-up finish, one point behind the No. 12 Penske Racing Porsche for third and 10 points behind the leading No. 58 Brumos Porsche. The SunTrust team started the day seventh in the points.

"We obviously want to win races," said team owner Wayne Taylor. "Having had that bad result last weekend at VIR (13th), you've got to focus and think about the championship. Once Ricardo got by Max, it was clear that we would put ourselves at risk trying to challenge, and at that point it was all about a point's race for us. Clearly it's narrowed up the points, so I'm happy."

## **Bryce Miller's Race Report**

Source: Sylvia Proudfoot

Bryce Miller survived a wild, wet race on his home track on Sunday. The Summit, N.J., driver finished ninth in the GT class in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series race at New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville, N.J., despite trying conditions in heavy rain.

Dane Cameron of Sonoma, Calif., drove the first stint in the No. 30 Marquis Jet Mazda RX-8 prepared by Racers Edge Motorsports. He started fourth on the GT grid and moved to the class lead after 65 minutes of the two-hour 45-minute race. He led twice before pitting for a driver change at 1h24. Miller drove the final stint, returning to the track 12th in class behind the GT cars that had pitted earlier in the race. He regained three positions to finish ninth.

Both drivers were slowed by a malfunctioning windshield wiper. Cameron experienced intermittent problems, and then the wiper motor failed early in Miller's stint, leaving him with very limited visibility.

"The conditions today were so frantic; everything was unpredictable in terms of the accidents that were happening and the cars off track. It seemed like every lap, there was someone gathering it up or coming back on. It's a positive thing we were able to move up to ninth," Miller said.

"I found a little window of dryness on my windshield and was able to finally see a little bit. My foot kept slipping off the brake pedal, so there were some driver challenges from inside the car. But in terms of the car's performance, the team delivered well. The car was good, we were able to finish the race and bring the car home in one piece."

## **Porsche Motorsports Race Report**

Source: Porsche Motorsport

### **PORSCHE SWEEPS ROLEX GRAND-AM GT PODIUM IN NEW JERSEY; PORSCHE VS PORSCHE FOR FINAL PODIUM SPOT IN DAYTONA PROTOTYPE LEAVES EVERYBODY SMILING**

Whether they were tears of joy or extra large rain drops dripping down their cheeks, nearly every Porsche driver was smiling after the Verizon Wireless 200 Rolex Grand-Am Sports Car series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 race on a dismal and dreary day in New Jersey Sunday.

Porsches swept the podium in GT – indeed, Porsches 911 GT3 Cup cars finished one through four, with victory going to the #87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche of Dirk Werner (Germany) and Leh Keen (Charleston, SC). They led 38 of the GT race's 86 laps, including the final 22 with Werner at the wheel. They finished eighth overall in the 31-car field.

Rain fell throughout the race and Grand-Am officials even ran 12 laps under caution because track conditions were so treacherous - unusual for normally all-weather sports car racing.

"The conditions were really difficult," Werner said. "When I was behind Spencer (Pumpelly), it took me 15 minutes to see where I could pass him. Once I got around him, I could pull away and get a pretty comfortable margin. In these conditions, it is the driver's responsibility to keep the car on the track. Leh did a great job and I look forward to racing with him again."

The #86 TRG Porsche 911 GT3 Cup of Pumpelly (Mason Neck, VA) and Ted Ballou (Corona del Mar, CA) finished second in GT, one lap down. With their second place at Daytona and sixth last week in Virginia, the TRG duo now lead the GT points after three events. Third in GT went to the #86 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup of Eric Lux (Jacksonville, FL) and Bryan Sellers (Dayton, OH).

Fourth, and just missing the GT podium, was the #67 TRG Porsche GT3 of Justin Marks (Chico, CA) and Andy Lally (Newport, NY).

"When it rains, it goes really well for the Farnbacher Loles Racing team," Keen said. "From the first green lap, we knew we had a good car and could win the race."

Overall victory in the two hour, 45-minute race went to the Krohn Racing Ford Lola of Nic Jönsson (Sweden) and Ricardo Zonta (Brazil), who led 52 of the 87 laps.

A spirited battle for third place overall in the final minutes grabbed all the attention from a good-sized, but very soaking wet, crowd. Passing his Porsche counterpart just four minutes from the finish, Tim Bernhard (Germany) gave Penske Racing its first Grand-Am DP podium finish after a sixth at Daytona and seventh at Virginia International Raceway.

Saturday, Romain Dumas have given Penske Racing its first Grand-Am pole in the #12 Verizon Wireless Penske Porsche Riley he shares with Dumas.

Dumas pitted from second place in the #12 Penske Porsche Riley on lap 33. The crew added 12 seconds of fuel and driver change to Bernhard. They did not change their Pirelli full wet tires.

"So now Timo goes for it as we are one pit stop ahead of everybody," Dumas said. "My stop early was to meet the rules and it gave us an edge. It is really wet out there, it was difficult to pass the GT cars. They were battling each other and do not see me coming. For sure it was a mixed feeling. The weather was awful and the race was wonderful."

"After Romain gave me the car we were in the perfect position - in first behind the safety car," Bernhard said. "Then I got into the lead and was running as hard as I could (he set consecutive fastest race laps on last 46 & 47 before having to pit). We were losing pressure in the left rear tire, so we had to pit and lost position and time.

"It was very hard to see. At time there was so much water on the track I thought it best to stop the race. Then I spun out in turn 4 and gave back all the time I had gained. I had a good battle with David Donohue that last few laps and I was able to overtake him four minutes from the finish," said Bernhard.

But while Donohue (Malvern, PA) and Darren Law (Phoenix, AZ) missed the podium, they extended their DP Championship Driver's points lead because their top competitors finished behind them.

"Considering where we started this week, this is a very satisfying finish," Law said. "We were so lost on the setup that Saturday night we had a yard sale and changed everything. To come out and run this well is wonderful and a tribute to the Brumos crew.

"The best thing is that we finished ahead of the 01 and 99 cars, so that helps us in the points."

The #59 Brumos Porsche Riley was pushed back into garage under yellow due to a clutch problem. Additionally, since the beginning of the race the windshield washer had not been working properly all the time.

"The conditions were terrible," said Joao Barbosa (Portugal). "I could not see very well, and then the clutch went all the way to the floor. The crew is working, but I don't know if we'll get back out there." The car was retired with clutch problems

## **GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Race Report**

Source: Adam Saal

### **Gurney and Fogarty Rally For Sixth in Wet And Wild Verizon Wireless 250 In New Jersey GAINSCO Remains Second in Rolex Series Championships with Third Top-10 Of 2009**

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing and drivers Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty overcame heavy rain, a flat tire, a foggy windshield and a wave-by that wasn't to finish sixth in Sunday's Verizon Wireless 250 on Thunderbolt Raceway at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

An all-day rain shower caused some problems for the No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley but none of the setbacks were as costly as a pace car wave-by that never happened. The team went a lap down when starting driver Fogarty ducked into the pits after a broken valve stem caused the No. 99's right-front tire to go flat early in the 2 ¾ hour timed race. Gurney took over during the stop which was actually the team's third visit to the pits in the first 40 minutes. GAINSCO also made a strategic stop-and-go pit stop along with several other front runners under caution on Lap 2 and was forced to pit again soon after the race went green for a fogged-up windshield.

The pit delays initially put GAINSCO a lap down but an apparent opportunity to catch up with the lead pack during another caution period never materialized. Gurney had worked his way back to the tail-end of the lead lap and was the first competitor behind the pace car when standing water on the track forced 12 laps to be run under caution at mid-race. The usual practice of waving by cars until the pace car picks up the race leader, however, never happened and Gurney had to charge his way back into contention after the race went green. He set several fastest race laps in the final hour, but GAINSCO realistically needed another caution to get back in touch with the front of the pack.

"That was solid rain throughout but not a bad result for the No. 99 car despite all of our woes," said Fogarty. "We had an issue with our windshield, which was not a big deal, but then we had a tire just go flat and I had to dive for the pits. We were already at the tail-end of the field at that point because of the earlier windshield issues, so that put us a lap down. We did a good job to align ourselves to get the wave-by but for whatever reason the series decided to not wave us by and restart the race with a back marker in the lead. That pretty much sealed our fate. Alex was the fastest guy out there for most of the time and I am pretty sure we had a good podium going had we been able to race without being nearly a lap down."

Gurney actually closed to within six seconds of the fifth-place finishing No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley and didn't put a wheel wrong in his more than two-hour stint.

"It was a good result but I am really frustrated with that call," Gurney said. "I don't understand it. That really sealed our race. We should have been on the podium for sure. It was fun out there driving in those conditions and it was nice to stay on the track, and even though it was frustrating, we still came out good on the points."

After the first three races of the season, the No. 99 GAINSCO team and Gurney and Fogarty are still second in the point standings behind the leading No. 58 Brumos Porsche Riley of David Donohue and Darren Law, who finished fourth in the Verizon Wireless 250. GAINSCO now has 84 points in both championships, just four points behind the Brumos team and drivers.

## **Grand-Am Race Report**

Source: Herb Branham, NASCAR Public Relations

Wet and wild from the outset, Sunday's Verizon Wireless 250 was a water-marked battle at New Jersey Motorsports Park, won in a stunning upset by Ricardo Zonta and Nic Jönsson in the No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Lola.

They then quickly went to work on re-acclimating themselves to Victory Lane post-race protocol. For Zonta, this was his first win in the Rolex Sports Car Series. Jönsson's only previous victory in the series came in 2005 at Watkins Glen International.

The win may have been surprising but it also was commanding; the margin of victory was 44.752 seconds, over the runner-up No. 10 SunTrust Racing Ford Dallara co-driven by Max Angelelli and Brian Frisselle.

Afterward, Zonta - from Curicuba, Brazil - revealed that the team had an additional challenge besides the weather.

"We did not have radio [communication]," he said. "So, I had no information during the race. We were last on the restart (on Lap 44) so I had to catch everybody. I tried to push as hard as I could.

"The car was excellent. The conditions, they were changing a lot out there."

Krohn Racing is learning on the fly about their potential. Jönsson - a native of Sweden now living in Buford, Ga. - pointed out that this is only the second year for the team using the Lola chassis, and this season marks a return to Ford engines for the first time since 2006.

"We're starting to be competitive everywhere we go," Jönsson said.

Sunday's race, Round 3 of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16, started amid a steady rain - on an increasingly challenging 2.25-mile, 14-turn road course. Conditions got the upper hand on competitors immediately, in the form of a two-car Daytona Prototype mishap on the very first turn of the opening lap of the two-hour, 45-minute event. The wreck involved two cars - and ruined the chances of the race's defending champions repeating.

Mark Patterson, sharing the No. 60 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley with Ozz Negri - they won here last autumn - rammed the back of the No. 13 Beyer Racing Pontiac Riley, being driven by Ricky Taylor. The impact sheared off the No. 60's front cowling and sent the car to the garage, its day done as far as contending was concerned.

"It's not Ricky's fault," Patterson said. "We got a good start and went up the middle ... it was very dark and hard to see. I tried to get off the gas in time and the next thing I knew, there was a gap way too small to get my car through it. Ricky braked up ahead and I clipped him on the right rear. Our left front is shot."

And that was just the start.

The rain continued to worsen. How wet was it? On Lap 32 - just over an hour into the race - a caution flag came out solely because of standing water at various points on the course. The caution lasted until the 44th lap, approximately a half-hour later.

After that, the 31-car field raced the rest of the way, as huge rooster-tails of water belied the fact the rain actually did let up slightly as the afternoon wore on.

Reigning Daytona Prototype series co-champions Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas, who started their No. 01 TELMEX Lexus Riley on the outside front row, were never a factor due to a series of mechanical issues. The first was a faulty windshield wiper - wrong day for that, to be sure - that forced a costly green flag pit stop on Lap 18.

After the Zonta-Jönsson and Angelelli-Frisselle 1-2 result, rounding out the Daytona Prototype top five:

- Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas, No. 12 Verizon Wireless Porsche Riley;
- David Donohue and Darren Law, No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley by Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas.
- Mark Wilkins and Burt Frisselle, No. 61 AIM Autosport Ford Riley.

These are the top five in Daytona Prototype points after three events:

- David Donohue 88
- Darren Law 88
- Jon Fogarty 84
- Alex Gurney 84
- Timo Bernhard/Romain Dumas 79 (tied))

The production-based GT class was won by Dirk Werner and Leh Keen, in the No. 87 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3. They ended with a margin of victory of one lap over the runner-up No. 66 AXA/Mitchell Rubber/Wealth Management Strategies Porsche GT3 of Spencer Pumpelly and Ted Ballou.

The No. 87 and No. 66 finished an impressive eighth and ninth, respectively, overall.

The rest of the GT top five:

- Bryan Sellers and Eric Lux, No. 86 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3 (10th overall);
- Andy Lally and Justin Marks, No. 67 Construct/Corp/No Fear Energy Drinks/Voodoo Ride/K1 Speed Porsche GT3 (12th overall);
- Robin Liddell and Andrew Davis, No. 57 Bryan Mark/Stevenson Automotive Group/VIN Solutions Pontiac GXP.R (13th overall).

Here are the top five in GT class points:

- Ted Ballou 89
- Spencer Pumpelly 89
- Leh Keen 86
- Dirk Werner 86
- Andrew Davis 86
- Robin Liddell 86

After a week off, the Rolex Sports Car Series resume on May 17 at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterrey, Calif., for the Verizon Festival of Speed presented by SPEEDCOM Communications.

POST-RACE QUOTES TO NOTE:

David Donohue, after a fourth-place finish allowed him to retain the Daytona Prototype points lead:

"I didn't know we were on a podium position. I came up on the 13 car coming up into Turn 12. Visibility for us was really horrible, the way the windshield wiper was depositing its rubber onto the windshield. I didn't trust that he knew I would be coming through, and I backed out of it. The 12 car (Bernhard) took total advantage, and that was it, there was nothing that I could do. They were really fast. We were off all weekend long, so for Brumos Racing, this was really a great result after how badly we were running in practice and qualifying."

Patrick Dempsey, after earning a career-best GT class finish of seventh, driving with Joe Foster:

"I love this track. I had a great time here, I had a great finish, and I really enjoyed myself the whole time. I was really relaxed and confident, and I had a blast all weekend. I was second this morning in practice and I felt really comfortable. I really like the rain. I feel really comfortable in the rain. I just tried to have fun. I didn't feel any pressure, I just want to go out and have fun. I think the improvements on the track made a big difference - it's nice to have grass! The chicane is very nice. It made for good racing, because we could stay close to the DPs. I have to credit all the DP drivers, they were really respectful today. Everybody drove really smart, which is a great thing about this series. All the drivers realized how difficult the conditions were, and they really took care of each other. It's a great series to be part of, I'm happy for the result, and I'm happy for Mazda and having a great result for El Grado. It's been a great weekend. Conditions were bad, but that's racing. I had a blast."

## **Banner Racing Report**

Source: Jim Bourn

### **Collins & Edwards finish Pontiac GXP.R 15th in rain swept Grand-Am race in New Jersey**

Rain was the order of the day for Round 3 of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 race at Thunderbolt Raceway at the New Jersey Motorsports Park as Kelly Collins and Paul Edwards, stymied by a fog shrouded windshield, finished a disappointing 15th in the GT class.

The severe fogging conditions on the windshield, caused by the combination of cold rain and a hot engine, steamed up the windshield and reduced visibility to zero from the drivers' seat.

Sunday began as a wet and dreary day but the rain slackened as the fans braved the cool and wet climate in Millville New Jersey to take the traditional pre-race Grand-Am Fan Walk in the pits. Unfortunately just as the field formed up on the track to take the green flag start the rains intensified and Round 3 of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series was run under dreadful conditions for 2 hours and 45 minutes.

Actually for Kelly Collins and Paul Edwards the standing water and rain soaked track weren't as much of an issue as Kelly Collins and the #07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R rowed, pun intended, out the storm and lead the race early on.

Kelly Collins, of Newport Beach California, started the race and led early as the rains pelted the Southern New Jersey track but he soon had problems seeing through the windshield eventually leading to a spin out of the lead when Kelly hit a large puddle he couldn't even see.

"Everything was fine early on but the windshield wiper only operated on the left hand side so it got to the point where I couldn't see out the right side," said Kelly Collins. "As it rained harder there it puddled up on the inside of the kink coming onto the main straightaway. I hit the puddle, the car aquaplaned and I spun the car.

"As I was working my way back up through the field I was passing around the outside in turn ten and three cars spun in front of me and I had to take to the grass again and I was back behind all of the cars I had just passed."

The problem for Collins and then Edwards worsened as there was almost zero visibility out the windshield of the #07 Pontiac due to heavy fogging and debris that caused the wiper to grind a swath into the windshield.

"As I was working my way back up the order again the inside of the windshield started fogging and I literally couldn't make any more headway from that point on," said Collins. That was about an hour and fifteen minutes into the race. I then came in and Paul got in the car."

"When I got on the track I couldn't see anything, zero, and when I came into the pits the first time I was looking out the side window," said Paul Edwards. "You might as well have sprayed the windshield white."

Edwards made several stops under caution as the team tried many things to help cure the problem including replacing the windshield. During this time the #07 Pontiac GXP.R lost several laps.

"Unfortunately it wasn't wet enough in any of the practice sessions to get any spray or standing water on the track to create the steam and water we were getting on the windshield under these conditions," said Edwards. "I literally couldn't see anything. They made some changes but I still couldn't really see anything until the last 20 minutes when the rain slacked off. Then I could see left and see the puddles but that was about it."

"It was a disappointing deal because we work so hard to get ready for these races and the rain threw us a curveball," said team owner Leighton Reese. "We just got caught short. We practiced in the mist and light rain and while this was not a deluge this was the most rain we have had for a flag to flag race in three years of Grand-Am racing.



"It hurt us and I think we are tenth in points but we it is still early in the season and the points can tend to fluctuate wildly. We just cannot afford to have another bad result for the rest of the year so the pressure is on."

"At least the car is in one piece but we really have to look at this race as a DNF," concluded Collins. "But we have to put that behind us and look forward to Laguna although we do have to look at this fogging problem and correct that before we have another rain race like this one."

"Hopefully this will be the only bad finish of the year, but at least we finished, we got some points and our Pontiac GXP didn't get hurt," said Edwards.

The next race for LRPG Pontiac GXP.R and Paul Edwards and Kelly Collins will be Round 4 of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16, the Verizon Festival of Speed Presented by Speedcom at Mazda Speedway at Laguna Seca in Monterey California scheduled for May 17th 1009.

For more information about the number 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R of Paul Edwards and Kelly Collins go to their website at: [www.leightonreese.com](http://www.leightonreese.com).

### **Spirit Of Daytona Race Report**

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

After leading the early stages of the Verizon 250, Spirit of Daytona Racing finished the race 11th as Guy Cosmo and Scott Russell partnered in the No. 09 Spirit of Daytona Porsche V8-Coyote in round 3 of the Rolex Sports Car Series championship at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

The race was run in highly challenging conditions in the second visit to the south Jersey facility for the Rolex Series.

After he qualified 6th Cosmo was once again looking to make the most of the Coyote's tendency to shine in low-grip conditions, and he did just that as he pounced to take the lead from the defending Rolex Champion 01 machine. The rain kept coming, and so too did a pair of yellows, so the team called Cosmo in to swap seats with Russell, which was the same formula the team employed to take a top ten last weekend at VIR.

But the rain meant that not only was there little grip and visibility on offer, but it also contributed to cockpit fogging and a part-time wiper failure, which when combined with the high speed, made for a tough day in the office for both drivers.

"Even though I'd never raced this car in the rain, I was hoping to have been faster out there than I was so that was a bit disappointing," said Russell. "But I kept it on track and Guy did an amazing job. You couldn't even see out there when the wiper WAS working, so for him to be out there in these conditions without it working was impressive. There is no way to prepare for these conditions-you have to just get in there and do what you can do. Now I've had this experience, and I know I'll be better the next time I'm in these conditions."

"It was tough!" said Cosmo as he emerged from the cockpit. "We had to make some extra pit stops with a wheel nut problem, which meant that at least I could get my windscreen wiped off! It was great to have the pace early on to just go out and run to the front like we did, but we had some small things just keep us back today. It was tough out there, but we kept it on the track and brought it home!"

"It was a frustrating day out there for us," said team owner Troy Flis. "We just had a couple little things go wrong and when things are like they were out there today, that can really set you back and it did just that today. But both guys kept it on the pavement, and that was a lot harder than it sounds. My guys on the team have been working so hard, so you want to be bringing better results for all their effort. But we're all looking forward to moving forward on the next chapter with this Coyote, and hopefully we can come out swinging next time."

## **Michael Shank Racing Report**

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

Michael Shank Racing's return to New Jersey Motorsports Park made for a disappointing visit for the defending race-winning team on Sunday, as the Verizon 250 didn't go according to plan for the team in round 3 of the 2009 Rolex Sports Car Series championship.

The No. 6 Ford-Riley of John Pew and Michael Valiante finished the race 8th, with the No. 60 of Mark Patterson and Oswaldo Negri taking the checkered flag an unlucky 13th at the finish.

The race results were all the more disappointing given the remarkable pace shown all weekend long, as the team led the time sheets in several practice sessions with both Daytona Prototype entries leading up to the race. That fact was underscored as Valiante posted the fastest lap of the race on the final lap of the event with a 1:27.355-second tour of the 2.25-mile wet facility.

"This is the second race in a row that we've had two cars that could win the race, but circumstances just didn't play out our way today," said team owner Mike Shank. "It's disappointing, but at least we are coming out of here with the cars in one piece and now we'll head straight home, get the cars stripped down, race-prepared, and then be ready to head out to Laguna Seca by Friday."

The two-hour and forty-five minute event took the green flag in high-precipitation and low-visibility conditions, which immediately had an effect on the race outcome. Heading into the first corner, Patterson arrived with the field carrying much less speed into the corner than he did as he made contact with another car.

"At the start, I passed the 77 car and Darren (Law), and I should have just left it at that and tucked in, but then the 13 car braked a lot more than I expected and we had contact," said Patterson, who won the 2008 race at New Jersey Motorsports Park. "It's not his fault. I should have backed out earlier. You could just not see anything out there and it was my mistake. Hopefully we can get the car back out for some points."

The team did exactly that, rallying to return the machine in time to allow both Patterson and Negri to log enough time to score points according to the Grand-Am rules, with Negri taking the machine to the finish in 13th.

The sister No. 6 got off to a better start, as Pew avoided any issues in the opening laps and moved up to run into the top five before turning the car over to Valiante.

"You can't see anything out there," said Pew. "It was a complete white-out. Thank God for (spotter) Barry Waddell. He was calling everything for me. I couldn't even see the brake markers out there. I was just saving the car from spinning the whole time. It was a big challenge today."

Unfortunately, the duo's ambition for a Rolex Series second podium in as many weekends was thwarted by a wheel nut problem, which forced the car to make a long pit stop, and then return to the pits a subsequent time. The setbacks saw Valiante forced to finish 8th despite the prodigious pace shown by the No. 6, as illustrated by his fast lap time on the final lap of the race.

"I really couldn't believe how hard it was to see out there," said Valiante. "We had the problem with the wheel nut and that cost us. The car was hard to drive leading up to that, with the vibration. But once I came in and it was fixed, the car was awesome. It's a shame to have such a quick car and to not get to do more with it."

Michael Shank Racing will get the chance to do more with both fast Daytona Prototypes in two weeks as the series heads to Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. Oswaldo Negri set the track record and won the pole position at the track in his first start with Mark Patterson in 2005.

## **NJMP Track Report**

Source: Reece White, Director of Public Relations

New Jersey Motorsports Park opened its 2009 season with a record crowd at the Verizon Wireless 250 presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16, featuring the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series.

The weekend saw a 30 percent gain over last season's event, despite steady rain falling on Sunday's race day.

"Under these conditions, this was a hearty showing by dedicated race fans," said Kevin Wittman, General Manager of New Jersey Motorsports Park. "The entire Mid-Atlantic region, including South Jersey, is really embracing road racing and this facility. This weekend's attendance is a testament to that."

Many of the Grand-Am Rolex Series drivers competing in the event remarked on the size of the crowd despite the conditions.

"I was really surprised at the turnout," said David Donohue, winner of the 2009 Rolex 24 At Daytona and fourth-place finisher Sunday in the No. 58 Brumos Porsche Riley. "Under the yellow flag, I was looking around at the people in the stands with umbrellas, waiting it out in the rain. That was pretty amazing, and my hat's off to them."

The weekend included a capacity crowd for the autograph session, featuring all of the Rolex Series drivers, and a 30-minute Fan Walk where the pre-race grid was open, free of charge, to all spectators.

"The crowd was great," said Brian Frisselle, driver of the third-place finishing No. 10 SunTrust Racing Ford Dallara. "I couldn't believe it when we were driving around under yellow, the grandstands were completely full. I thought, 'These people are crazier than we are.' I love the track, I love being here, and I'm happy we put on a great show."

Patrick Dempsey, who finished a career-best seventh in the No. 40 El Grado Tequila Mazda RX-8, was pleased by the response of the Millville/Vineland communities.

"I'm seeing a difference in the community itself," said the star of ABC's Grey's Anatomy. "There's a whole new confidence downtown. I know some people don't like the noise, but I think it's a great thing for the community. I think the fan support is really great here. A lot of people came out. I was very happy to sign a lot more autographs, and we ran out of pictures. I think the future for this track is very strong."

The next event at the Millville, N.J. facility is the New Jersey Vintage Grand Prix Festival May 29-31, featuring the Cumberland County Community Festival on Saturday, May 30. Children 12 and under are admitted free to all events at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

