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GRAND-AM Cooldown Lap: Circuit Of The Americas
GRAND-AM Of The Americas Presented By GAINSCO And TOTAL
Rolux Sports Car Series
Saturday, March 2, 2013



The Recap

It had been a long time since Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty last won a Rolex Sports Car Series race – Montreal in 2011 to be exact. Saturday, all the stars aligned for the two-time DP champs, who scored a popular home-state victory for GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing in the inaugural GRAND-AM race at Circuit of The Americas.

Driving for the Dallas-based team, Gurney took over the lead with 14 minutes remaining when Brendon Hartley's upset bid ended with a broken suspension. Gurney then held off valiant attempts by both Scott Pruett and Ryan Dalziel to take the 16th Daytona Prototype victory for both drivers.

Dalziel finished second, .427 seconds behind, in the No. 2 Popow Starworks Motorsport Ford/Riley started by Alex Popow. Pruett took third in the Rolex 24 At Daytona-winning No. 01 TELMEX BMW/Riley, coming back from a late-race miscue that saw the five-time champion fall to 10th after contact with Max Angelelli. Co-driver Memo Rojas dominated the opening two-thirds of the event, leading a race-high 33 circuits.

Running his second Rolex Series race, Hartley led by four seconds in the No. 8 Starworks Motorsport Ford/Riley started by Scott Mayer. Contact with the GT Audi R8 of Ian Baas sent him spinning to the sidelines with a broken right-rear suspension, ending his upset bid.

GT also went down to the wire. Alessandro Balzan and Alessandro Pier Guidi dominated the event, leading 47 laps. Andy Lally, driving the No. 44 Magnus Racing Flex-Box Porsche GT3 started by John Potter, took over on pit stops and was able to hold on for 12 laps before Pier Guidi made the pass with 3:30 remaining. Bill Auberlen, driving the No. 94 Turner Motorsport BMW M3 started by Paul Dalla Lana, also managed to get by Lally. GRAND-AM officials penalized Pier Guidi for avoidable contact, and assessed a one-lap, plus 90-second penalty after the checkered flag.

That gave the victory to Auberlen and Dalla Lana. It was their first victory since Homestead-Miami Speedway in 2011. Ironically, they also combined to win the accompanying Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge race for the team on both occasions.

In GX, Rolex 24 winner Dr. Jim Norman combined with Austin driver Jeff Mosing and Spencer Pumpelly to win in the No. 38 BGB Motorsports Porsche Cayman.

The Stats

DP 1st: Jon Fogarty/Alex Gurney, No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Corvette DP

DP 2nd: Alex Popow/Ryan Dalziel, No. 2 Starworks Motorsport Ford/Riley

DP 3rd: Memo Rojas/Scott Pruett, No.01 TELMEX BMW/Riley

GT 1st: Paul Dalla Lana/Bill Auberlen, No. 94 Turner Motorsport BMW M3

GT 2nd: John Potter/Andy Lally, No. 44 Magnus Racing Porsche GT3

GT 3rd: Andrew Davis/Leh Keen, No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche GT3

GX 1st: Dr. Jim Norman/Jeff Mosing/Spencer Pumpelly, No. 38 BGB Motorsports Porsche Cayman

GX 2nd: Tom Long/Sylvain Tremblay, No. 70 Mazdaspeed/SpeedSource Mazda 6
GX 3rd: Tristan Nunez/Joel Miller, No. 00 Visit Florida Racing/SpeedSource Mazda 6
Margin of Victory: .427 seconds (DP); 2.388 seconds (GT); 4 laps (GX)
Average Speed: 87.743 mph (DP); 82.757 mph (GT); 75.734 mph (GX)
Cautions: 2 for 10 laps

The Points (Unofficial)

DP: Memo Rojas/Scott Pruett, 65; Alex Gurney/Jon Fogarty, 59; Ryan Dalziel/Alex Popow, 53; Max Angelelli/Jordan Taylor, 49

GT: Andy Lally/John Potter, 58; Dion von Moltke, 57; Emil Assentato/Anthony Lazzaro, 56; Paul Dalla Lana/Bill Auberlen, 51.

GX: Jim Norman, 70; Jeff Mosing, 65; Sylvain Tremblay/Tom Long, 60

Noteworthy

➤ The No. 57 Stevenson Auto Group Chevrolet Camaro was qualified fourth by John Edwards, but started at the back of the GT grid. Following qualifying, the team found debris and decided to change engines. Edwards – battling back from a bout with the flu – worked his way back into contention before being hit in the left-rear wheel by another competitor, causing a long pit stop that dropped them from contention.

➤ The event marked the first GRAND-AM Rolex Series event without Darren Law in the field. Law has competed in 161 races, dating from GRAND-AM's debut in the 2000 Rolex 24 At Daytona through the 2013 Daytona event, where he finished seventh for GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing.

➤ Enzo Potolicchio confirmed that Stephane Sarrazin will drive in all but one of the remaining Rolex Series races. He will sit out the Mid-Ohio round to prepare for the 24 Hours of Le Mans, with his drive in the Diamond Cellar Classic taken by Tom Kimber-Smith. The team scored the best finish of its young history at Austin, taking fourth.

➤ A pair of Rolex 24 class winners had new rides for the event. GT winner Dion von Moltke joined Muehlner Motorsports' No. 18 Porsche GT3 after winning Daytona in an Alex Job Racing Audi R8. Dr. Jim Norman – part of Napleton Racing's winning GX effort in the Rolex 24 – moved to BGB for Austin, joining Jeff Mosing and Spencer Pumpelly.

The Numbers:

- 9 – GT lead changes among five cars and six drivers
- 10 – Laps led by Brendon Hartley
- 15 – Winless streak in races for Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty since winning at Montreal in 2011
- 25 – Rolex Series victories for Bill Auberlen
- 80 – Career Rolex Series podiums for Scott Pruett
- 101.978 – Speed in MPH of Joao Barbosa's fastest DP race lap

Quoteboard:

➤ "It's great to be back. We finished second quite a few times last year, and man, what a day! We pushed it so hard the whole way. It was an incredible battle at the end with Dalziel and Pruett, and it feels amazing to hold them off. We had 500 GAINSCO guests today, and we created 500 new racing fans. They were all going crazy." – **Alex Gurney, No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Corvette DP**

➤ “It’s great to win, obviously, but today couldn’t have been a better time with all the people here from GAINSCO. Victories are always great, and beyond that, we just put ourselves in a great position for the points championship. Now we have to keep it going.” – **Jon Fogarty, No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance Corvette DP**

➤ “The Ferrari and Andy were battling out up front. We made two laps back, and put our head down and raced. I didn’t see what happened with Andy and the Ferrari, but it slowed Lally down and he came back to me. I had a move ready and I put it into action. It got tight, we bumped a few times and ran out a few times. Andy got mad, and I apologize if he felt I did him wrong, but I don’t race dirty. It was a great win for Turner. This team is good enough to win races, so there’s no reason we shouldn’t try to win everything we get our hands on.” – **Bill Auberlen, No. 94 Turner Motorsport BMW M3**

➤ “The car was really consistent, and BGB did a great job setting it up. I just tried to stay out of traffic, and as the sun was setting, it made it tough battling with the other cars. Winning my first Rolex Series race in my home town is very exciting.” – **Jeff Mosing, No. 38 BGB Motorsports Porsche Cayman, GX winner**

➤ “The team worked really hard on our setup for today, and they really nailed it. We were having a great race, leading most of the time we were out there. Then Scott had contact with the 10 car and tore off the front of the car. I’m not sure exactly what happened, but it’s a shame for the team and the fans.” – **Memo Rojas, No. 01 TELMEX/Target BMW/Riley**

➤ “Our start was a little messy, and I fell back to sixth. But the car was great, so we took our time and worked up to second. We had the quickest car on the track, and Max was flying once he got in. Racing Ricky was exciting – a lot more action than I expected. I’m sure we’ll be talking about it later.” – **Jordan Taylor, No. 10 Velocity Worldwide Corvette DP**

➤ “I was right behind two incidents but missed both of them, thanks to the work of my spotter. Barry Waddell has saved me a lot of money over the years. This is a great place for GRAND-AM to be. It’s one of the best tracks in North America, for both fans and racers.” **John Pew, No. 60 Michael Shank Racing Ford/Riley**

Coming Up:

Round 3 of the 2013 Rolex Sports Car Series season will be the Porsche 250 at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Ala. (SPEED, April 7, 5:30 p.m.).