

Baumann, Marcelli Earn First Win for Lexus RC F GT3

May 07, 2018

Image not found or type unknown



LEXINGTON, Ohio (May 7, 2018) — 3GT Racing drivers Dominik Baumann and Kyle Marcelli were victorious behind the wheel of the No. 14 Lexus at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course to earn the first GTD class win for the RC F GT3 in IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship competition.

“We are so excited and proud of 3GT Racing, TRD (Toyota Racing Development) and all four of the 3GT Racing drivers,” said Jeff Bracken, group VP and general manager, Lexus Division. “While it was two drivers that won in the RC F GT3 today with Dominik (Baumann) and Kyle (Marcelli), really it’s all four of our drivers, including Jack (Hawksworth) and David (Heinemeier Hansson), which really put us in a position to win in just the third race of our second season. From my standpoint, it’s a huge accomplishment and I just couldn’t be prouder of the entire team.”

The historic win marks the first North American victory for the RC F GT3 since joining IMSA competition at the beginning of the 2017 season, and is the best result for 3GT Racing after a previous best finish of fifth.

“We are ecstatic,” added Lexus motorsports manager Mark Egger. “We were able to take all of the pieces that we’ve been able to put together over the last year and a half developing the RC F GT3 with some near misses and some heartbreaks throughout the last year and get our first GTD win. 3GT Racing did a fantastic job putting together a great program and everything came together this weekend, so we’re very happy to get that first win with the RC F GT3.”

The 3GT Racing RC F GT3s combined to lead every lap in class around the 13-turn, 2.258-mile Ohio road course that included Baumann pacing the GTD field for the final 73 circuits. Marcelli started the race second in the No. 14 Lexus and kept pace with 3GT Racing teammate Jack Hawksworth at the front of the field before turning over driving duties to Baumann for the final two stints of the sprint race. The 25-year-old Austrian held off a late-charging competitor in his RC F GT3 to cross the finish line first and capture the GTD win in his first start at Mid-Ohio.

Hawksworth led the field for the first 43 laps in the No. 15 Lexus after earning the pole position on Saturday, and went on to finish fourth with co-driver David Heinemeier Hansson in Sunday’s two hour and 40 minute race. Hawksworth ran the quickest GTD lap of the race with a time of 1:20.536, while Marcelli recorded the second-quickest circuit in the No. 14 RC F GT3 with a time of 1:20.758.

Lexus and 3GT Racing will next compete at the Raceway at Belle Isle Park in Detroit on Saturday, June 2.

3GT Racing Driver Quotes

Dominik Baumann, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

What was the key to getting Lexus and 3GT Racing the first win with the RC F GT3 today?

“The radio connection was not too good so I had to manage it myself, but I pushed every lap. It was just 100 percent every lap. I’m so glad we did it. The pressure is off and such a perfect day.”

How exciting was that finish from behind the wheel of the RC F GT3 battling on the closing lap?

“I felt the pressure coming 15 minutes until the end. We struggled a little bit with the used tires and we had to push even more in the beginning of the stint to pull a gap. I was a little bit lucky with traffic. I was happy to see the white flag. On that last lap he (Alvaro Parente) closed the gap so quick that I tried to defend with everything I’ve got.”

How special of a moment was it for you to drive the RC F GT3 to the checkered flag to get the first win for Lexus?

“It’s a great feeling. I thought, ‘No mistakes, just go to the finish line, stay focused.’ It was crazy in the car. It’s

an honor for me driving the car over the finish line for 3GT and Lexus. It's just an amazing feeling.”

Kyle Marcelli, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

How does it feel to be here in victory lane today with 3GT Racing and Lexus?

“A huge thank you to Lexus, a huge thank you to 3GT Racing. It's an absolute team effort. Today was not easy. It was hot out there. Dominik (Baumann) drove his butt off and what a day.”

How big of a win is this for 3GT Racing and Lexus?

“It's a huge win. It's always difficult to get the first one. There's a lot of pressure. I put a lot of pressure on myself coming into this weekend being that it was the first sprint race of the season I knew we had a strong car. We had a strong driver lineup and that we needed to execute and I knew that if we just didn't make mistakes we'd get a good result. Yesterday in qualifying again, I put a lot of pressure on myself to get a good lap and we were first and second for 3GT Racing and Lexus. Our car was working really well on the new tire and we had to make the most of it. We struggled a little bit on the used tire so we needed to really work hard to get a good gap when our tire was good and then manage that towards the end of the stint. It's a team effort. The 3GT guys have worked so hard for two years and real honor to bring them the first win for Lexus and 3GT Racing.”

What does it mean to get Lexus the first win in the RC F GT3?

“Lexus has got a lot of involvement in this program trying to showcase their brand as a performance brand and I think we accomplished that today against the competition. Just a huge win for everybody – for Lexus and for 3GT Racing. I'm just really excited to go into Detroit and the balance of our races.”

How does it feel to sweep both the Continental race yesterday and the WeatherTech race today?

“Just a great weekend all around. To win the Continental Sports Car Challenge race yesterday and win the WeatherTech race today, it's a dream come true weekend. We put a lot of green flag miles on our Continental Tires today so hats off to all of our drivers for keeping it to clean, good hard racing. Just a great day for Lexus and 3GT Racing.”

Did you ever think you could come to Mid-Ohio and win both races?

“It's an absolute dream come true weekend. I said to my wife (Amy) a couple of days ago, ‘How cool would it be to win both series in the same weekend?’ And, after we got the win yesterday which I had to work real hard for, got in the car sixth and it was a never give up attitude yesterday and pushed every lap. I took the lead with two laps to go and there was some drama at the end where we had a mechanical issue, but it was enough to still win the Continental race. Then, today the roles were reversed. I had the easier job of starting the race, but my goal was just to build a gap and keep the car clean and then my teammate Dominik (Baumann), he had a lot more pressure at the end to deliver the result. He held up his end of the bargain and brought Lexus and 3GT the win. Just a great weekend all around.”

Jack Hawksworth, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

Can you evaluate your race today after starting from the pole with the Lexus RC F GT3?

“I think we lost a little bit of time in the pit lane on the first stop and then obviously David (Heinemeier Hansson) did a fantastic job in that second stint and held (Alvaro) Parente off. Then, on that last stop, we came in and lost some more time and I was much faster, but really slow to overtake him (Lawson Aschenbach) and then just spent the whole stint really just trying to get past him. I had a bit of trouble with a lapped car, but in the end I caught (Lawson) Aschenbach and passed him for fourth. It was a real shame because we had a really fast car and we were the fastest car, but still we got fourth. Obviously, the 14 Lexus won so it was a nice day for 3GT Racing and for Lexus. I was happy for them. It was a great day for the team and a great day for Lexus. It shows all of the hard work everyone has put in so it's a great day.”

David Heinemeier Hansson, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your race today in the Lexus RC F GT3?

“I had a wonderful battle with Alvaro Parente to be able to help the 14 Lexus since it got really close at the end and then I held up Parente for a good 10 laps there (during my stint). It was wonderful to see the team finally get the first win and for us to get fourth with that amazing pass by Jack (Hawksworth) there at the end. It would’ve been nice if there was a little bit more, but I think we’ve also got to be realistic. This was a green race, which meant everything came down to pace and hey, our car has a pro and it has an amateur and there’s just limits to just how much faster we can go with that combination. I think we had a wonderful car and the best race car of everyone today and I think we got pretty much all of it out of it. This track really suited the RC F GT3. There was enough of these high speed corners where the downforce really kicks in and also if you look at the overall pace it was just phenomenal and incredibly impressive also in the 14 car that Kyle (Marcelli) was able to hang with Jack (Hawksworth) for an entire stint, it was just wild.”