



## **Bits & Pieces From the Rolex 24 – Saturday Pre Race**

### **Burtin Will Have Memories To Last A Lifetime**

Claudio Burtin is the team owner of the No. 17 FOAMETIX®/Burtin Racing with Goldcrest Motorsports Porsche GT3. While coming to the end of this grueling race can provide a lifetime memory, after the race Burtin will have something better to give him a lifetime of memories.

“On Monday, I head back to Georgia because my girlfriend Danielle is 39 weeks pregnant, so for anybody that’s had kids, that’s their due date.” Burtin said. “Last I hear, she’s going to be induced on Tuesday, so we’re cutting this down to the wire. This will be my fourth child, another little girl. I have two older boys and two little girls. I have a seven year old, who is really looking forward to having a little sister. I’m very much looking forward to our new baby.”

### **No. 4 eBay Motors/Children’s Tumor Foundation/Racing4 Research Porsche GT3 Team Ready To Roll And Raise Funding**

A cautious yet productive run through Friday’s rainy final practice session for this weekend’s 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona left the No. 4 eBay Motors/Children’s Tumor Foundation/Racing4Research Porsche GT3 team ready to race and raise funds for the fight against neurofibromatosis (NF) in Saturday’ day-long race.

Team drivers Ryan Eversley, Justin Bell, Daniel Graeff and Ron Yarab all had ample time at the wheel. “We went out Friday morning just to try the car,” Bell said. “We had an error issue that we wanted to clarify on the data. It wasn’t much fun, I can assure you, in the slippery conditions. After Thursday night’s practice, we’re very confident in the pace of our car. We’re

going to rely heavily on the yellow flags, full course yellows and the wave-bys to gain position. This race will be down to the last yellow flag until the finish.”

Eversley drove the opening laps in the wet session.

“We needed to bed in some brakes so went out, did the brakes, and while we were doing it, the car felt really good in the wet conditions,” Eversley said. “So we worked on just kind of getting a lap out of it, and I think we were in the top 10 pretty easily. I ran around with Wolf Henzler for about a lap and a half and on our in laps we both had 52.1s or something. I’m pretty sure he wanted to stay out and go P1 as well but it was nice to have the car in the top 10 and not kill ourselves to do it. The focus was to get the car ready for the race.”

The Children’s Tumor Foundation/Racing4Research program increases awareness of neurofibromatosis (NF) and raises funds for research to find a cure for the debilitating disease. The program’s fifth-year campaign at the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona has the double support of leading online companies eBay Motors and Quicken Loans Inc. The Rolex 24 Racing4Research program has become the annual kickoff event for CTF fundraising each year and donations can be made at [www.racing4research.org](http://www.racing4research.org).

## **GAINSCO Says No To Rain But Yes To Fans**

A light but persistent band of rain showers kept more GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series teams in the garage than on the track Friday at Daytona International Speedway (DIS), and the new No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Corvette Daytona Prototype was among them.

“We feel really good,” Alex Gurney said. “We were definitely hoping to get a last little run there today but the weather decided against it. We’ll take the gamble. I don’t know what we’re going to do on setup but we feel pretty good about it. We were only going to make a small change. The car has been reliable. We feel pretty good, we think we’re prepared across the board. The team has done a great job. We really focused on reliability, and I think that’s going to be key for the race.”

Gurney, who qualified the No. 99 fourth quickest with a lap time of 1:41.519 (126.242 mph) on Thursday, will start the race. The schedule calls for Gidley to drive second and Fogarty to fill the final spot in the rotation. All three drivers spent some time at the track Friday visiting with agent partners and employees from GAINSCO Auto Insurance.

“It’s nice,” Gidley said. “It’s always nice when you have people behind you that are rooting you on or cheering you on, especially having an actively involved sponsor where people come out, see the car and the name. That’s neat, it’s for sure better to have fans than not to have fans. When they are your own personal GAINSCO fans, that makes it that much better.”

Fogarty has been part of the GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing family since 2006.

“I am so incredibly fortunate and blessed to be a part of the GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing team,” Fogarty said. “It is a dream to have a sponsor that is so committed and enthusiastic about a racing program. The way GAINSCO utilizes the race team to represent and build the brand of GAINSCO Auto Insurance makes me feel like a part of a much bigger team than of the

one that shows up at the track. It is awesome and I never forget how great it is. I am part of an incredible race team and I am part of an incredible auto insurance company, GAINSCO.”

## **50th Anniversary of the Rolex 24 At Daytona**

### **By the Numbers...**

The past 50 years of sports car racing at Daytona International Speedway has been marked by an incredible list of milestones, including a few of which that are part of the golden anniversary weekend of North America’s premier endurance race.

- 3 – Only Rolf Stommelen (1960s, 1970s and 1980s) and Scott Pruett (1990s, 2000s and 2010s) have won the overall Rolex 24 in three different decades
- 5 – Hurley Haywood owns a record five overall Rolex 24 At Daytona victories
- 10 – There are 10 Rolex clocks throughout the property at Daytona International Speedway for the weekend – 9 free-standing clocks and a 25-foot tall, four-sided clock located on pit road.
- \$10 – Grandstand admission to the 50th Anniversary of the Rolex 24 At Daytona after 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28
- 18 – Hurley Haywood has the longest span between first and last victories in the Rolex 24 – 18 years (1973-91)
- 21 – There are 21 different countries in the world represented among the Rolex 24 overall champions
- 22 – Porsche leads all manufacturers with 22 overall Rolex 24 At Daytona victories
- 29 – There will be 29 past champion cars in attendance and on display in the 50 Years of Champions Exhibit Presented by Continental Tire
- 38 – Hurley Haywood owns 38 career starts in the Rolex 24 At Daytona, most among drivers
- 47 – There will be 47 past champion drivers in attendance for the 50th Anniversary of the Rolex 24 At Daytona
- 66 – Drivers from the United States have produced 66 overall Rolex 24 At Daytona victories, the most among countries.
- 82 – The 1984 Rolex 24 At Daytona held the largest car count in the history of the race with a starting field of 82 cars
- 394 – Hurley Haywood and Peter Gregg, the winners of the 1973 Rolex 24 in a Porsche Carrera, turned the fewest laps – 394 – by an overall winning car.

- 762 -- Masahiro Hasemi, Kazuyoshi Hoshino and Toshio Suzuki, the winners of the 1992 Rolex 24 in a Nissan R91 CP, turned the most laps – 762 – by an overall winning car.

31,404 – Total number of combined laps completed in the Rolex 24 At Daytona

- 115,093.2 – Number of miles completed in the 50-year history of the Rolex 24 At Daytona.
  - o By comparison, the Earth’s equator is 24,902.5 miles in length, meaning the number of miles completed in the Rolex 24 is 4.62 times around the planet’s equator.
  - o Round trip driving distance from DIS to Seattle (and back) is 6,218 miles, which means the number of miles completed in the Rolex 24 equals 18.5 round trips from DIS to Seattle.

## **VISITFLORIDA.com Named Presenting Sponsor Of Inaugural North American Endurance Championship**

VISITFLORIDA.com has been named the presenting sponsor of the inaugural North American Endurance Championship, a special competition encompassing major GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series races at three of the continent’s iconic race tracks: Daytona International Speedway, Watkins Glen International and Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

The North American Endurance Championship presented by VISITFLORIDA.com begins with this weekend’s Rolex 24 At Daytona, followed by the Sahlen’s Six Hours of The Glen on July 1 and the Super Weekend at the Brickyard at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on July 27.

To determine the championship winners in both the Rolex Series’ Daytona Prototype and GT classes, points will be awarded on a 5-4-3-2 basis for drivers and teams. First place earns five points, with four for second, three for third and two for fourth and each following position.

The three events will each be scored uniquely, enabling drivers and teams to earn a possible maximum of 20 points at each. For the Rolex 24 At Daytona, points will be awarded based on standings in each class at six hours, 12 hours, 18 hours and the finish. At Watkins Glen International, points will be awarded at the three-hour mark and finish, with points multiplied by two. At Indianapolis, points will be awarded at the finish of the three-hour race, which will be multiplied by four.

The endurance championship winners will be crowned on the Victory Podium at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, following the historic GRAND-AM debut on the 2.605-mile road course. The DP champion team will receive \$100,000, with the GT champion team getting \$50,000.

“This inaugural championship is an exciting new addition to the Rolex Series season and now we have a great presenting sponsor partner to support it as well,” said GRAND-AM CEO Ed Bennett. “Champions will no doubt cherish the moment when they are presented their trophies, at a legendary setting – Indianapolis.

## **The World's Fastest Neurosurgeon Is Back At Daytona**

Dr. Jim Lowe - the World's Fastest Neurosurgeon - has returned to Daytona International Speedway to make his 7th appearance in the Grand-Am Rolex 24 at Daytona this weekend, January 28-29, 2012. This legendary twice around the clock event has held special meaning for Dr. Lowe since his first running in the Grand Touring class with The Racers Group in 2006. The following year Dr. Lowe and the newly formed team JLow Racing placed third in GT class running the 64 JLow Racing Porsche.

What started as a "pie-in-the-sky" dream quickly became an obsession. "It started out as a "maybe, someday, if everything were wonderful, maybe I would get to go once", recalls Dr. Lowe. "As I look back to the first 24 hour, it's hard to understand how it all happened. It has now become an obsession. Being here is absolutely my goal for how I want to spend my Januarys for as long as I can."

This weekend, Dr. Lowe will participate in the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 at Daytona behind the wheel of the 77 Doran Racing Circle K Combos Ford Dallara Prototype with Brian and Burt Frisselle and IndyCar legend Paul Tracy.

You can follow Dr. Jim Lowe on Facebook and Twitter.

## **TRG - Live Roaming Webcast From The Buckler Girls**

For the fourth consecutive year, The Racer's Group will be webcasting live from the trenches at the Rolex 24 at Daytona. Never content to simply follow convention, TRG will be roaming LIVE from multiple locations around the track and interviewing a star studded cast of drivers, celebrities and interesting racing personalities.

TRG is again leading the way into the future by expanding its webcast to include all 24 hours of the race, plus pre and post race coverage. TRG will be using the latest technology to allow for the roving reporters, so viewers can experience the spectacle of Daytona, both day and night and from some very interesting and unusual locations.

In addition, the team has asked, KT and Alysa Buckler, daughters of Kevin and Debra Buckler, to host the webcast. Both are veterans of the track and the sport, having grown up with the same drive and work ethic as their more famous parents. The "Buckler Girls" will be assisted by Social Media and Marketing Director Rob Neidel and they have quite the show planned for the viewers.

"We want to have some fun with this and the girls volunteered to help", commented TRG CEO Kevin Buckler. They are both very accomplished technically and Alysa will be leading the technical and organizational side. KT really enjoys the communication side and knows many of the drivers, guests and track personalities. They grew up in the sport and are strong with Social Media. Unfortunately, they are not old enough to access the Hot Pits, so the idea of the "roaming program" was born and we have interviews set up all over the track and with some incredible people. We of course have the latest & greatest technology powering our programs and supporting them and a great staff. I know we will have some really cool surprises and some awesome giveaways and with the new look of the team being rolled out as well, we wanted to keep it fresh and fun!"

During the webcast, viewers will have the opportunity to interact with the drivers and crew at the track, and participate in the drama as it unfolds (well, hopefully not "too" much drama!). TRG will also give away team items every two hours during the webcast, including a VIP pass for the 2013 running of the Rolex 24 Hour race.

### **Damon Barnett Passes**

Damon Barnett, a member of the Road Racing Drivers Club (RRDC) passed away on December 26th. Barnett was the original Mazda motorsport Manger in the U.S. and he grew the program from early days of the RX-2 to the 1980's GTU domination of the RX-7.

Barnett was a native of Seattle and he was one of the first employees of Mazda North America starting in 1970. Between 1977 and his transfer in 1989, he brought Mazda more than 29 manufacturers championships in IMSA and SCCA competition.

The Mazda teams in the Rolex 24 are carrying stickers honoring Damon.

### **Weather And Crowds Are Looking Bright**

Weather should be good for the entire duration of the race as the prediction is for sunny skies Saturday and Sunday with a high of 75 today followed by 69 tomorrow. Looks like the Cont rain tires will stay under wraps this weekend.

What is coming out into the sun this weekend is the fans. The infield parking areas are packed as are the camping areas. Long lines of cars keep coming in and it wouldn't be a long shot to say this will be one of the best attended races in recent years.

**Photos from the BMW Performance 200 Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge are now posted on [www.ashautophotos.com](http://www.ashautophotos.com)**

