Pruett and Lexus Punted Off Podium at VIR

April 27, 2009

ALTON, Va. (April 25, 2009) – After overcoming an early tire change, the #01 Telmex Lexus was sitting in third and challenging for the victory before Scott Pruett was punted off the track on a re-start with just three laps remaining in front of a record crowd at Virginia International Raceway today.

Memo Rojas started the race from the pole and led the first four laps before a flat-spotted tire forced him to pit out of the lead. He regained the lead on Lap 20 and held it through Lap 36, when he lost the top spot for just one lap before powering back to the front for laps 38-43. He eventually relinquished the lead to pit. Overall, Rojas led 27 circuits during his 43-lap stint.

The #01 Lexus emerged from the pits in sixth-place after the driver change from Rojas to Pruett and climbed back into contention for the win, steadily passing cars as he moved up to third-place. Pruett had closed up to the bumper of the second-place car as the top three were separated by less than a half-a-second before a late full-course caution on Lap 75.

On the re-start, Pruett maintained his third position heading into Turn One when he was hit from behind by David Donohue and sent spinning into another car and knocked off the track. The #01 car was able to limp around the track before pulling into the pits and retiring to an eventual 12th-place finish.

The Rolex Sports Car Series returns next Sunday, May 3 at the New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville, New Jersey, with coverage live on SPEED beginning at 1 p.m. EDT.

Lexus Race Results, Start/Finish

#01 Pruett/Rojas, Telmex/Target Lexus 1/12

Notes

– Today's race marks the first time that the #01 Lexus finished outside of the top-10 in six trips to Virginia International Raceway, the #01 Ganassi Lexus previously had four top-three podium finishes including a pair of victories – in 2005 with Scott Pruett and Luis Diaz behind the wheel and last season with Pruett and Rojas teaming up. The team also placed second in 2004, third in 2006 and eighth in 2007.

– With the 12th-place finish today, the #01 team drops to fourth in points, nine behind the leader.

Drivers Championship		
1.	Donohue/Law	60
2.	Gurney/Fogarty	59
4.	**Pruett/Rojas**	**51**

Team Championship		
1.	Brumos #58	**60**
2.	Gainsco/Stallings Racing	**59**
4.	**Chip Ganassi Racing**	**51**
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Manufacturer's Championship		
1.	Porsche	60
1.	Ford	60
3.	Pontiac	59
4.	**Lexus**	**51**
5.	BMW	50

Quotes

Memo Rojas, #01 Telmex Lexus: "We had an early problem with a flat-spot on one of our tires, but other than that everything ran smooth. The car was great and the Lexus engine was strong. There really wasn't a strategy in staying out, it was simply that we weren't slowing down and our tires weren't a problem. It's definitely hot out there, but it really wasn't a problem – and it's the same for everyone. (On contact with Max Angelelli in passing on Lap 38) I pulledto the inside going into Turn 1 and then he just came down on me a little bit – nothing major."

Scott Pruett, #01 Telmex Lexus: "We overcome a tough break on the tire early and Memo ran a great race and the team did a great job in getting us back up front. We were conserving fuel for most of that last stint. We were in a good position in third, I don't really know if I had something for the leaders, but I would have liked to find out. Then we just got blatantly punted going into one on that re-start. I expected more out of (David) Donohue and more out of Grand-Am."