

Ganassi Clinches Sixth Rolex 24

TUSCC>> 2015 Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona

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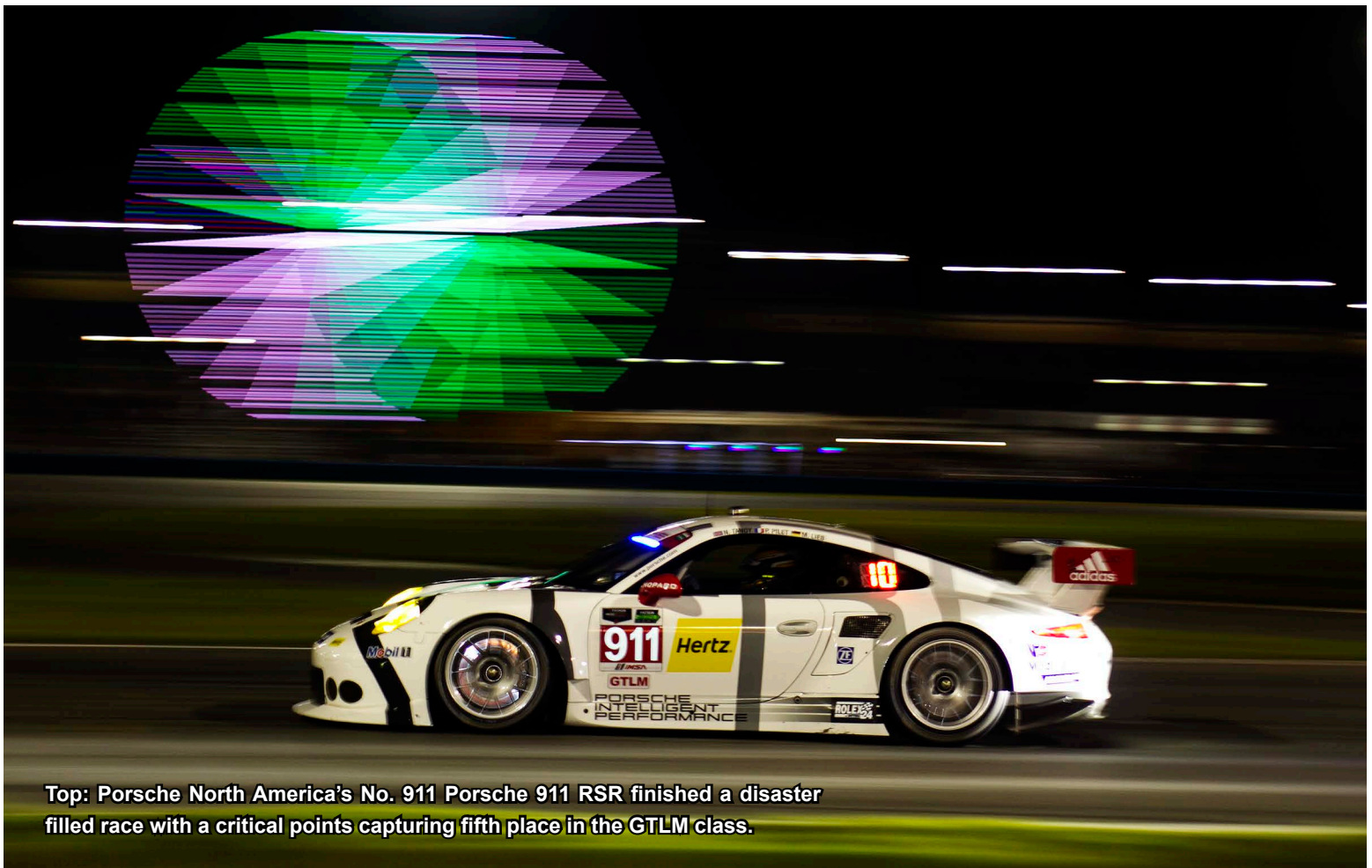
Top: The No.02 Ford EcoBoost/Riley of Ganassi Racing took the overall first place victory.



Bottom: With the 2015 No. 02 Ganassi victory, Jamie McMurray becomes the third driver to win both the Daytona 500 and the Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona.

Daytona Beach, FL - January 26, 2015 – Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates' No. 02 Target/Ford EcoBoost Riley outdistanced the field to win the 53rd Rolex 24 at Daytona by finishing 740 laps at 2,634 miles. The victory by Scott Dixon and Kyle Larson, alongside Verizon IndyCar Series driver Tony Kanaan and NASCAR driver Jamie McMurray, marked a record sixth Rolex 24 win for Chip Ganassi Racing. Emotions ran high in the Ganassi pits after the win as Jamie McMurray joined AJ Foyt and Mario Andretti as the only drivers to win the Daytona 500 and the Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona.

"I told Chip after the race was over, we have shared some of the most special memories of my life together, some of the greatest days, with the exception of getting married and having kids. It's been great. Victory Lane at Daytona has been very special for us, and this is a big deal for me because these cars are so much different than



Top: Porsche North America's No. 911 Porsche 911 RSR finished a disaster filled race with a critical points capturing fifth place in the GTLM class.

what I typically drive in NASCAR," celebrated McMurray.

The No. 02 Ganassi qualified second and went to the front early by taking the lead on lap one. It maintained the top spot for the majority of the first four hours. After a splitter change during the late afternoon hours caused the No. 02 to go one lap down, the car's dream driving squad was able to recover the lost time and eventually regained the lead. A late full-course caution saw Dixon hold off the No. 5 Action Express Racing Corvette DP entry to cross the finish line a meager 1.333 seconds ahead after 24 hours of racing.

"I think for all of us, it's such a team event. It's 24 hours, we have a mix of personnel from the different teams that Chip and Felix have. The car was very consistent and I think we had good speed. Everybody pulled their weight. That's what gets you through the 24 hours. To win, you have to be there in the end. You have



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to try to look out for the car so you have the speed in the end to try to compete for the win. The No. 5 car had been very quick and the No. 10, I thought was going to be the one to beat with strategy," explained Dixon.

Despite finishing second, Action Express Racing never stopped performing like a winning organization. With the green flag in the air and the 24-hour countdown clock on, Barbosa navigated the No. 5 up to the third position by the time the first full-course yellow was thrown 54 minutes into the competition. The No. 5 Mustang Sampling Corvette DP drivers of Barbosa, Fittipaldi and Bourdais fought their way to the front, with Bourdais navigating the car to the lead on lap 222 following a lightning-fast pit stop by the over-the-wall crew. However, adversity struck the team eight hours and 42 minutes into the race when Barbosa keyed the radio to report that he had lost fuel pressure on lap 268 while running second. Coming to a halt on the track, the No. 5 Corvette DP brought out a full-course caution one lap later and was towed to the garage. The crew immediately diagnosed the issue as a bad fuel pump connector and the issue was



repaired quickly, but the team lost three laps in the garage, appearing out of contention for their second-consecutive Rolex 24 victory. However, as he returned to the track in seventh place, Barbosa came over the radio once again, stating, "We'll get it back."

The team did get it back, utilizing the raw talent of its drivers and smart pit strategies, ultimately returning to the lead lap on lap 531 with just under eight hours remaining. On lap 545, Barbosa took the point position, leading the field for 53 laps. In the final four hours of the event, Barbosa, Fittipaldi and Bourdais continued to contend for the win, fighting hard until the clock ran out and the checkered flag waved. Bourdais closed out the race with a second-place finish.

"I am so proud of this team's effort," said team owner Bob Johnson. "We've been preparing for this race since before last season ended; there are thousands of hours of work that went into our racecars this weekend. We expect to win and we did everything necessary to do so this weekend."

GTLM Class

Difficulty proved to be the defining theme for Porsche in GTLM. The Porsche North American 911 RSRs challenged for the lead during the first half of the Daytona classic. For the official factory program in GTLM, the race hinged on a mid-race incident that took both the No. 911 and No. 912 Porsche 911 RSR entries out of contention to win a second-consecutive Rolex 24 victory. At the 11 hours and 10 minutes mark, the No. 911 driven by Marc Lieb came together with an Aston Martin over the curbing near turn one, with the No. 912 RSR shortly behind. As a result, Earl Bamber in the No. 912 took evasive action, drove across the wet grass and slid into the No. 911 as it re-entered the track. While no one was injured in the incident, both RSR's had significant damage. The No. 912 was repaired in pit lane and returned with Fred Makowiecki behind the wheel some 27 laps down. Bamber, Makowiecki and Jörg Bergmeister fought to regain positions until a drivetrain failure ended No. 912's run in the 21st hour.

The No. 911, shared by Lieb, Nick Tandy and Patrick Pilet needed to be flat-bedded off the course. Brought to the garage,





the team overachieved in replacing both the right front and right rear suspensions along with an oil tank that necessitated removing the flat-six engine and transmission. The crew returned the car with enough time to enable the team to fight for a checkered flag crossing at fifth place.

Corvette Racing returned to Victory Lane, scoring a hard-earned GT Le Mans class victory. Antonio Garcia, Jan Magnussen and Ryan Briscoe won in their No. 3 Chevrolet Corvette C7.R in Corvette Racing's second race back at Daytona since 2001. Garcia crossed the finish line with a 0.478 second margin of victory. The winning trio completed 725 laps – 2,581 miles – for the team's second Rolex 24 victory.

"It's just such a tough race. Jan and I were talking about it, for both of us it's the first time we've ever done the race without going back to the garage. There's so much action all race long. I felt it was a 24-hour sprint race from the start," revealed Briscoe.

The No. 3 team led GTLM for more than 360 laps and took the lead for good with 90 minutes left when the then-class leader experienced trouble in the pit lane. The No. 3 Corvette responded shortly thereafter with a perfect stop for tires and fuel to increase its lead. Garcia was precise and clean in the final run to the checkered flag.

GTD Class

The No. 58 Dempsey/Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT America took the checkered flag in GTD's third place. Painted in the famous colors of Brumos Porsche and co-operated with Patrick Dempsey Racing, the No. 58 machine dropped from fourth in class on the grid to last place overall at the beginning of the Rolex 24 due to problems with its transponder, the electronic unit IMSA supplies to record its laps completed. The team made four pit stops to solve the problem. Consistent, mistake-free driving and good pit strategy helped them move up the field and onto the podium.

"I am really proud of the entire team. We came from seven laps down, finding ourselves in 51st overall. To never give up the fight and to be on the podium at Daytona is a testament to how hard our team worked. It's an amazing achievement, elaborated Patrick Dempsey, the



Bottom: Sponsored by famed Brumos Porsche, the No. 58 Dempsey/Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT America captured a podium finish.



Bottom: Scott Pruett preparing to start his 25th Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona race.

actor turned racing driver. “With Brumos Porsche, and their history here, it is such a satisfying experience and we want to thank them for their belief in me and our team. It means a lot, as there is a real family feeling about Brumos. There is a beauty in this company that is all-inspiring.”

The No. 93 TI Automotive/ViperExchange Dodge Viper GT3-R driven by Ben Keating, Al Carter, Cameron Lawrence, Kuno Wittmer and Dominik Farnbacher took the GTD checkered flag after completing 704 laps, equating to 2,506 miles. Starting the race from dead last, the No. 93 Viper progressed up the GTD field through solid driving and the misfortunes of other teams – No. 45 Flying Lizard Audi R8’s clutch problems, No. 33 TRG Aston Martin’s engine issues, and teammate’s No. 33 Viper’s electrical/engine gremlins. At the 18-hour mark and after numerous lead changes, the No. 93 Viper took the lead for good. When the clock hit 24 hours the No. 93 Viper claimed a win with a 7.588 second advantage over the No. 22 WeatherTech Porsche. **AA**