



Grand-Am Rolex 24 Hours At Daytona Final Race Report

Source: Team Race Reports



Grand-Am Race Recap

Brumos Racing Back In Gatorade Victory Lane At DIS in Rolex 24 Thriller

In the closest finish in the history of the Rolex 24 At Daytona, the No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley and drivers David Donohue, Darren Law, Buddy Rice and Antonio Garcia captured the 47th anniversary of the twice-around-the clock challenge on Sunday afternoon at Daytona International Speedway.

The final hours of the twice-around-the-clock marathon came down to an epic four-way battle between the No. 58 and 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Rileys, the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Ford Dallara and the No. 01 Chip Ganassi Racing Lexus Riley – a team that has captured the past three Rolex 24s.

On Lap 712 with 41 minutes remaining in the race, pole sitter David Donohue in the No. 58 car slipped past Juan Pablo Montoya and the No. 01 car coming through the tri-oval and held on for the win by .167 seconds -- the closest margin of victory in the history of the Rolex 24 At Daytona.

The No. 01 Lexus Riley with Montoya, Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas took second-place honors followed the Brumos Racing sister car – the No. 59 machine of JC France, Hurley Haywood, Terry Borcheller and Joao Barbosa – and the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Ford Dallara with Wayne Taylor, Max Angelelli, Brian Frisselle and Pedro Lamy.

The previous closest margin victory in the Rolex 24 was 30.879 seconds set in 2000 and the four cars that finished on the lead lap was also a Rolex 24 record.

“Was I surprised there were six cars in the lead lap come daybreak? Not really,” Donohue said of the fierce competition in this year’s Rolex 24. “The Daytona Prototypes have proven their durability over the years. The field was filled with fully capable teams, multi-car teams, single-car teams. Guys that had done their homework. It just makes it that much sweeter to beat a Ganassi and beat a Penske and beat a SunTrust.”

David Donohue joins his late father Mark as the third father-son combination to win the overall Rolex 24. The late Mark Donohue won the Rolex 24 At Daytona with Penske Racing 40 years ago.

“I’m certainly very, very proud of my father and his accomplishments and what he’s done,” Donohue said. “Just coincidentally we happened to nail it on the 40th anniversary of him winning the Lola and Penske’s winning the Lola. I feel more attachment to the effort my guys have put in to this and to Brumos and to Hurley (Haywood) and Bob Snodgrass and Bob Carlson from Porsche. That’s where my heart is to be honest.”

For Brumos Racing, it was their first Rolex 24 victory since 1978 and the No. 58 car covered 735 laps, 2,616.6 miles.

GT class

The No. 67 and No. 66 Porsche GT3 Cup cars brought home a one-two finish for TRG in the Grand Tuner Class.

The No. 67 TRG team consisted of five drivers -- Justin Marks, Andy Lally, Valentine Braintree, Jorg Bergmeister, and Patrick Long.

“To win the Rolex 24 At Daytona is a thrill beyond imagination for me,” Braintree said. “What happened for me today is a thrill beyond comprehension.”

“I’ve got people up here that are my close friends and that I’ve shared some of my most special moments with,” said TRG driver and owner Kevin Buckler. “To be able to be a part of the delivery of a victory for these guys, it’s just so satisfying.”

Wright Motorsports’ No. 33 Porsche GT3 Cup car captured third.

Other notable finishers include:

After having some early mechanical issues, the No. 2 Childress-Howard Motorsports Pontiac Crawford that featured Indy Car star driver Danica Patrick, NASCAR driver Casey Mears, Rob Finlay and Andy Wallace, finished eighth overall.

“Four years ago, I felt more like a road racer and now I feel more like a NASCAR guy,” Casey Mears said. “But it doesn’t take long to find your roots.”

The GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing No. 99 Pontiac Riley that included three-time defending NASCAR Sprint Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson finished seventh overall.

"It's nice to get the butterflies going and get your brain going again," Johnson said.

The No. 40 Dempsey Racing Mazda RX-8 Team that showcased driving Grey's Anatomy star Patrick Dempsey finished 22nd in the GT Class and 35th overall.

Grand-Am Race Report

Source: Grand-Am Communications

Brumos Racing Takes Closest Rolex 24 At Daytona in History

David Donohue passed Juan Pablo Montoya with 39 minutes remaining and held on to win the 47th Rolex 24 At Daytona - on the 40th anniversary of his father, Mark Donohue's, victory in the 1969 event.

Donohue joined Darren Law, Buddy Rice and Antonio Garcia to give Brumos Racing its first Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 victory since 2003, denying TELMEX/Target Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates its fourth consecutive triumph in America's premier sports car event by .167 seconds, the closest finish in event history.

"These guys have put a lot of effort into this," Donohue said. "I'm glad to be able to carry the flag. The Brumos team is just a tenacious bunch of guys, they never give up and today proves the point. We came here ready to run and we ran hard the whole time."

Montoya pressured Donohue throughout the final 39 minutes, but the No. 01 Lexus Riley could not overcome the power of the Brumos Porsche on the Daytona banking.

"Every corner it was 110 percent everywhere," said Montoya, who drove for Ganassi in the team's 2007 and 2008 victories. "And it was fun, because we drove like that the last two hours. And we didn't make any mistakes. I gave it 110 percent, and I know I couldn't go any faster if I had done anything different."

Joao Barbosa finished third in the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley shared by JC France, Hurley Haywood and Terry Borcheller - 5.504 seconds back -- while Max Angelelli took fourth in the No. 10 SunTrust Racing Ford Dallara co-driven by Wayne Taylor, Pedro Lamy and Brian Frisselle, 10.589 seconds behind.

Scott Dixon, the 2006 event winner, took fifth in the No. 02 Target/TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley shared by Dario Franchitti and Alex Lloyd.

The record-breaking event had the closest margin of victory, most finishers on the lead lap and most cautions, 25 for 117 laps. The top four finishers covered 735 laps - most in the Daytona Prototype era. The previous record for the closest Rolex 24 finish was 2000, 30.879 seconds. The 53 lead changes among 22 drivers and nine cars were the second-highest total in event history.

The final hour was run under green flag conditions, with the top four running nose to tail part of the way.

The GT race came down to a one-two finish for TRG Porsche, with Andy Lally and Justin Marks joined by Jorg Bergmeister, Patrick Long and RJ Valentine in the winning No. 67 Porsche GT3. Second, one lap behind, was the TRG No. 66 of Spencer Pumpelly, Tim George Jr., Richard Leitz and Emmanuel Collard.

The opening two hours and 45 minutes of the race were run under green flag conditions, with Penske Racing joining the Brumos and Penske teams in setting a torrid pace.

Timo Bernhard, Romain Dumas and Ryan Briscoe combined to lead 191 laps in the debut of the Penske Racing Crown Royal Cask No. 16 Porsche Riley before the team lost 15 laps in the early morning hours to replace the rear-end assembly, dropping out of contention. The team went on to finish sixth, 18 laps down.

The GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Pontiac Riley of Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty - joined by three-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson and Jimmy Vasser - rebounded from early mechanical problems to take seventh. Another team coming back after a slow start was the No. 2 Childress-Howard Motorsports Gentlemen Jack Pontiac Crawford of three-time Rolex 24 winner Andy Wallace, Rob Finlay, Casey Mears and Danica Patrick, which finished eighth.

The No. 09 Spirit of Daytona Racing/Boy Scouts of America Porsche Coyote of motorcycle standouts Scott Russell, Jeff Ward and Jason Pridmore - joined by Guy Cosmo - rebounded from two spins and a pit fire to take 11th in the Daytona Prototype class.

Heavy attrition struck the Ford-powered teams, with a mechanical problem - traced to a wheel on the crankshaft - sidelining six of the seven teams. This included the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Riley, which suddenly slowed with AJ Allmendinger at the wheel near the five-hour mark. Only 10 minutes later, Darren Turner coasted to a stop while running third in the No. 76 Krohn Racing Ford Riley. Similar problems would sideline the contending No. 60 Michael Shank Racing Westfield Insurance Riley, the No. 61 AIM Autosport Riley and the No. 77 Doran Racing McDonald's Dallara, which led four laps with Brad Jaeger at the wheel.

Also failing to finish was the new No. 45 Victory Junction - Orbit Racing BMW Riley of Kyle Petty, Bill Lester, Darren Manning and Leo Hendry, which exited after 216 laps with engine problems.

Brumos Porsche fielded winning entries in the Rolex 24 in 1973, 1975 (as Peter Gregg Racing), 1976 and 1978, and also sponsored the winning Joest Porsche in 1991. The team also won its class in 1962, 1968 and 1972. Porsche's last overall victory in the Rolex 24 was in 2003, when TRG put a GT entry in victory lane.

The Donohues became the third father-son combination to win overall in the history of the event, three days after the pair joined Dan and Alex Gurney as the race's lone father-son pole winners. Mark Donohue won the 1969 race in a Lola-Chevrolet T70, joined by Chuck Parsons. Al Unser and Al Unser Jr., and John Paul and John Paul Jr. also were overall winners of the Rolex 24.

TRG Takes 1-2 Finish in Rolex Series GT Class

With arguably one of its best driver lineups ever, TRG earned the top two positions in the Rolex 24 in the Rolex Series GT class, with Andy Lally anchoring a team which included Jorg Bergmeister, Patrick Long, Justin Marks and RJ Valentine to the GT victory and a ninth-place finish overall in the No. 67 TRG Construct Corps/CRG Porsche GT3. It marked the second straight season two GT cars finished in the top 10 in the overall standings.

Lally earned his second class victory in the Rolex 24, finishing a dominating weekend for TRG, which led 301 of the 695 laps. In fact, TRG drivers never looked back after Andy Lally inherited the lead from Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3 driver Kevin Roush, who pulled off the course on Lap 553 with a broken driveshaft.

Porsche clearly made a statement from the beginning, as Lally traded the lead with defending race

winner and 2009 polesitter Sylvain Tremblay in the No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8 early in the 2009 race. But when Tremblay pulled the Mazda off the track with a ruptured fuel cell in the race's first hour, the Porsches dominated. Of the 695 laps, Porsche led all but 72 of them, and at the 24 one-hour intervals, only three times did a Porsche not lead.

It was a battle between TRG and Farnbacher Loles Racing thereafter. Dominik Farnbacher, Matthew Marsh and Kevin Roush put the No. 86 Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3 up front a race-high 268 laps, and during the late-night and mid-morning hours, the No. 86 and Nos. 66 and 67 TRG Porsche GT3s swapped the lead multiple times.

But when Roush pulled off the track - in nearly the same fashion as Farnbacher Loles Racing's No. 87 Porsche GT3 hours earlier - during the final four hours, it gave TRG all it needed to earn the team's first Rolex 24 victory since 2003, when Bergmeister and team owner Kevin Buckler won overall and in the GT class with Michael Schrom and Timo Bernhard.

The victory was the third in Rolex 24 competition for Bergmeister, and the first for Long, Marks and Valentine, a 62-year-old Massachusetts native who became the oldest Rolex 24 class winner since Joe Policastro won at 62 years, 10 months and 13 days.

Spencer Pumpelly - who shared the No. 66 TRG AXA/Mitchell Rubber Porsche GT3 with Ted Ballou, Tim George Jr., Emmanuel Collard and Richard Lietz - gave his team a second-place finish, one lap behind the No. 67. The car actually led 152 laps - three more than the No. 66 - and as late as the final three hours.

Not only did TRG sweep the top two positions, but Porsche swept the podium. B.J. Zacharias, Phillip Martien and Porsche factory drivers Sascha Maassen and Patrick Pilet took the No. 33 Wright Motorsports Phillips Way Racing Porsche GT3 to third. The quartet never led, but ran among the top five for more than half the race.

Others led but trailed off at the finish. Defending Rolex Series GT champions Paul Edwards and Kelly Collins, who shared the No. 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R with Jan Magnussen, paced 66 circuits in the only to finish fourth.

Roush, Farnbacher, Marsh and Eric Lux didn't go away completely empty-handed, however. The crew made the changes and took the checkered flag fifth, seven laps behind the GT winners. Two other Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche GT3s also finished in the top 10.

For their efforts, the No. 70 SpeedSource team finished 17th in class, breaking a three-race Rolex Series winning streak at the 3.56-mile track.

The next action for the Grand-Am Rolex Series will be April 26, with the Bosch Engineering 250 at Virginia International Raceway.

POST-RACE NEWS & NOTES

- This is the first overall Rolex Series victory for Darren Law, Antonio Garcia and Buddy Rice and the fourth career Rolex Series victory for David Donohue.
- This is the first Porsche overall victory in the Rolex 24 At Daytona since 2003, when TRG took overall and GT honors. The Porsche overall victory also broke a three- race winning streak in the Rolex 24 by Lexus.
- David Donohue became the third second- generation driver to join his father, Mark, as a Rolex 24 overall winner. Other father- son winners were Al Unser Sr. and Al Unser Jr., and John Paul Sr. and John Paul Jr.
- The winning margin by Donohue over Juan Pablo Montoya was 0.167 seconds, the closest 1- 2

finish in Rolex 24 history, and the top four cars were separated by only 10.589 seconds. Both marks bested the previous best margin of victory of 30.879 seconds, set in 2000. The 0.167-second margin of victory was also the fourth closest in Rolex Series history. Ironically, Law, Donohue and Garcia were all involved in the closest finish in Rolex Series history in 2008 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal.

- The margin of victory made the Rolex 24 not only the 1- 2 closest finish in race history, but also the closest 1- 2- 3 and 1- 2- 3- 4 finish.

- Five of the top six closest finishes in Rolex Series history have included Scott Pruett.

- The victory by Brumos Racing was the team's first since 2003 at Le Circuit de Mont- Tremblant.

- Buddy Rice became the 12th driver in history to win the Indianapolis 500 and the Rolex 24 At Daytona, joining Dario Franchitti, Scott Dixon, Juan Pablo Montoya, Arie Luyendyk, Al Unser Jr., Al Unser, A.J. Foyt, Bobby Rahal, Dan Wheldon, Mario Andretti and Mark Donohue.

- Antonio Garcia became the first driver from Spain ever to win the Rolex 24 overall.

- The 52 car lead changes in the Rolex 24 were the second most in Rolex Series and Rolex 24 history (64, 2008).

- The last time three drivers from the U.S. were involved in the overall winning team in the Rolex 24 was 2004.

- The victory extended a four- year streak in which at least one driver from the U.S. was part of the overall Rolex 24 winning team.

- The 735 laps completed by the winning drivers were the fourth most in Rolex 24 history, despite setting Rolex Series and Rolex 24 records for most cautions (25) and laps run under caution (116). The Rolex 24 lap record stands at 762 in 1992.

- The 2009 victory for Donohue came in the 40th anniversary of his father Mark's win (1969) and the 40th anniversary of Lola's one and only win in the Rolex 24. Ironically, Mark's victory came with Roger Penske, whose team David battled for the lead for much of the first 18 hours.

- The podium was the third straight for No. 01 TELMEX Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley drivers Scott Pruett and Juan Pablo Montoya in the Rolex 24 and second consecutive for Memo Rojas. The trio won the 2008 Rolex 24 overall with Dario Franchitti.

- Brumos Racing also claimed third overall in the Rolex 24, with drivers JC France, Joao Barbosa, Terry Borcheller and Hurley Haywood.

- The 1- 2 finish by TRG in GT was the first 1- 2 finish in the Rolex 24 At Daytona since 2000 (GTO class, Viper Team Oreca).

- The Rolex 24 victory was the first for TRG drivers RJ Valentine, Justin Marks and Patrick Long, while Andy Lally and Jorg Bergmeister both own multiple victories. All five drivers had previously won Rolex Series GT class races.

- The victory was the first for Porsche in the GT portion of the Rolex 24 since 2003, when TRG also won overall.

- Porsche dominated the top 10 in the GT class, taking four of the top five and seven of the top 10.

POST-RACE DRIVER QUOTES

DAVID DONOHUE (No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): "I'm not sure how to begin after all what I just heard. We tested for like 3,000 miles here. "We" being the team. And Darren □□ I wasn't doing much of the testing, and came up with a real efficient package, if anyone notices. Yes, we got them on the straight. Ever noticed how he closed up in the breaking and the chicane and so forth. I'll leave it at that. It's ridiculous at this point.

"Emotions run high mostly for our team. We've been at the bottom of the barrel for a while through '04 and '05. And these guys just, I've said in the past pretty much racing has got a lot of tenacity there. Just a tenacious bunch of guys, never give up and today proves the point. We came here ready to run hard and we ran hard the whole time.

"There were a lot of tears out there. Harris Snodgrass was in victory lane. Bob Snodgrass, our late

boss, and he was kind of Brumos, and the passion and spirit behind Brumos, passed away two years ago.”

ANTONIO GARCIA (No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “It's incredible. I thought Lemman last year was really tight. It was different, and here it was tight. Awesome. I could not see the last hour.

“A lot of things came in my mind. Also the Montreal race, because they were involved in that as well. I mean, I cannot describe it. I just want to thank Brumos, these guys, Porsche, everybody.”

DARREN LAW (No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “I don't know if anyone knows, we rolled off that trailer this weekend and never touched the car. Setup was spot on. We did a lot of homework. The car is really, really good. Porsche gave us a great motor. The team did a great job. All the drivers did good. So we're really happy.

“Honestly, it's just sour grapes on their part. We have the smallest motor. Two fewer cylinders than everybody. Porsche just built a good motor. Like David said, we've done our homework. The car was hooked up, trimmed out. And as David mentioned, look, they crossed the line 50 feet behind us. It was a fight the whole way through.”

BUDDY RICE (No. 58 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “I'm still shocked by it. To think my face is on the Borg-Warner trophy. That was an elite group. But now to also have all the people who have won the 24 hours at Daytona, and also for me to be able to do both, it's unbelievable. It's hard to believe. I'm just really happy to be coming in with Brumos Racing for the last three, four years, running on both the bookends of the series. I run here and run with Miller with them and it's a great thing.

“Darren and I have known each other for years since I was in high school and started working with them, and it's just really cool. It's awesome. I can't be any happier. I'm grateful to see that Brumos, like David said, the last two years we've been quite strong.

“We had a self-inflicted wound two years ago, we had a car that was capable of winning. Last year we had a bit of a mechanical issue. It's not like a big shock that we're running up front. But this year we made sure we had all of the Is dotted and the Ts crossed and we came here and executed. That's what Penske does. That's what Ganassi and Wayne Taylor does. There's guys that win races. They execute. You could see how close the qualifying was. You can see how close all times are, but it comes down to execution and not making mistakes. That's what it takes to win these 24-hour races and Brumos did it the best this weekend.”

JOAO BARBOSA (No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “It was a great race, everybody was 100 percent, sprint race all the way through the race and no one wants to lose laps. No one wants to lose touch with the first car. We all pushed really hard, and sometimes traffic played a big part of it.

“Personally I got held up in traffic in the bus stop, like 15 minutes ago and that was it. But that was really tough to fight for any other position. But we were really pushing and the car was great. So I probably could have got a shot at 2nd place. It's tough to say, but we just had a great race and we're really pleased with 3rd place at this point.”

TERRY BORCHELLER (No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “I started with them last year and it was just awesome. I really enjoyed the team. The friendship with the drivers and with all the boys on both cars. Darren and I, I've known Darren for probably almost 20 years and Buddy Rice. And it's just a great, it's a great definition of a team to be with Brumos. And I hate not winning.

“But today, when Joe got caught in the traffic, I knew it was over for us. And I was, up until that point I was still pulling for our car and our lineup. But as soon as that happened, I couldn't be happier for the 58 car and what they accomplished. And they really deserve it. They did a heck of a job, all of them.”

JC FRANCE (No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “I was pretty much overcome with emotion there at the finish, see my teammates in the 58 car to get a well-deserved victory and for us to have a great finish right behind them is everything we could ask for. It's a great start to the season. I'm proud of all my co-drivers here. They really stepped up and carried the load last night and today and just an overall great team effort on Brumos.

“I don't know. The 58 car was pretty strong. Both our cars were working real well. To try to say ifs and buts and what would have happened out there in racing conditions, when you come across traffic and stuff. But the track position is definitely a key factor. It's easier to block than it is to pass. That had some impact on it.”

HURLEY HAYWOOD (No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche Riley): “We've got to remember that Brumos is a team with two cars, and the success of the 58 car is shared by everybody on the 59 car and all the drivers and all the crew members, because it is a team.

“And our team worked very, very hard. We had a setback. We were the first team to come on board with the Daytona prototype when it was first introduced, it came with the fab car.

“We had some issues with that chassis. But we stuck to it. We changed over to the Riley. Bob Snodgrass was our spearhead. He led us and gave us encouragement and made it all possible for us to compete in this great series”

“I think the trophy will probably go back to Jacksonville to add to our trophy case that's in our Porsche dealership. It's got quite a few of our trophies from the 24-hour races. So I think it will end up there. It might move back and forth because the guys deserve to share that.”

JUAN PABLO MONTOYA (No. 01 TELMEX/Target Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley): “I don't think I ever made any attempts to go back by it. I tried, but the amount of power they have on the straights. I'm actually surprised we finished second. I think everybody at Chip Ganassi were making jokes. They drove their ass off well and we stayed in the lead most of the race. And it's one of those deals.

“I was actually surprised we even fought for the win, to be honest. Everything □□ the rumors and the Penske would drive away from us easily. I drove my butt off. I knew if I would get any traffic in the backstop I was done. And I did. And I did, and I was done. And it didn't matter how many times they made mistakes. And they just kept driving off and driving off for me, even when I was in the draft.

“But it's what it is. And they're going to have a fun year.”

SCOTT PRUETT (No. 01 TELMEX/Target Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley): “I couldn't be more prouder for the whole Ganassi operation, with TELMEX and Lexus. And, of course, the job that Juan Pablo and Memo did. We gave it 110 percent. It was actually a little bit better than what we expected. And congratulations to the Brumos guys for finally getting their first victory. I know they've been chasing after that.

“But it is a little frustrating. I mean, when guys just drive by you, it just never seems right, no matter

what you do. Everything will get evened out. I can't say enough about the whole Ganassi organization, with Lexus and TELMEX to come back here and run as strong as we did the whole time and never miss a beat. Again, the car never had a problem at all. The car didn't have a problem."

MEMO ROJAS (No. 01 TELMEX/Target Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley):

"I agree with Scott and Juan. I just want to congratulate my team. They did an awesome job all weekend. We have the car to win. We didn't have the power to win, but I mean Juan and Scott, literally, it was a very difficult race. We had to drive 10, 10 through most of the race. Although there wasn't much rain, there was few yellow flags as compared to previous years. And you could see how it came up for a 24-hour race to be that tight in the end with Juan driving like a qualifying, like in a one-hour qualifying session. That was pretty impressive.

"So congratulations to Brumos again; and, well, they have won the season."

JORG BERGMEISTER (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3): "It's been a while since 2003. Back again with TRG, winning again is just awesome. Kevin put together a great program. Great driver lineup. And I'm just excited to have another watch."

PATRICK LONG (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3): "Stellar. Just has been an unbelievable month. Being here with Jorg, a teammate for a long time. Kevin gave me my first run here at the Rolex back in 2004.

"I said it time and time again, I thought this was the one race that would elude me for my whole career. Having some early success with thanks to Porsche and many other big endurance races, this Rolex has slipped away from me a few times. Personally this is really sweet. But just a really congrats and well done to the whole team. Thanks to Kevin and TRG."

ANDY LALLY (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3): "I don't look at myself as team leader. I'm fortunate to be part of TRG five years and be a small part of an awesome program and it's an honor.

"This is Daytona for me is the pinnacle of the endurance racing. A lot of people look at Lemans, but this place holds a special spot in my heart. And the 24 is the moment and the day that I think of when I'm looking for energy and inspiration during my workouts and how to keep going, and this is what I want and this is the drive. And to be able to win here at Daytona anytime, whether it's the summer race but especially this race, the Daytona 24, is the most amazing thing."

JUSTIN MARKS (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3): "It's a great way to get back into sports car racing. I knew coming into it we would have a real legitimate shot at this. So much talent on the team and in the TRG organization.

"So it was just really excited to get the thing kicked off with this race and knew we were going to have a good run. And I've been lucky enough to win the summer sports car race here twice, the 250 twice. But this is just on a scale that's so far beyond that it's just awesome. To be able to do it in, do it for Kevin and do it with the team that I made my 24 hours debut with in 2001 is pretty special, too, because I spent the next couple years racing for BMW. To come back to Porsche TRG, winning the thing, it's awesome, great momentum for the season and for Andy."

RJ VALENTINE (No. 67 TRG Porsche GT3): "For me, this is my 23rd race, racing over 30 years. To win your Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona is a thrill beyond imagination for me.

"Having participated with some of the greatest drivers in the world is also a thrill for me. I don't mind telling you I'm 64 years old. I've been in this a long time. What happened for me today is a

thrill beyond comprehension.

“There's not much more I can say. I'm still in shock. I still can't believe I was involved with a team that won it. And TRG and Deborah and Kevin and Porsche Motorsports did a tremendous job with our car.”

TED BALLOU (No. 66 TRG Porsche GT3): “It is a great way to start. Spencer has done a great job of bringing me along this year. I'm looking forward to spending the whole year with him. We just signed a new sponsor in AXA. They're actually a French company. Nice to have Collard on the team. And obviously Richard did a great job in the middle of the night fighting with Farnbacher. And Spencer and obviously Tim. So it really was a great event for us.”

EMMANUAL COLLARD (No. 66 TRG Porsche GT3): “The race was really exciting. We were fighting for the win, for the race. We had a problem at the end with the brakes. But overall the car was well prepared by the team, TRG. And I think it was a great weekend also for Porsche overall, because they won with the GT, with the GT also. Wonderful weekend for them.”

TIM GEORGE JR. (No. 66 TRG Porsche GT3): “It was awesome to be a part of TRG again. With the 66, same colors, different number this year. Step up to the podium, with Collard and Pumpelly last year and as well this year, it's awesome. Welcome Richard and Ted on the team. And it's really good racing with everybody here. Speedweek is coming up, Arthur Remax Series for me. And February 7th is the race there. So being in that No. 2.”

RICHARD LIETZ (No. 66 TRG Porsche GT3): “It was my first race with TRG. We finished second on the podium. They organized everything really well. When you go with five cars in a 24-hour race, it's really, really difficult. And they did it well. And position 1 and 2 for a team says everything. And I'm happy that we finished on the podium and maybe we do it next year again and thank you very much.”

SPENCER PUMPELLY (No. 66 TRG Porsche GT3): “I was actually in the car at the time when the 86 broke, and that was the first I'd heard of the deal. But we had a similar deal last year. And it's tough being in that situation knowing that when we pitted, they took the lead, and when we take the lead, there's a fifty/fifty shot that that happened.

“So we just kind of came out on the unlucky side of that deal. But at the same time you can't win the 24 without some luck, as anyone who has won it knows. And it was the right decision to be made. And we're part of a historic finish in 1-2. And, again, it was not a big deal as far as when I look back on the race, what I look back is having the opportunity to run with these guys here and work with such a good group of people.”

PHILLIP MARTIEN (No. 33 Wright Motorsports Porsche GT3): “It's the best birthday present ever! Third place in my first Rolex 24! It is the best day of my life. I still don't really comprehend what's going on. It's going to be tomorrow morning before I really realize what we did. I can't thank John Wright and the Wright Motorsports team for all their work that enabled us to bring the car to the podium. It's a total dream come true. I also want to thank Porsche Motorsports for giving us Sascha and Patrick. And of course Wright Motorsports' lead driver is B.J., who is wonderful.

“The best moment was to see us in P3 on TV. We had the good sense to not get rattled when we had problems in the last hour. We got a drive-through penalty, and then a potential flat tire, but we managed to hold onto third place. The last hour was so exciting. It's true what they say; it's never over until the fat lady sings. And what do I want for my next birthday? To come back here and win!”

SASHA MASSEN (No. 33 Wright Motorsports Porsche GT3): "I'm happy for Brumos of course, and for us as well. We had a plan. First, we wanted to finish the race, but I thought that wasn't going to be easy. Then we wanted to try to get on the podium, and I thought that was going to be hard too. Phillip hasn't even done a 24-hour race, but I'm happy with his performance because he made no mistakes. You can only finish a race in a good way if you do not make mistakes. Wright Motorsports is a great crew; they didn't make any mistakes either, and that's why we got on the podium. It was a great result!"

PATRICK PILET (No. 33 Wright Motorsports Porsche GT3): "This was only my second Rolex 24 and my first podium in this race, so the day was a great success. The team did a very good job. I knew John Wright had a good team. The car was very consistent. The pit stops were very quick. The podium finish was a very nice present for Phillip. We don't know why the throttle wasn't working correctly. It was only about 90 percent. Next time we'll come back with it 100 percent and maybe we can win! I don't know exactly what happened at the end; I don't think I was hit. There was a vibration in the rear and smoke came out of the left rear. We thought it was a puncture. We came in and tore off the rear bumper in case something was rubbing the tire, but luckily it was OK. I hope to be here next year with the same team, only next time we want to win!"

BJ ZACHARIAS (No. 33 Wright Motorsports Porsche GT3): "Of the six Rolex 24s I've done, this one was the biggest rollercoaster. We were second pretty early, and then we fell behind a bit. We didn't have full throttle all day, and of all the tracks where you need full throttle, Daytona is it. I'd say it was about 97 percent at best. The crew worked hard to make it handle better all day, and John Wright called a great race. We also had one problem when we changed a brake caliper; only one front caliper was working after that stop, so we had to make another stop to change the right front caliper again. That was at about the 15-hour mark.

"We're an independent team. There are some advantages to running a big, multicar team, and I think there are some disadvantages too. We're the little team that could. We had a great car and a great driver line-up and great support, and we want to thank everyone involved."



© Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com

Spirit of Daytona Racing Endures to Finish Rolex 24 At Daytona

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

The Spirit of Daytona Racing No. 09 Porsche V8-powered Coyote overcame several setbacks over the course of 24 hours of hard racing in the 47th Rolex 24 At Daytona before racing to the finish with the Boy Scouts of America-liveried machine. The team completed 649 laps to finish 11th in the Daytona Prototype class with motorcycle champions Jeff Ward, Scott Russell, and Jason Pridmore sharing the driving duties with Spirit of Daytona Racing pilot Guy Cosmo.

The race marked the first round of the 2009 Rolex Sports Car Series as the team continued to move the development curve forward for the Coyote chassis teamed with Porsche V8 power.

Starting the race from the seventh row, the team was dealt its first bad hand in the early laps, as the electrical charge dropped, forcing the drivers to race in the high cockpit temperatures without the benefit of helmet blowers or coolers as all non-essential electrical systems were switched off to conserve power over the long run.

Before the race passed the first hour mark, the challenge got even bigger after the clutch went, only to then be followed up by a throttle cable issue that also slowed the team's progress. But the team continued on undeterred, focused on bringing team partner Boy Scouts of America a finish in their first Rolex 24 together.

Despite the race being the first Rolex 24 appearance for Pridmore and Russell—Ward made a start in the 1997 Rolex event—the motorcycle champions continued to show a quick adaptation to running on the high banks on four wheels rather than two, keeping the car moving at a quick clip over and over on the 3.56-mile infield road course.

The team continued to press on through the night and into the long Sunday race day. As the field thinned from attrition while the team established a strong rhythm and moved up the charts, there was one final set back as a fuel line broke and caused a small fire in the pits as Cosmo came in to turn the car over to Russell. Quick work in the pits by the team and fire marshals saw both Cosmo and Russell out of the car unscathed. After taking the No. 09 behind the wall for the first time after over 22 hours of racing, the team found the problem, fixed it, and sent the machine back out to race to the finish.

Appropriately enough, "Mr. Daytona" Scott Russell took the machine across the finish line for the 649th time to accept the checkered flag just after 3:30 PM ET local time.

"I couldn't believe that they could get the car fixed after the fire and back out on the track," said Russell. "There have been a couple of times that I had to pinch myself that this whole experience is really happening. The team has been great. It's amazing to get through the adversity that we did, that the whole team fought back all they way to get to the finish. This Coyote did its job and I know the team is looking forward to getting the new one soon and starting that development process. This was a fatiguing race, but I had a blast and would love to do it again. It was great to have Guy driving with us because I'm not sure what we'd have done if he wasn't with us. It was a long day! Hopefully I'll get a chance to race again as soon as (Rolex next race) VIR."

"This was a great opportunity to race in this Rolex 24 after watching it for so many years and just wanting so badly to race in it myself so it's great for us to get to the finish today," said Pridmore. "To be fair, we certainly had our share of problems in this race but the team never gave up and never stopped fighting. It's a big challenge for us to jump into this sandbox like this, but I think we just kept getting closer and closer and we'd made a lot of progress before the fire. You always want to finish on top, but this was our first time out. I'd love to do this again."

"There was a lot of rubber and junk out there on the track in my last stint, but the car was pretty much consistent throughout," said Ward. "I got a lot more time in the car in this race than when I was here in 1997 because even though we had some set backs, the car just kept running, all through the night. This is a great group of guys to work with and I want to do more races like this, but it'd be great to get more time testing and getting ready but if there was a chance, I'd really like to do more. The seat wasn't perfect, so I'm going to be sore and tired tomorrow, but this was a tough race!"

"It is an amazing feat for us to finish this race, with the guys doing this for the first time and all the problems we had to overcome to get to the end is just amazing to me," said Cosmo. "But all the guys did great. It was a grueling race, and I think we are all feeling beat up and cramped up, but I think this was a good chance for us to work with some fantastic champions and to also keep the process of learning this new Coyote bodywork going. I'm happy that the fire didn't cause any injuries and that we were able to get back out and keep going to have Scotty take it over the finish line."

"We put a pretty big challenge in front of ourselves to have the motorcycle guys taking this on for the first time after we just got this bodywork a month ago. So I think we have to be happy to come out of this with a lot of data and another finish in the Rolex 24 as well," said Team Owner Troy Flis. "This was a great opportunity to work with some really cool people, and we're all counting our blessings to get to do that. I'm just looking forward to getting the new car and to hopefully having the chance to go to VIR with a car that we're already familiar with inside and out."

Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R finishes 4th Rolex 24 hour at Daytona

Source: Jim Bourn, Banner Racing

After 24 hours of racing's most grueling contest Paul Edwards, Kelly Collins and Jan Magnussen brought the Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R to the finish line in 4th position today in the Rolex 24-Hour at Daytona International Raceway. The race began the 2009 season of the Rolex Grand-Am Road racing Championships Presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16.

The Banner Racing Team recovered to finish 4th from a pit lane collision during the late night hours and a broken muffler, that threatened to light up the right rear tire, that dropped them out of the top three for the second time.

To finish in the top four Collins, Edwards, and Magnussen drove nearly flat out for 24 hours to try to maintain pace with the Porsches and Mazdas who have a significant top speed advantage on the big Daytona banked track.

"We ran as hard as we could go for the entire race, there was nothing left," said team owner Leighton Reese. "We just don't have the speed here and it is very, very frustrating but we had a hard fought fourth and these Banner Racing guys should be proud of that. Of course we want to win but the alternative is to wind up in the garage and today we won some good championship points so it was a strong effort from everyone on the team."

"Oh, yeah, very happy with a fourth place finish," said Paul Edwards. "Considering that we were in the garage twice and the guys turned around the car faster than anyone else out here could do it. They knew exactly what they were doing at all times. When I came in (with the broken exhaust) they knew what was wrong and what they needed to do before I got there. We had two 8 minute turnarounds to two 20 minute jobs.

"Considering the contact we had in the pits, which is unforeseeable, and the exhaust problems and a couple of little problems that put us into the garage twice, fourth is a fantastic finish," said driver Kelly Collins. "Particularly considering that at any given time we were racing a car that was between 12 and 16 miles an hour slower than the cars that won the class. Fourth is better than the seventh we had here last year when we won the championship so we have this one under our belt and we are on our way to trying to defend our championships. The car is in one piece so that is always a good deal."

But for team drivers Collins and Edwards who will try to repeat their Grand-Am championship run from 2008 in 2009 the crew were the stars of the 4th place finish of the Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R.

"Totally hats off to the Banner Racing crew," said Edwards. "They took care of our sore car and kept us out on the race track as much as humanly possible. Of course we would all like to win but everything considered, a fourth here at Daytona is a pretty good thing and it keeps us in the championship race."

Leighton Reese echoed that sentiment saying, "The drivers and crew did an awesome job today, and night come to think of it. We have good camaraderie and the kind of team work necessary to run well in races like this where everything isn't necessarily going to go your way. I also have to thank our great sponsors like Pontiac, GM Racing, Mobil1 and Shock Doctor."

"Congratulations guys, you are the best," Collins said to the crew as they were busily packing up their pit stall. Because, for the crewmen who service the race cars in the Rolex 24 hour race at Daytona the work day doesn't end when the checkered flag falls. It ends when the car and all of the bits and pieces that keeps a race car going for 24 hours are packed into the transporter.

"It looked like we were going to be strong 4 or 5 hours in," said Leighton Reese. "We held a pretty commanding lead for awhile but this is a long tough race and so many things can happen. We had that accident on pit road with the Mazda and we lost four laps fixing that deal but the crew did an

awesome getting the car to the garage and back and only losing five or six laps. We managed to work our way back up to 3rd when the exhaust system exploded.”

Paul Edwards, Kelly Collins and Jan Magnussen raced the Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R for 2,453 hard miles (689 laps) in a little over 24 hours and the Banner Racing crew kept the Pontiac GXP.R running and the pit stops short and that is how a team finishes and finishes well in the Rolex 24-Hour race at Daytona.

Extended Banner Race Report:

Starting from the 15th starting position Paul Edwards took a conservative approach and kept the Pontiac GXP out of trouble but was barely staying in the top 20 as the early pace was torrid. Paul moved up to 8th 20 laps into the race and turned over the car to Kelly Collins on lap 54 after a double stint well inside of the top ten.

“We are fighting it a bit because we did all of our practice here at Daytona in cold weather and I think as the night comes our setup will come to us,” said Edwards. “It is a long race so I’m happy that I kept it out of the wall and kept it from hitting anybody. For sure the opening laps were a matter of survival. I wasn’t taking any risks.”

By 7 PM Collins had the No. 70 Pontiac GXP into the top 5 and as the double yellow caution flags flew the top four cars pitted leaving Collins in the lead. The Banner Racing Team chose to leave Collins out on the track using risky strategy to gain the lead.

A few laps later a timely yellow helped the risk pay off as it allowed Collins to pit the GT race leading Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R under yellow. Kelly turned the controls over to Danish driving ace Jan Magnussen. The pit stop dropped the #07 Pontiac GXP.R into the 3rd position.

“The timing was excellent,” said Leighton Reese. “We had to stop for fuel and better doing that under a yellow than a green. Kelly did a great job keeping our Pontiac GXP in the lead. We almost got lapped but this last sequence of pit stops really worked out for us. I was thinking optimistically that we would try to get into the lead by midnight but we surpassed that by getting the lead five hours into the race so it is good so far.”

“Everything was good and the car is working great,” said Collins. “Steve and Jim (race engineers), talked with me and let me know what was going on and they made the decision (to stay out during the caution) and it was obviously a good one.”

Working the 5th and 6th hours Jan Magnussen moved into P-1 when race leader Henzler pitted the #87 Farnbacher Loles Porsche and course immediately went yellow when the #55 Daytona Prototype had suspension failure of sorts on lap 156.

The sequence put Magnussen into the lead by almost a full lap but that generous lead evaporated when the yellow flags flew shortly thereafter. The generous lead Magnussen enjoyed as what the yellows had given has now been taken away. Such is 24 hour endurance racing where 1 minute and even lap leads evaporate quickly.

Magnussen held the lead in GT and was 16th over-all as the seventy hour drew to a close as he soon turned the Banner Pontiac back over to Paul Edwards.

“I’m very happy, we got up near the front again,” said Jan Magnussen. “It was a very uneventful run, but it was very, very hot out there. It was a problem when I was behind a Mazda or a Ferrari which have really high top speed because I was faster than they were on the infield but I couldn’t do anything on the straight because they just open the gap back up and I would have to catch back up and try to pass.

“The Pontiac is running absolutely perfect and the guys are making great calls and so far so good. It is still early but we qualified fifteenth, we are no longer fifteenth so right now it is perfect!”

But fortune can turn in a heartbeat at the Rolex 24

Edwards upon exiting the pits after his pit stop made contact with the #69 Mazda as Paul was exiting his pit and the Mazda was entering his. The suspension of the #07 Pontiac was damaged and the Banner Racing team took the GXP into the garage area to repair the damage which took about 8 minutes. The team also replaced the front brake rotors and pads.

The incident dropped the 07 to 8th and later 10th but some 5 laps out of the leader, the #86 Farnbacher Porsche. Porsches then occupied 8 of the top ten positions with only the Pontiacs of Davis, in 4th, and Edwards, running in 10th, invading the Porsche parade at the front of the running order.

"I was pulling out of the pits and I didn't even see him coming," said Paul Edwards. "When I did I kept the car straight and low but he cut right across in front of me and clipped my nose."

Edwards, Collins and Magnussen spent the night running strong and consistent laps and closed the lap gap down to 3 and sometimes 4 depending on how the pit stops fell. The Banner Pontiac GXP.R was running a similar pace as were the leaders but just couldn't erase the deficit.

During hour 21 the Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R which had just taken over the 3rd position after the problem suffered by the #86 Porsche dropped back to 5th due to a mechanical issue with the exhaust system. The muffler on the right side of the car split apart and broke in half.

When Paul Edwards took over the #07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R he noticed something seriously wrong with the pitch of the usually strong Pontiac V8.

"When I got in the car and drove out of the pits it sounded like I was in a tunnel as soon as I went out," said Paul Edwards. "I was losing 1.4 seconds down the pit straight here and another second down the back straight and here wasn't much I could do. Something fell off (part of the muffler) and I ran over it in the banking and I came in to the pits. But when I went back out it was 100 times worse."

The Banner Racing team took their Pontiac to the garage and replaced the exhaust system. Between the extra pit stop and the garage time they lost more laps to the leaders and fell to 5th position.

"We are still losing a second over here and another 8 tenths on the back straight because we just don't seem to have the same power," said Edwards. "I drive it hard on the infield but when get I to the banking I am just sliding all over the place because the broken exhaust was melting the right rear tire and when I tried to go anywhere it slid all over the place. Hopefully we can pick up a spot or two before the end."

When Edwards came in for a routine pit stop he was again suffering from an overheated right foot but when he got out of the car he collapsed. The team feared he was overheated but Paul said that wasn't the case.

"I'm fine," Paul smiled as he soaked his injured foot and ate fruit and had a cool drink of water. "When I got out of the car my right calf cramped up so badly that it almost made me pass out. I've never had anything hurt that bad. But I'm fine now!"

As the 22nd hour ended the Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R was in 5th in the GT classification and 13th overall seven laps down to the class leading #67 TRG Porsche of Jorge Bergmeister..

Kelly Collins and then Jan Magnussen finished up the driving chores as the crew had to make extra brake repairs and Magnussen had to make driving allowances as he was having trouble getting the transmission to utilize 3rd gear.

The frantic pace the drivers had to set on the infield portion of the course to make up for the speed differential on the high Daytona banking was taking a toll on the equipment but the Banner Racing Crew kept the number 07 Banner Racing Pontiac GXP.R running to the checkered flag for a hard fought and well deserved 4th place finish in north America's toughest race. The Rolex 24 Hour at Daytona.

For more updates and race info go to www.LeightonReese.com.

Wright Motorsports Finishes Third in Rolex 24 at Daytona ***Linda Mansfield, Restart Communications***

It was up against huge multi-car teams with much bigger budgets. It had a brand-new car, but brand-new race cars usually need to run a few races before all the kinks are out. It was competing in the longest race in professional endurance sports car racing in North America. It was running on a high-horsepower course that favors other marques over the car it brought. And one of its four drivers was making his first Rolex Series start, and even his first start in a 24-hour race.

Despite all that, Wright Motorsports of Batavia, Ohio thought it could finish this weekend's Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway, and perhaps even get on the podium in the tough, 30-car GT class that was part of the 49-car field. And on Sunday afternoon, that's just what the little team that thought it could did.

Drivers Phillip Martien of Finksburg, Md. and B.J. Zacharias of Cincinnati, along with Porsche factory drivers Sascha Maassen (a native of Aachen, Germany now living in Lontzen, Belgium) and Patrick Pilet (Le Chesnay, France), withstood a throttle that didn't work quite right in their Phillips Way Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car, No. 33, throughout the 24-hour enduro. Pilet had the scare of a potential flat tire in the last hour of the race, which caused him to pit and have the crew tear off the car's rear bumper and some bodywork in case anything was rubbing. They had a couple drive-through penalties too. Despite all that, and a few other less dramatic problems, the team finished third in GT and 11th overall.

Martien, who helped team owner John Wright organize the team's participation in this race and was the driver making his first start here, said it was the best day of his life. It was also a wonderful present for his 50th birthday, which he celebrated earlier in the week.

After qualifying 11th in class, the team dropped to 17th in class in the first hour due to the problem with the throttle, which was sticking periodically. After some WD-40 was applied that problem disappeared, but the drivers said they only had between 90 and 97 percent throttle throughout the race.

By hour two the team was up to fifth in class, and by hour four it was second. It was primarily in fifth or sixth place until it moved into fourth place on Sunday with four hours to go, thanks to great driving, great pit stops and great race strategy by Wright. The team was in third place by Hour 21, and ever relinquished that spot the rest of the way even though fourth place was just 30 seconds behind at one point.

The potential flat tire and the subsequent bumper rip-off, as well as a drive-through penalty for being out of line on a restart, all occurred in the last hour of the race.

The team finished 691 laps in all, four less than the GT winner, three less than the second-place car, and two more than the Pontiac that finished fourth. They also contributed to a one-two-three sweep for Porsche in the GT division.

Pilet was driving when the car ran its fastest lap of the day, a 1:52.267 (114.156 miles per hour) on its 477th circuit of the 3.56-mile, 14-turn road course.

Driver quotes follow:

Phillip Martien: "It's the best birthday present ever! Third place in my first Rolex 24! It is the best

day of my life. I still don't really comprehend what's going on. It's going to be tomorrow morning before I really realize what we did. I can't thank John Wright and the Wright Motorsports team for all their work that enabled us to bring the car to the podium. It's a total dream come true. I also want to thank Porsche Motorsports for giving us Sascha and Patrick. And of course Wright Motorsports' lead driver is B.J., who is wonderful.

"The best moment was to see us in P3 on TV. We had the good sense to not get rattled when we had problems in the last hour. We got a drive-through penalty, and then a potential flat tire, but we managed to hold onto third place. The last hour was so exciting. It's true what they say; it's never over until the fat lady sings. And what do I want for my next birthday? To come back here and win!"

B.J. Zacharias: "Of the six Rolex 24s I've done, this one was the biggest rollercoaster. We were second pretty early, and then we fell behind a bit. We didn't have full throttle all day, and of all the tracks where you need full throttle, Daytona is it. I'd say it was about 97 percent at best. The crew worked hard to make the car handle better all day, and John Wright called a great race. We also had one problem when we changed a brake caliper; only one front caliper was working after that stop, so we had to make another stop to change the right front caliper again. That was at about the 15-hour mark.

"We're an independent team. There are some advantages to running a big, multicar team, and I think there are some disadvantages too. We're the little team that could. We had a great car and a great driver line-up and great support, and we want to thank everyone involved."

Sascha Maassen: "We had a plan. First, we wanted to finish the race, but I thought that wasn't going to be easy. Then we wanted to try to get on the podium, and I thought that was going to be hard too. Phillip hasn't even done a 24-hour race, but I'm happy with his performance because he made no mistakes. You can only finish a race in a good way if you do not make mistakes. Wright Motorsports is a great crew; they didn't make any mistakes either, and that's why we got on the podium. It was a great result!"

Patrick Pilet: "This was only my second Rolex 24 and my first podium in this race, so the day was a great success. The team did a very good job. I knew John Wright had a good team. The car was very consistent. The pit stops were very quick. The podium finish was a very nice present for Phillip. We don't know why the throttle wasn't working correctly. It was only about 90 percent. Next time we'll come back with it 100 percent and maybe we can win!"

"I don't know exactly what happened at the end; I don't think I was hit. There was a vibration in the rear and smoke came out of the left rear. We thought it was a puncture. We came in and tore off the rear bumper in case something was rubbing the tire, but luckily it was OK.

"I hope to be here next year with the same team, only next time we want to win!"

Farnbacher Loles Racing

Source: Sylvia Proudfoot

Farnbacher Loles Racing set the fastest GT race lap en route to a top-five finish during the Rolex 24 At Daytona, after leading the class through most of the 24-hour endurance race. The No. 86 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car topped the team cars, finishing fifth with drivers Dominik Farnbacher, Eric Lux, Matthew Marsh and Kevin Roush. Farnbacher drove the fast lap – one minute 50.241 seconds on the 3.56-mile Daytona International Speedway infield road course in Daytona Beach, Fla. Roush was the GT leader when he lost traction during the 19th hour of the race. He was towed back to the garage, where the crew quickly replaced the car's driveshaft, but still lost five class positions and 10 laps.

The No. 88 Porsche drivers also had a strong weekend, finishing seventh in class, just ahead of the No. 87 in eighth. Steve Johnson, Dave Lacey, Robert Nearn, James Sofronas and Richard Westbrook were behind the wheel of the 88. Wolf Henzler, Leh Keen, Dirk Werner and Westbrook shared driving duty in the No. 87.

The No. 89 Farnbacher Loles European car, driven by Pierre Kaffer, Giacomo Petrobelli, Gabrio Rosa, Giorgio Rosa and Alan Simonsen, finished 15th in class. The No. 85 Children's Tumor Foundation Porsche finished 16th for Richard Campollo, Michael Gomez, Daniel Graeff, Henzler and Ron Yarab, despite a non-functioning clutch and other mechanical issues.

Daniel Graeff, No. 85: "It's the most unbelievable challenge I've ever experienced – emotionally, physically and mentally. I love it! We brought the car home, but we left a little bit on the table this year. I'm headed back here next year and we're going to get it as a team."

Matthew Marsh, No. 86: "To finish a 24-hour race is brilliant. Only 50 per cent of the field finished here this weekend and we were the class of the field. We got the fastest lap, we led most of the way, we had the best-looking car, with the nicest drivers, the most fun mechanics, just everything was brilliant. For most of us, the doing is more important than the result. And the doing was special. It's not the watch – I've already got a Rolex – it's the driving that's important."

Wolf Henzler, No. 87: "Our car was running good and everything worked very well until we got a problem in the rear of the car. We had to bring it back to the garage and we lost 20 laps. We couldn't win any more, so we just tried to get some positions and get some points for the season. Our car was running great – there are some parts missing, but the car still had good handling. Thanks to Farnbacher Loles and everybody. We didn't get the result we wanted, but we finished and we scored some points."

Steve Johnson, No. 88: "It was a great run – seventh GT and 15th overall. I don't think we could have asked for much more than that. We were, however, one broken steering wheel away from fifth. I've never seen anything like that, but I'm glad to know I could drive [the car back to the pits] by those little prongs. It was a great effort by Farnbacher Loles and all the guys on the team. I'm just really proud of this finish and I can't wait to come back and do it again."

Giacomo Petrobelli, No. 89: "I'm happy to have finished this year. The car was fast and we were running well, but unfortunately, we had two mechanical issues – one initially with the clutch and then with the driveshaft – which made us lose something like 70 laps. If you look at where we ended up, 73 laps behind the GT leaders, we could have been on the podium if we didn't have issues. But that's 24-hour racing."



© Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com

TRG Race Report

Source: Kyle Chura – The Racers Group

TRG won the 47th running of the Grand-Am Rolex Series Rolex 24 Hours At Daytona GT race today. Justin Marks, RJ Valentine, Andy Lally, Patrick Long and Joerg Bergmeister drove the No. 67 TRG Porsche 997 to victory by a narrow margin over their teammates. The No. 66 of Ted Ballou, Tim George Jr., Spencer Pumpelly, Emmanuel Collard and Richard Lietz came second, giving TRG a one-two finish to open Speed Weeks at Daytona.

The turning point in the race came on lap 577 at 11:45 a.m. this morning when Lally and Pumpelly were engaged in a battle for the lead with the No. 86 Porsche. Until this point the lead changed over several times throughout the night between the two TRG 997s and the No. 86, basically narrowing the GT battle from 30 down to three. In the late morning the 86 slowed and pulled off of the track, due to an axle failure. The deal was made between the two TRG front runners that if the 86 broke that the teams would freeze their running order and take the checker accordingly. The team did not want two cars taking a chance of racing each other and having the worst happen.

"It is a great way to start the season," Marks said. "I was excited to get started with TRG. I knew going in that we had a shot at winning and I was really enthused after the test. But it really doesn't sink in until you cross the finish line. This is a great welcome back to sports cars and start the season with Andy and Kevin. I have been lucky enough to win the 250 here twice, this is just on an awesome scale. It is special because I made my Daytona debut with TRG."

"It doesn't get any better than this!" Valentine said. "It is a thrill beyond my imagination. I am 64 years old and what happened today has me in shock. This is the greatest thing in racing that has happened to me in 30 years of competing. Kevin and the TRG guys run a great team. They take great care of me and prepare a fast Porsche. The car ran great and all of the guys did an excellent job today. It was a great race."

"I have finished second here three times before," Lally said. "I know what the 66 guys feel like, it is tough. The car was so well prepped, the crew made it bullet-proof. We had minimum mistakes and there isn't a dent on the car - only dust. It is a great way to start the season for the team, Kevin and especially Justin and I. I am a small part of an awesome program. Daytona is the pinnacle of racing for me. We wanted to give RJ the honor of taking the car across the finish line, that was special for everyone on the team."

"Thanks to Kevin and TRG for giving me my first shot at the race a few years ago and my first win," Long said. "I don't think that the car had a nick on it. Andy and Kevin led the team, Joerg and I just did some work and Justin and RJ ran mistake free, consistent laps. It is really surreal for me. I thought this was one that was going to keep slipping through the cracks and one that I would have to chase my whole career. This Rolex has slipped away from me a couple of times, so that makes it twice as sweet."

"Wow," Buckler said. "It has been a lot of work this last four months. We have a team of five cars that are really driven by a bunch of my friends and that makes it all the more special. Each team had a slightly different goal and I am so glad that we were able to accomplish most of them. I have shared some great moments with these guys before. Daytona is a special place for TRG. Our team chemistry is a big part of our success. I am really proud of that, it is cool."

"The guys had a great event," Buckler continued. "We brought all of our cars to the checker except one. The quality of driving we had this weekend in all five cars was fantastic. It is a real accomplishment for TRG to have four cars finish this cruel race and take the ultimate plum - a one-two finish."

For team owner Kevin Buckler it is his third win at Daytona. As a driver/owner Buckler won his first in 2002 in the GT class and the second was in 2003 when he won the race overall in his Porsche 911.

Bergmeister also joins the TRG three-peat club having won all three of his races with the team. The first two wins were co-driving with Buckler.

Lally posted his second 24 hour victory. The first, in 2003, was in the old SRP11 category.

Ted Ballou, Tim George Jr., Spencer Pumpelly, Emmanuel Collard and Richard Lietz drove the No. 66 AXA/Mitchell Rubber/Wealth Management Strategies/TRG Porsche GT3 to a second place finish. The result had Pumpelly finishing first, second and third over the past three years.

"Obviously, every time you come here, you want a victory, but this second place and to be a part of a 1-2 finish for TRG is great," Pumpelly said. "Once again to have the opportunity to work with some really good people who put a lot of effort into it and spent a lot of hours at the shop preparing for every possible contingency, most of which never arose, but still we were ready for them, it's just a pleasure. It's always a good time when you can come and be that strong, with that good of a group of guys. Ted Ballou, Tim George Jr., Emmanuel Collard and Richard Lietz, my co-drivers, were amazing, and the strategy was perfect. We didn't have the fastest car on the track by any means this weekend, but thanks to our strategy and our preparedness and just kind of our calm nature, we were able to come one off of the goal. It was great to be part of the effort."

"It was a good race, obviously," Ballou said. "To have TRG up front most of the race and an epic battle with Farnbacher and then to come down to battling your teammates was great. It was a great outcome. Obviously, first would have been better, but we'll take second, take the points, and move on. Spencer and I are looking forward to a great year."

"Last year, I was in the 66 and this year we swapped the numbers, but kept the colors," George Jr. said. "It was looking good out there. We moved a spot up the podium. Last year, Spencer and I finished third and this year we're second. It was a pretty brutal race and it came down to, really, the last few hours. We thought we had a win in the bag, but it's good to have a TRG 1-2 finish. The preparation that went into this from all the guys was just phenomenal. I'm looking forward to coming back next year and have one more step up on the podium."

"It was a great result for the team and for Porsche also," Collard said. "The car was running really well all the time. We just had a small problem at the end with the brakes, but apart from that, everything went really well. The car was really, really well-prepared by TRG."

"It's the first time with me here on the podium, so I'm very happy," Lietz said. "After two years with not so much success, to have this success this year with my team, and also for TRG to finish in position one and two, it is really incredible. Porsche is 1-2-3, so for them it was a great job. I'm very happy."

The No. 68 James Farrell & Co./Pallis Properties, Inc./COLO Columbia River Logistics/Cohen Financial/TRG Porsche GT3 driven by Josemanuel Gutierrez, Steve Miller, Chris Pallis, Duncan Ende, and Scott Schroeder finished the 24hour in 14th place. The team did an excellent job to put the 997 in the top fifteen as well as being the eighth place Porsche.

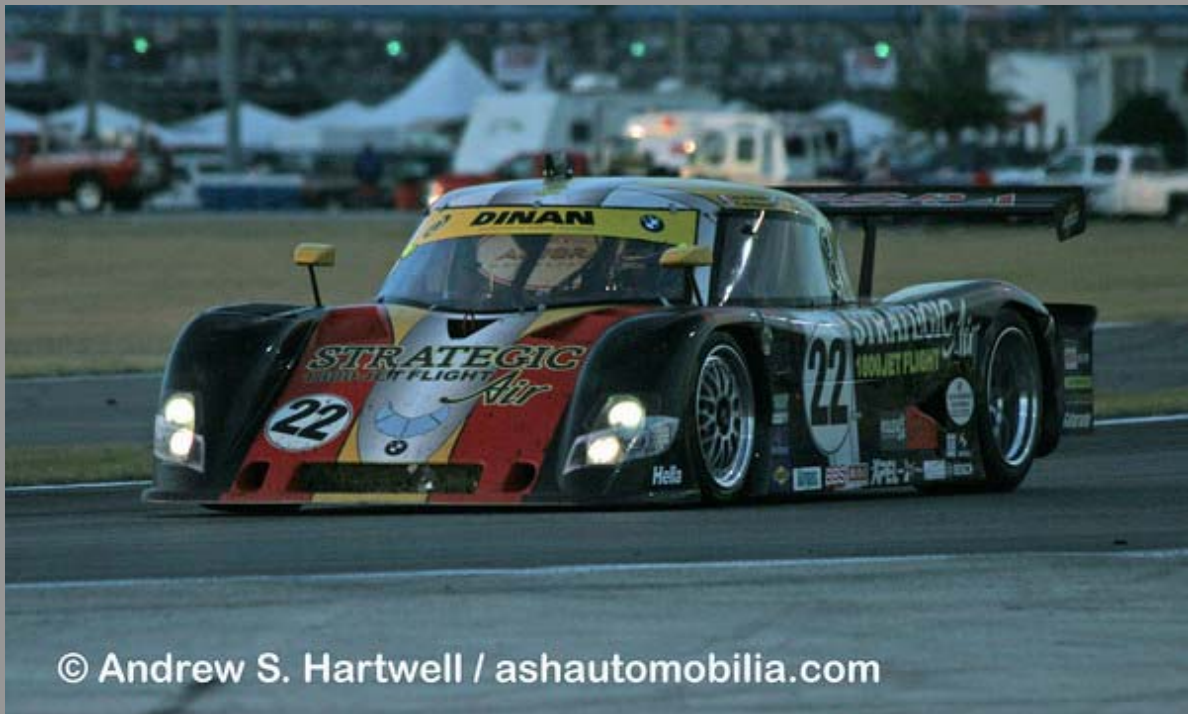
"I did a double stint at 7:00 a.m. this morning," Schroeder said. "The car had some contact through the night and the front splitter was gone. Without the splitter the car lacks a large amount of downforce. This makes the high speed turns, like the Bus Stop, extra challenging. It also really changes your braking points. The guys did a good job in the pits to get us maximum laps and our finish is not that bad considering what we went through."

The No. 63 Guardian Angel Motorsports/Children's Hospital Boston/ jetblue.com /Cavallino Group/www.guardianangelmotorsports.com/TRG Porsche GT3 of Bruce Ledoux, David Quinlan, Dan Watkins, Steve Zadig and Kurt Kossmann had a tough start to the race. The car returned to the paddock three times, but the grit of the TRG 63 crew together with the perseverance of the drivers, the team was able to post a top 20 finish in 18th. With 572 laps completed, the goal of running maximum laps for charitable donations for Children's Hospital Boston was a resounding success.

"The early going was tough for us and our car," Kossmann said. "I think we went through three radiators over the course of the race. We finally hit our pace during the night and it was pretty smooth since then. We were able to come back and finish in the teens. The car ran well and for all we put it through, it stayed aligned so we could drive it. We also turned a lot of laps for charity."

TRG Motorsports will return next week to Daytona where they will run two ARCA RE/Max cars, one Camping World Truck Series entry and one NASCAR Sprint Cup car.

Round two of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series will be held at Virginia International Raceway April 24.



© Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com

Alegra Motorsports' StrategicAir Riley BMW Shows Its Muscle at Rolex 24

Source: Linda Mansfield, Restart Communication

Although Alegra Motorsports didn't get the results it wanted in the 47th annual Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway this weekend, the team will return to its home base of Miami with the confidence of a group that knows it can compete against the powerhouses of the Rolex Series.

The team's Riley BMW No. 22 was fast. Its fastest lap of the race was a 1:42.335 on the car's 254th trip around the 3.56-mile, 14-turn road course for an average speed of 125.235 miles per hour. Only six of the 49 cars in the race ran a lap that was any faster, and five of those six finished in the top six. Four of them finished first through fourth, too.

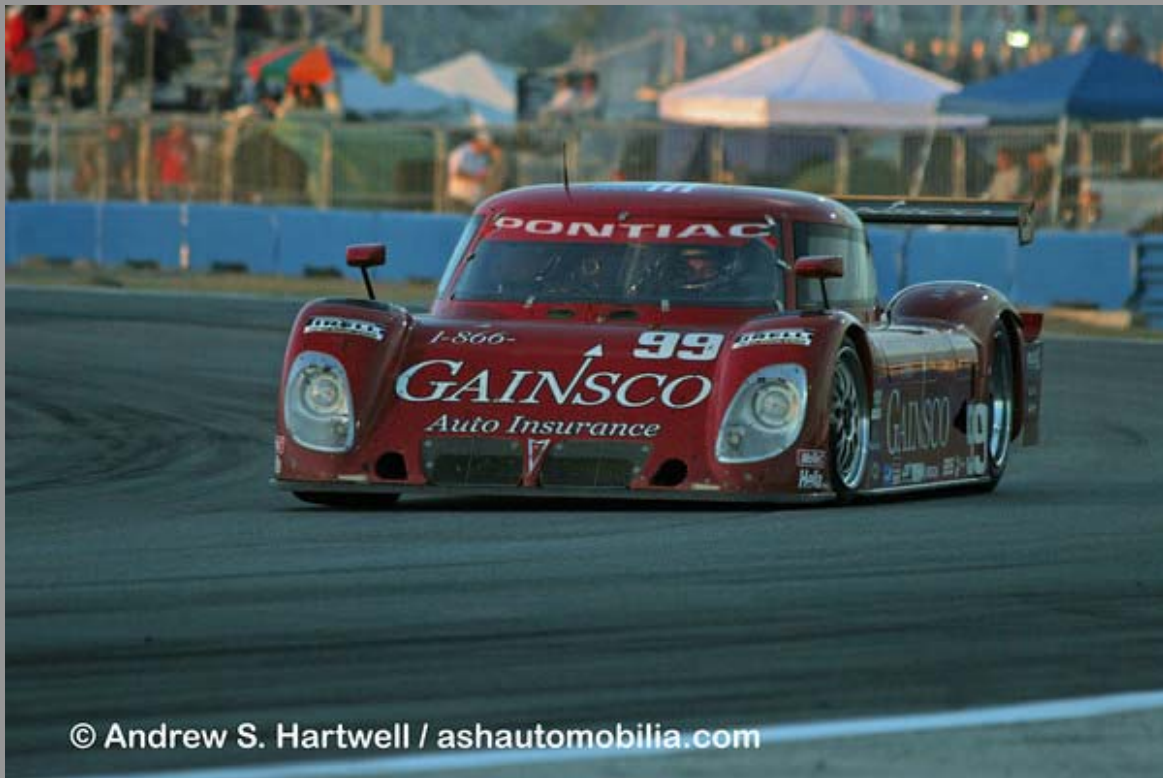
Unfortunately in the wee hours of Sunday morning at the nine-hour, 44-minute mark, one of the Alegra Motorsports drivers, Chapman Ducote of Miami Beach, Fla., hit the wall exiting Turn Six and going onto the high banks to bring out the event's tenth caution flag. He drove the car back to the pits and then the garage area, but the entry was retired at the 10-hour, 56-minute mark due to the damage.

The car got as high as eighth on the scoreboard and it was 12th at the time of the single-car accident. The entry, which is sponsored by StrategicAir, Merchant Services LTD, Gatorade and TodayMD.com, ended up 15th in the Daytona Prototype standings in the final rundown.

The team overcame several challenges prior to the crash. It lost some time early when Ducote pitted because he thought a tire was going down, although luckily that turned out to be a false alarm. Tomas Enge of Monte Carlo was setting some blistering times when a problem occurred with the wiring in the steering column, causing a small fire in the cockpit and the loss of the data acquisition system. Ryan Dalziel of Orlando, Fla., the driver who did such a phenomenal job bringing the car from 19th to eighth early in the race, drove without that data for about an hour before the team brought him in and fixed that problem.

The car's brakes needed changing at one point, and the team waited as long as they could to try to catch a full-course yellow to make those repairs. None came, so they brought Dalziel in at 10 p.m. around the six and a half-hour mark to do a complete brake change and also replace the muffler, which the series officials required. Jean-Francois Dumoulin of Trois-Rivieres, Quebec, team owner/driver Carlos de Quesada of Coral Gables, Fla. and Enge had subsequent great stints before the team's day ended at the beginning of Ducote's second stint.

Dalziel put things in perspective. "It was good and bad," he said. "Obviously we had a couple mistakes, but I think we overcame a lot of hurdles. I think we did a really good job as a team to get here and be counted in with the big boys. The car was extremely fast all day. We had great power and a great-handling car. But it's the 24 Hours of Daytona, and you need a lot of luck to do well in this race."



© Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Race Report

Major Setbacks Don't Stop GAINSCO/Bob Stallings

Team Recovers from Major Repairs in Race's First Half to Earn Solid Championship Points

Source: Adam Saal for GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing recovered from two major repair jobs before the Rolex 24 At Daytona even reached its midway mark and spent the final 12 hours clawing back into the top 10 before taking the No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Pontiac Riley across the finish line in seventh place Sunday in the 47th annual running of America's premier endurance race.

The GAINSCO team swapped out gearbox internals in a quick 10-minute pit stop in hour four and then endured a major change of the entire rear-end componentry in under 30 minutes just before the race's halfway mark early Sunday morning. The setbacks put the No. 99 GAINSCO team out of realistic contention for a victory, as much as 24 laps down from the leaders at one point and well out of the Top 20, but the 2007 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series Champions never gave up.

"I am really proud of everybody," said GAINSCO's starting driver Alex Gurney. "Everyone hung in there. Considering all of the problems we had I think it was a really good finish, points wise. It wasn't anywhere near as bad as we thought it was going to be, so overall I think it was a pretty good day."

In the end, GAINSCO finished 21 laps behind record-setting winners Brumos Racing and drivers David Donohue, Darren Law, Buddy Rice and Antonio Garcia in the No. 58 Porsche Riley. The GAINSCO No. 99 completed 714 laps and scored its second-straight Top-10 finish in the Rolex 24 after finishing second last year. The most recent results are GAINSCO's best Rolex 24 showings in four attempts.

"We just don't give up," said Gurney's fulltime teammate Jon Fogarty, who drove the final stint of the race. "That's the wonderful thing about this team. There is just not a negative thread running anywhere. We have these issues and we just put it back together and we go back out. At the same time, you don't only go back out, you go back out to race, because you never know when a lap here or a lap there is going to pay off. Six hours later, somebody else might have a problem, and you might be a lap ahead of them because you went for it. That was our plan, we did everything we could to advance, and I think seventh is a pretty good result for having so many issues."

Team regulars Jimmy Vasser and Jimmie Johnson were also part of GAINSCO's determined charge back to the front. Each drove a pair of stints during the race and once again left Daytona impressed by the GAINSCO team and the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series.

"It is great to finish in the Top 10 again," Vasser said. "A win wasn't meant to be with the mechanicals we had and, quite honestly, we really didn't have the speed. The team just has a never-give-up attitude and we didn't. We came from nearly dead last in class to finish seventh. We got some good points for the team for the season and hopefully they can use them to win another championship."

Johnson raced in his second consecutive Rolex 24 with GAINSCO and scored an impressive third Top 10 finish in five attempts, including last year's runner-up showing and another second-place finish in 2005.

"The Grand-Am Series is something special that everybody is focused on and the truth is that it is some of the best road course racing I have ever seen," Johnson said. "You have got a nice balance in the car where you can lean on somebody and not hook wheels and flip each other over or rip wheels off your car. Grand-Am has done a great job building cars that are durable and can run door-to-door and put on a great show. It was nice to be out here and I hope to race here a little more."

Seventh position awards 24 points for both the Rolex Series Daytona Prototype Driver and Team Championships. The winning No. 58 Brumos Porsche team, by comparison, earned the maximum 35 points and now leads the 2009 standings after this weekend's season-opening race.

"Obviously we came here with the idea of winning this thing but under the circumstances, I am extremely happy," said GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Team Owner Bob Stallings. "We won the 2007 championship but it was very difficult after not doing well here in the Rolex 24. We are leaving here with some good points so we are real happy."



© Andrew S. Hartwell / ashautomobilia.com

Sun Trust Racing Report

SunTrust Opens with Solid Fourth-Place at Rolex 24

Frisselle, Lamy, Dallara, New Ford Power All Pass First Test With Flying Colors As Taylor, Angelelli, SunTrust Score Third Straight Top-Five at Daytona Opener

Source: Laz Denes - True Speed Communication

Throughout nearly the entire running of the 47th Rolex 24 At Daytona, Simon Hodgson, general manager for the No. 10 SunTrust Ford Dallara team of Wayne Taylor Racing, repeatedly told each of his four drivers over the radio: "Be patient, there is a lot of time left, take care of the equipment."

Max Angelelli, Brian Frisselle, Pedro Lamy and team owner and Rolex 24 driver Wayne Taylor each heeded the advice and finished a solid fourth in the annual twice-around-the-clock endurance classic on the 3.56-mile road course at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway.

The four drivers drove a smooth and clean race, avoided any major mechanical issues and scored SunTrust's third consecutive top-five finish in the Rolex 24 and fifth top-five in six season-opening events here. Taylor and Angelelli won this event in their second season for SunTrust en route to the 2005 Rolex Series championship. Having led four times for a total of 56 laps in this year's 47th renewal, Angelelli and the team were faced with their best chance since 2005 to score a repeat victory as the Italian driving ace was engaged in a fierce four-car battle for the lead over the final two hours.

Angelelli chased the Nos. 58 and 59 Brumos Porsche Rileys and the No. 01 Lexus Riley of three-time-defending race champion Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates to the bitter end before settling for the fourth-place finish. David Donohue in the No. 58 car passed Juan Montoya in the No. 01 with 40 minutes remaining and went on to break the Ganassi team's three-race stranglehold on this event. Despite their strong run throughout the entire 24-hour marathon, Angelelli and Montoya found the Porsches were not to be caught over the final 30 minutes.

“Well, coming out of last year, we really had an up-and-down year but we ended on a pretty high note (with a victory and consecutive second-place finishes at the final three events),” Taylor said after the race. “But coming to a 24-hour with a car you have never actually run for 24 hours is a challenge. Add to that the change in engine manufacturer to Ford power, and that was another massive change. So, coming in, there were a lot of unknowns. Last night, about four or five hours in, John Maddox (Roush Yates manager of Cammer Engine Programs) told me that it was possible that none of the Ford engines might finish. We spent about an hour talking about it amongst everyone and realized it was negative energy. We decided there was no point in worrying about it because if it was going to happen, it was going to happen. So we said, ‘Let’s go race.’ If you take that perspective, then this fourth-place finish is great. But we come here to win. We had an understanding of what might be the problem and we knew we couldn’t do anything about it, so we just decided to fight and go race. Maybe we got lucky, or maybe there wasn’t any problem at all. We are happy coming out of here in fourth place. We got good points and we know now we have a good package. We have run 24 hours, so we *should* be able to finish the 2:45s. Our sites are on the championship. That is what it is all about for us.”

Angelelli, who started the race Saturday afternoon after qualifying seventh on Thursday, moved toward the front from the opening laps and, with his co-drivers, spent virtually the entire 24 hours running in the top-five. Angelelli, his new full-time co-driver Frisselle, and European sports car racing and Formula 1 veteran Lamy all drove the SunTrust car into the lead at various points during the race. The Italian, however, was typically disappointed in the final outcome of fourth.

“We are very competitive and we want to win, and when we don’t win, we are disappointed,” Angelelli said. “That is our DNA. We want to succeed. It’s written in our DNA and when we don’t, we are disappointed and upset. I don’t know what happened to the other Fords. Our car was fantastic. I want to thank Dallara and Ford for what they gave me today. Without that combination, I wouldn’t have been able to finish fourth. I was fast by myself, but when I got close to the others at the end there, they had higher top speed and I just could not get around. Otherwise, I’m very happy with today. I’m looking forward to a great season.”

Frisselle, a 25-year-old from Aspen, Colo., who scored his first career Rolex Series victories on back-to-back weekends in Montreal and Watkins Glen, N.Y., last August while driving for the AIM Autosport Ford Riley team, enjoyed a flawless performance during his three driving stints over the 24 hours.

“It was an excellent effort on the SunTrust team’s part,” Frisselle said. “The car ran flawlessly, for the most part. We had very minor issues and we stayed on the lead lap. There are a lot of positives that come out of this. Most importantly, we come out of here with good points, because the ultimate goal this year is the championship. Sure, we wanted to win this race, but the championship is the ultimate goal. I’m very satisfied. I didn’t put a wheel wrong throughout the entire 24. I kept it on the track and the team did a great job of supporting me and giving me a great piece of equipment to run in. It’s a great way to begin this relationship.”

Lamy, too, enjoyed his first experience with the SunTrust team.

“There were no major incidents and I was quite careful with the traffic,” Lamy said. “Maybe I lost some time with that, but when you have the possibility to leave the car on the pace to compete for the win, it makes the most sense to be sure and bring the car home in one piece. Maybe I should have risked a bit more with the traffic, but I did not want to hurt the team. I learned a lot about the Dallara and the Ford engine and the track all in 24 hours. The team did a great job with the strategy all race long. The car was very fast and we were able to keep going to the end. I am very, very impressed with everybody on the team and everything about this race. It’s a great race.”

Darren Law, Buddy Rice and Antonio Garcia joined Donohue in the winning drive in the No. 58 Brumos Porsche Riley. The victory came 40 years after Donohue's father, Mark, won the race for Roger Penske. In addition, Rice added his name to a small list of drivers who have won both the Rolex 24 and the Indianapolis 500.

The No. 01 Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Lexus Riley, in which Montoya was joined by Scott Dixon, Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas, finished second, just .167 of a second behind, while the No. 59 Brumos Porsche Riley driven by J.C. France, Joao Barbosa, Terry Borcheller and Hurley Haywood finished third to round out the podium finishers.

The top four cars all finished on the lead lap and were separated by less than 11 seconds after 1,440 minutes of racing that covered 2,616.6 miles. There were 25 caution periods for 100 laps.



Michael Shank Racing Report

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management

After closing out the 2008 Rolex Sports Car Series season with wins from both team Daytona Prototypes, Michael Shank Racing had good reason for high expectations for a strong result in the 47th running of the Rolex 24 At Daytona.

Boasting the same technical Ford-Riley package that powered the team to victory lane last season, as well as a stellar driving line up for both the No. 6 and No. 60 machines, the aim was clear for the season-opening enduro at Daytona—to return to the Rolex 24 podium once again.

But after getting off to a strong start, that ambition will have to be postponed one year as both team machines were unable to finish the race after being sidelined by a sensor failure in the drivetrain. Even for a team that has demonstrated remarkable comebacks in previous examples of the grueling endurance test, the setback proved to be too much to overcome as both team entries were retired.

Deepening the disappointment was the fact that the early race performance confirmed the team's high hopes for the event. The No. 6 was in the lead at the time of the problem some five hours into the race, with the No. 60 Westfield Insurance entry still running on the lead lap in fourth position as the race neared the nine-hour mark.

“This is a huge disappointment for us because we’ve never had any kind of problem like this before, and to have both team cars get knocked out while running so strong is just a punch in the gut,” said Shank as his team started packing up to make the trip back to team headquarters in Ohio. “If we weren’t going to win this race, we wanted at least to start off right in the championship with some good points and a strong result but unfortunately that’s not the way it played out tonight.”



KROHN Racing Report

Source: Barbara J. Burns for Krohn Racing, Burns Group Unlimited

After closing out the 2008 Rolex Sports Car Series season with wins from both team Daytona Prototypes, Michael Shank Racing had good reason for high expectations for a strong result in the 47th running of the Rolex 24 At Daytona.

Boasting the same technical Ford-Riley package that powered the team to victory lane last season, as well as a stellar driving line up for both the No. 6 and No. 60 machines, the aim was clear for the season-opening enduro at Daytona—to return to the Rolex 24 podium once again.

But after getting off to a strong start, that ambition will have to be postponed one year as both team machines were unable to finish the race after being sidelined by a sensor failure in the drivetrain. Even for a team that has demonstrated remarkable comebacks in previous examples of the grueling endurance test, the setback proved to be too much to overcome as both team entries were retired.

Deepening the disappointment was the fact that the early race performance confirmed the team's high hopes for the event. The No. 6 was in the lead at the time of the problem some five hours into the race, with the No. 60 Westfield Insurance entry still running on the lead lap in fourth position as the race neared the nine-hour mark.

“This is a huge disappointment for us because we’ve never had any kind of problem like this before, and to have both team cars get knocked out while running so strong is just a punch in the gut,” said Shank as his team started packing up to make the trip back to team headquarters in Ohio. “If we weren’t going to win this race, we wanted at least to start off right in the championship with some good points and a strong result but unfortunately that’s not the way it played out tonight.”

PORSCHE Motorsports Race Report

BRUMOS RACING SCORES HISTORIC ROLEX 24 WIN WITH PORSCHE RILEY AND DONOHUE/LAW/GARCIA/RICE; TRG PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUPS TAKE ONE-TWO IN GT

On the 40th anniversary of his father's victory at the Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona, David Donohue, of Malvern, Penn., drove a gripping last hour of the 2009 sports car classic to pass, and then hold off, former Formula 1 champion and NASCAR star Juan Pablo Montoya to score an overall win for him and his teammates Antonio Garcia (Madrid, Spain), Darren Law and Buddy Rice (both Phoenix, Ariz.) in the Brumos Porsche Riley prototype at Daytona International Speedway.

It was the closest finish in the 47-year history of the Rolex 24, with Donohue edging Montoya by 17-hundredths of a second. In fact, with four cars finishing within eight seconds of the leader, this year's finish will be hard to beat. The Brumos Racing team Porsche Riley of Joao Barbosa (Porto, Portugal)/Hurley Haywood (Ponte Verda Beach, Fla.)/JC France (Daytona Beach, Fla.)/Terry Brocheller (Vero Beach, Fla.) finished third after contesting the race late into the event.

Porsche's perfect day was completed when the TRG Porsche 911 GT3 Cup racer piloted by Andy Lally (Dacula, Ga.)/Patrick Long (Bellair, Fla.)/Joerg Bergmeister (Langenfeld, Germany)/Justin Marks (Rockland, Calif.)/RJ Valentine (Braintree, Mass.) won the GT class of the Rolex 24 by a lap over TRG Porsche teammates Ted Ballou (Corona Del Mar, Calif.)/Emmanuel Collard (Paris, France)/Tim George, Jr. (New York, NY)/Richard Lietz (Ybbsitz, Austria)/Spencer Pumpelly (Suwanee, Ga.)

Porsche also took third in GT, with the Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car of Sascha Maassen (Aachen, Germany)/Phillip Martien (Finksburg, Maryland)/Patrick Pilet (Le Chesnay, France)/BJ Zacharias (Cincinnati, Ohio).

The Brumos Porsche team win was significant for many reasons, including:

- The first overall win for Porsche since 2003 (The Racer's Group Porsche 911 GT3 RS), and the first overall win for Brumos Racing since 1978 (Porsche 935).
- The first win for a Porsche entered in the overall class since 1995 (Kremer . Porsche K8).
- First win for the Porsche 911-based 3.99-liter Grand-Am race engine.
- Brumos Racing's first Daytona prototype win since 2003 (Mont Tremblant)
- Porsche prototypes led 500 of the 735 laps.

.This was a great team effort, which started last winter when we did more than 3,000 hours of testing, lots of creative problem-solving by the Brumos crew, and hard work by Porsche to improve our chances to win races overall,. said an elated Donohue, who scored his first overall 24-hour win.

"We were rock-solid when we got here, and we never touched the car once it rolled off the trailer. From fastest in practice in the winter test to qualifying on the pole for the race, we were set for a good event, and my teammates did the rest. This was really great.. said Donohue.

The Crown Royal Penske Porsche Riley driven by Timo Bernhard (Germany)/Romain Dumas (France)/ Ryan Briscoe (Australia) led much of the early part of the race, including the overnight hours, until the transmission broke as the sun came up on Sunday. The Penske Racing crew replaced the gearbox but lost 15 laps in the process, and ended up finishing sixth overall. In the GT class, the Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars were also fast, leading the class for many hours until mechanical ills beset them, especially the #86

Farnbacher/Lux/Marsh/Roush racer, which finished fifth, and the #87 Henzler/Keen/Werner/Westbrook Porsche, which finished eighth.

TRG team owner Kevin Buckler, who has an overall win and a class win at Daytona to his credit, said this GT victory was as rewarding as his overall victory in 2003.

“This effort from all the guys at the shop, the drivers, and our partners make this very sweet. The Porsches ran great all weekend, and it was a great win. It’s nice to have people working with you that are both talented and personable, said Buckler.

Frisselle Racing Report

Frisselle Racing Scores Best Rolex 24 At Daytona Result

Brian races closer to the podium but Burt’s race ends early

Source: Matt Cleary, Sunday Group management

With a father who has several wins in some of the sport’s biggest races, **Burt and Brian Frisselle** were looking to follow in that family legacy and score a new Rolex watch this weekend as the brother racing duo chased success in the 47th running of the Rolex 24 At Daytona to open the 2009 Rolex Sports Car Series season.

Burt was making a return to AIM Autosport, where he will race for the full year with co-driver Mark Wilkins in the No. 61 Ford-powered Riley. The Rolex kick-off marked the first race start for Brian with SunTrust Racing as the Colorado-based youngster looked to grow his win tally in Rolex competition.

Despite running with a new team and a new chassis, Brian proved up to the task as he put in a flawless race performance, including a strong final stint to turn the car over to co-driver Max Angelelli to fight to the finish. His Italian teammate showed great pace and remarkable judgment, but the effort came out just seconds short after 24 hours of racing as the No. 10 came home 4th, just yards behind the race winning Brumos Racing machine. The result is the best to date for Frisselle Racing in the race, having scored a fifth place finish together in 2007.

“It was an excellent effort on the SunTrust team’s part,” Frisselle said. “The car ran flawlessly, for the most part. We had very minor issues and we stayed on the lead lap. There are a lot of positives that come out of this. Most importantly, we come out of here with good points, because the ultimate goal this year is the championship. Sure, we wanted to win this race, but the championship is the ultimate goal. I’m very satisfied. I didn’t put a wheel wrong throughout the entire 24. I kept it on the track and the team did a great job of supporting me and giving me a great piece of equipment to run in. It’s a great way to begin this relationship.”

As Brian was posting his inch-perfect stints on the 3.56-mile road course, he had an extra fan on hand to root him on later in the race, as his brother Burt’s race ended early. The AIM Autosport machine was classified 16th in the Daytona Prototype rankings after a motor issue halted the progress of the team in the dark Daytona night.

“It’s frustrating because we’d done everything right at that point,” said Burt. “We had set a great pace, and our Rolex 24 co-drivers (John Farano, David Empringham, and Alex Figge) were really kicking some butt in the car. But it’s just one of those things. A lot of the Ford guys had this issue so I’m sure they will find out exactly what it was and have it sorted by VIR. But I’m happy for Brian to get this great result and that they didn’t have the problem. Those guys (Brian with SunTrust) are going to be strong this year, but I know Mark (Wilkins) and I will be looking to take the fight to them

all season long!”

Frisselle Racing results/Rolex 24 At Daytona:

2005: 34th/Synergy Racing (Brian Frisselle, Burt Frisselle)

2006: 25th/Class-Synergy Racing (Brian Frisselle, Burt Frisselle)

2007: 5th AIM Autosport (Brian Frisselle, Burt Frisselle)

2008: 19th (Brian Frisselle—AIM Autosport)

2008: 9th (Burt Frisselle—Michael Shank Racing)

2009: 14th (Burt Frisselle-AIM Autosport)

2009: 4th (Brian Frisselle—SunTrust Racing)

For additional information:

www.frisselleracing.com

www.sundaymanagement.com