

Lexus RC F GT3 Registers First Pole in Canada

July 10, 2017

Image not found or type unknown



BOWMANVILLE, Ontario (July 9, 2017) — Sage Karam earned the first GTD class pole for Lexus in the 3GT Racing No. 14 RC F GT3 with a track record time and went on to finish fifth in Sunday's IMSA WeatherTech Championship race at Canadian Tire Motorsports Park with co-driver Scott Pruett.

Karam led the class field for the first 35 laps (of 122) of the two hour and 40 minute race en route to the first top-five result for the No. 14 Lexus and fifth consecutive top-10 finish. 3GT Racing has recorded seven top-10 results this season, including two consecutive top-five finishes in the last five IMSA events.

The 22-year-old's lap time of 1:16.563 in qualifying set a GTD track record around the 2.459-mile Canadian road course.

The No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3 started from the rear of the field after an accident during Saturday's practice session and finished the race 12th with drivers Jack Hawksworth and Robert Alon.

The 3GT Racing team worked into the night Saturday to get the No. 15 Lexus fixed and ready to compete in Sunday's race after missing Saturday's qualifying session. Hawksworth led Sunday morning's warm up session with the second quickest lap of the weekend (1:16.593).

The Lexus RC F GT3s next compete at Lime Rock Park in Lakeville, Connecticut on Saturday July 22.

Fans can keep up with Lexus Racing on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) by using #LexusRCF GT3, #LexusPerformance and #LexusRacing, and online at www.Lexus.com/Motorsports.

Lexus Racing Quotes

SAGE KARAM, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

Did you think you had a chance at the team's first win today?

"I think we definitely had a Lexus that could win. First stint, I was saving fuel as much as I could and then whenever I needed to I could just pull away. Got a hefty lead to where I thought if we came into the pits here, we could still leave – we weren't going to get jumped in pit lane or anything. Unfortunately, we had a really bad pit stop. I couldn't figure out how to get the car in neutral, so something was messed up there and then we got another penalty for equipment, but really unfortunate that put us back to like the 12th spot and then the whole Scott (Pruett) stint was just kind of damage control – just trying to get back as many positions as he can or not lose any positions and then all we needed was a yellow and it just seemed like the race was going to go green forever. Then right when I got back in it there it went yellow and the sky started to open up a little bit and rain started falling down and I was like, 'You know what? We can actually make something out of this now,' and I love racing in the rain. It's just one of my favorite things to do, so super tough conditions with a slick, wet track. That was a lot of fun. Really pleased with fifth-place. That's the best result for the 14 Lexus RC F GT3 this year. It matches the team's best result. One or two more laps and we probably would have been on the podium, but we're doing all the right things moving forward and every weekend is getting better and better."

SCOTT PRUETT, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

How did the race unfold?

"We got a good start and Sage (Karam) was in the lead, had control of the race and on our first pit stop not really sure what happened. The car came in in reverse, the wheels are spinning, so that's one stop-and-go and put a little wing in and the Allen wrench didn't come out and got another stop-and-go. Unfortunately, we were plagued by some of our own issues. However, I couldn't be more proud of our guys on our recovery. Sage did a great job, the team did a great job getting everything turned back around and now that's our best finish. We've broken that string of sixths and now we've got our first top-five."

SCOTT PRUETT, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3 (continued)

Are you encouraged knowing the Lexus RC F GT3s have such solid speed?

"Of course. It's absolutely encouraging and we've just got to keep doing what we're doing. Just keep doing it."

That was our first time with the car on the pole. We're continuing to make headway with both the 15 and the 14 Lexus RC F GT3, so we've just got to tidy things up a little bit."

ROBERT ALON, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

How would you evaluate your race?

"We had to start from the back and other than that and the penalty we got, it was a great race. I brought up the car up somewhere near halfway through the field and then I was pretty confident that Jack (Hawksworth) would be able to take it the rest of the way. Just not really sure what happened, but we received a penalty in the pits and it put us a lap down and there wasn't much we could do from there."

JACK HAWKSWORTH, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

How fast was your Lexus RC F GT3 today?

"The Lexus was very fast – just really quick. We just couldn't buy a little bit of luck today. We went out and we got the penalty – it stopped and the wheels were spinning – and so then we got a drive through penalty, passed a few cars and then I knew the leader was ahead. I caught the leader and passed the leader and got back on the lead lap, but then we lost it in one stop. For whatever reason, he jumped us back and then I caught the leader again, but this time I just couldn't pass him."

Were you impressed with the team rebuilding your car overnight?

"First of all more than anything, regardless of the result the team did a just phenomenal job – an unbelievable job – to recover after the car was in pieces yesterday. We rolled it out in warmup this morning and we nearly set the track record, so these guys did an absolutely unbelievable job. The Lexus was fast all race. We had the pace, but just nothing fell our way, you know what I mean? But the team did a phenomenal job."

MARK EGGER, motorsports manager, Lexus Division

How was the race weekend?

"Coming into the day, the Lexus RC F GT3 was on pole and it was fantastic experience for the team and for Lexus. We're up here in Canada and the Lexus dealers were out here looking for a great result today, but unfortunately with a couple incidents in the pits we fell back, but overall the car has a very strong pace and we're looking forward to getting to Lime Rock in a couple weeks time."

Do you feel like the team is getting close to its first podium or win?

"We're inching there. There's no question about that. When the Lexus is on pole for how strong it is and when the 15 car was being worked on overnight and was P1 in the morning warmup, it says we know we've got a good car. We've just got to put all the pieces of the puzzle together to get to that podium and then the next step."