

Tim Bell Looks Forward to Mid-Ohio Finale

Ready to “graduate” from a strong rookie season in GRAND-AM....

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Lexington, Ohio (14 September 2011) – Like a student getting his scores back from his last final exam and confirming that he will soon be picking up a diploma, Tim Bell is looking forward to graduating from his rookie year of pro racing as the GRAND-AM Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge stages the final race of the season this weekend at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car course.



Throughout the 2011 championship campaign, Bell has delivered impressive performances at race tracks around the country. Nearly every race meeting saw Bell learning a new track for the first time on Friday and then returning to race on it come Saturday.

As Bell prepares for the EMCO Gears Classic at Mid-Ohio, he enters the final race of the season fourth in the MESCO Building For The Future Rookie of the Year Award standings, having amassed six top-15 finishes in the first nine races. The highlight of the year came in April when the California racer stood on the podium in only his third GRAND-AM start after he and Doran Racing co-driver BJ Zacharias drove the No. 14 Office Depot BMW 128i to a second place finish at Barber Motorsports Park.

Bell's two most recent race outings have yielded strong results – finishing eighth in his home race at Laguna Seca before nearly scoring a second consecutive top-10 result when he finished 11th at New Jersey Motorsports Park. Bell looks to carry this momentum into the final event and hopes for another strong run at the front of the field.

The New Jersey round saw teams battle extremely hot and humid conditions as the Garden State faced an intense heat wave, but with Ohio temperatures predicted to be in the mid-60s for the final round of 2011 competition, teams and drivers will welcome the much cooler race conditions.

“I’ve never been to Mid-Ohio before so I’m excited to get going,” said Bell. “It’s been a long break and I’m eager to get back behind the wheel. The Office Depot BMW can out-brake just about everybody out there, so I definitely think we have a great chance for another good run this weekend.”

With a nearly two-month long break between the New Jersey and Mid-Ohio rounds, Bell has spent time using an iRacing simulator in order to familiarize himself with the Mid-Ohio circuit in preparation for his first visit to the 2.258-mile, 13-turn challenging Ohio road course.

“Working with a car in its first season of racing has proven to have some drawbacks, but I know that being a part of that process--even when it has sometimes been frustrating--will make me a more complete driver in the end. But of course, you are hungry to have good results every time out, so hopefully that is the way we can finish the season. Being in Ohio, this is Doran Racing’s home track and it’d be great to bring the guys another strong result because they’ve worked so hard, all year long. I think it’s going to be a very fun place to race.”

Bell will take to the track for the first time on Thursday, September 15 for a promoter test day. Official practice and qualifying will take place on Friday with the EMCO Gears Classic set to begin at 11:00 AM (ET) Saturday, September 17. The 2.5-hour race can be followed online with live timing and scoring at www.grand-am.com.

SPEED will air the race on Sunday, September 25 at 12:00 PM (ET).

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