



# News Release

## **IMSA News Roundup: August 18, 2016**

*Notebook Items Include Risi Competizione Looks To Continue Strong Showing At VIR; van der Zande Enjoying Standout Season On Two Continents; MINI JCW Records First Fastest Race Lap*

**DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (August 18, 2016)** – A trip to VIRginia International Raceway for the Michelin GT Challenge on Sunday, August 28 is just what the doctor ordered for Risi Competizione.

The Houston-based team is coming back from a heartbreaking conclusion to the recent Continental Tire Road Race Showcase at Road America. Now, it's looking to continue its recent success at VIR when Giancarlo Fisichella and Toni Vilander roll out the No. 62 Risi Competizione Ferrari 488 GTE.

Two years ago, Fisichella scored a thrilling last-lap victory, passing the Porsche of Bryan Sellers in the final turn to win in the No. 62 Risi Competizione Ferrari 458 Italia started from the pole by Pierre Kaffer. It was the team's second-consecutive victory at VIR, with Olivier Beretta and Matteo Malucelli winning an ALMS race at the circuit in 2013. Last year, Fisichella and Kaffer finished third, trailing the two Porsche North America Porsche 911 RSRs.

"I have to say VIR is probably my favorite circuit in the U.S.," Fisichella said. "First of all, because I like the shape of the circuit. Also, I have great memories from there. We won in 2014 and last year we finished third. The circuit suits the Ferrari well; probably with the new 488, it will be good, too. I'm really looking forward to it, and I'm happy to be going there soon."

In the recent race at Road America, Fisichella led nine laps before turning the red Ferrari over to Vilander, who worked his way up to second behind Richard Westbrook's No. 67 Ford GT. The race restarted with five minutes remaining following a late caution. With the Ford beginning to lose power with two laps remaining, Vilander made his bid for the lead. However, he was touched by a Prototype and spun. Vilander quickly recovered from the incident and returned to action, finishing fifth.

### **Van der Zande Enjoying Standout Season On Two Continents**

A late-race mechanical issue at Road America ended a streak of seven consecutive podium finishes for Renger van der Zande and Alex Popow in the No. 8 Starworks Motorsport ORECA FLM09. The mechanical issue caused Van der Zande to crash, bringing out the final caution and resulting in a sixth-place finish. As a result, the No. 8 pair enters the next round for the Prototype Challenge (PC) class at Circuit of The Americas with a seven-point lead in the standings, 293-286, over PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports drivers Robert Alon and Tom Kimber-Smith.

For van der Zande, 2016 has been a dream season, beginning with a fourth-place finish in the Rolex 24 At Daytona and WeatherTech Championship success that includes victories at Detroit, Watkins Glen and Lime Rock Park. His success also has carried over to international competition.

"I'm having a great season," said the driver from the Netherlands. "I was second at the Nurburgring 24 Hours, second at Spa 24 Hours – and you have to be lucky to even finish those races. Being on the podium in both of them is fantastic. It's been a great season in America, and we have a bit yet to go. I'm really enjoying it, getting to run in the best of both worlds in IMSA and in Europe."

While he's looking to capture the PC championship, van der Zande has his eye on the future.

"I love Starworks, and I would love for an opportunity to stay with them," he said. "If [Starworks owner] Peter [Baron] moves to Prototype, I'm ready to go for it. I'd love to step up. I think I've proved my point in PC, and I would like to show my mojo in the Prototype class. I'm talking to a few teams, both in Prototype and GTD. I enjoy American racing. I'm always coming late to the races, and I'm always jet lagged, but I don't really feel it, because I enjoy the atmosphere and the great racing."

### **Fastest Race Lap Another Milestone For MINI JCW Team**

MINI JCW Team put another notch in its belt at Road America, with Mat Pombo giving the team its first fastest race lap in IMSA Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge completion in the No. 73 Shopminiusa.com/ATELIER MINI John Cooper Works.

Pombo turned a lap of 2:31.809 (96.0 mph) on the 18th lap – just before the one-hour mark – while running 23rd in the Street Tuner (ST) field. Pombo had taken over for Derek Jones moments earlier, with the team making an unscheduled pit stop to take advantage of a caution flag.

Told to let loose, Pombo worked his way to the front, where he led for six laps. With 45 minutes remaining, he was told to go into fuel conservation mode. Spencer Pumpelly went by to take the lead, with Pombo remaining in second through the white flag. Midway through the final lap, Pombo began to run low on fuel, and he limped the car home to finish seventh.

"Running the fastest race lap shows our cars are in contention to win," said team owner Luis Perocarpi. "We're creeping up there. Now we can go into races consistently fighting for podium finishes. It's been a lot of work, taking a street car – the same car you can buy at the dealership – and being competitive with teams who've had a few years to develop their cars."

Perocarpi also proudly pointed to the results shown by the No. 52 MINI at Road America.

"Ramin [Abdolvahabi] had his career-best qualifying, 15th," Perocarpi said. "He and Nate Norenberg brought the car home in 12th, which was the highest our No. 52 car has ever finished. That's another indication that our cars are super competitive."

The three MINIs will carry "Parked it" stickers at VIR, honoring the late Bryan Clauson. Perocarpi was Clauson's crew chief at the 100th Indianapolis 500 in May, with the sprint car star finishing 23rd.

### **End Quote:**

Oliver Gavin, No. 4 Corvette Racing Corvette C7.R, on the finish at Road America: "Those final laps were crazy. When the caution came out with 12 minutes to go, we thought the race was over – little did we know. At the restart, it was frantic and everyone seemed to press the self-destruct button. Tommy [Milner] kept his cool, made the smart moves and worked his way up the order, while we all watched on in amazement. The volume got louder and louder in the Corvette Racing pit and then, when Tommy passed Richard [Westbrook] for the lead, everyone went crazy! With 30 minutes to go in the race, the No. 67 Ford was leading and we were sixth. We were effectively tied on points at that moment. To finish the way we did is huge for the title race for Corvette Racing, Chevrolet, and Tommy and I."

### **Contact:**

**Nate Siebens**

**Senior Manager, IMSA Communications**

**(386) 310-6568**

**[nsiebens@imsa.com](mailto:nsiebens@imsa.com)**