

Lexus RC F GT3s Look to Finish Season Strong at Road Atlanta

October 10, 2019



BRASELTON, Ga. (October 10, 2019) – Lexus and AIM VASSER SULLIVAN (AVS) are set to compete in the IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship season-finale Petit Le Mans at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta on Saturday.

The AVS Lexus RC F GT3 No. 12 and No. 14 entries will feature a trio of drivers racing in the 10-hour endurance event around the 12-turn, 2.54-mile road course. The No. 12 Lexus will include full-season drivers Townsend Bell and Frankie Montecalvo, with the addition of endurance racer Aaron Telitz. Telitz has raced in all endurance events with the AVS No. 12 this season, including being part of a runner-up finish at the season-opening Rolex 24 at Daytona.

Full-time drivers, Jack Hawksworth and Richard Heistand, will be joined by AVS newcomer Parker Chase in the No. 14 RC F GT3. Eighteen-year-old Chase joins AVS after having competed in seven previous IMSA events. The 2016 Pirelli World Challenge Rookie of the Year earned the Pirelli World Challenge GT SprintX Pro/Am Championship last year and has also competed in the Red Bull Rallycross Series and IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup previously.

In just the first season competing with two Lexus RC F GT3 entries, AVS has enjoyed quite a bit of success in the team's first season in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. The AVS entries have combined to earn two wins, five podium finishes, nine top-fives and 15 top-10 results in 10 races this season. Hawksworth and Heistand scored back-to-back wins at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course and Detroit's Raceway at Belle Isle Park earlier this year, while Townsend Bell and Frankie Montecalvo have teamed up to earn three podium finishes in their first season driving a Lexus.

Lexus currently sits fourth in the overall GTD manufacturer standings and clinched second place in the new GTD Sprint Cup Manufacturer's championship that was decided in the final sprint race of the season at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca last month. Bell and Montecalvo currently sit sixth in the overall IMSA GTD championship standings, while Hawksworth and Heistand are seventh heading into the season-finale at Road Atlanta.

Heistand currently leads the Bob Akin Award standings heading into the final race of 2019, holding a four-point advantage over second place. The Bob Akin Award is given to the highest-placed eligible GTD driver in the season-ending point standings. The 36-year-old Florida native earned his first career IMSA pole position at Mid-Ohio in May and teamed up with Hawksworth to register two victories and five top-five finishes in his first full-season of IMSA competition. Heistand competed in the Porsche Super Cup series in Germany last year after having not raced for nearly 10 years.

Saturday's race at Road Atlanta will be broadcast live on NBC, beginning at 12:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. EDT before switching over to the NBC Sports App until live coverage resumes on NBCSN at 5:30 p.m. EDT until the conclusion of the event. The race action will also be live on the NBC Sports App and NBCSports.com throughout its entirety. Fans can also follow Lexus Racing on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) by using #LexusRCF GT3, #LexusPerformance and #LexusRacing, and online at www.Lexus.com/Motorsports.

AIM VASSER SULLIVAN Driver Quotes

JACK HAWKSWORTH, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you looking forward to racing the Lexus RC F GT3 at the Petit Le Mans on Saturday?

"I'm really looking forward to the Petit Le Mans. It is the final race of the year, but also one of the highlights. We had a very productive test at the circuit recently and our Lexus RC F GT3 cars should very much suit the characteristics of the track. We'll need to work hard over the weekend to maximize our potential and try to put our RC F's ahead of the competition. Welcome to Parker (Chase), who will be joining us as the endurance driver in the No. 14 for this race. I think alongside myself, Richard (Heistand) and the AVS team that we will have a great chance of making something happen! We will be aiming to finish the year with two cars on the podium and third in the Manufacturer's championship for Lexus. Thank you to the whole AVS team and everyone at Lexus for all their handwork and support throughout the past season."

RICHARD HEISTAND, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

What has your experience been like racing in your first full IMSA season?

"It's crazy to think we are some days away from the final race of the year. It feels like yesterday I showed up to the Michelin tire test at Daytona almost terrified. I had never been a part of something so big! It turned out to be an incredible year in many ways for all of us at AIM VASSER SULLIVAN. At the same time, it feels like we're going into the final race at a bit of a low point. Things just haven't gone our way down the stretch and the

feeling that gives us doesn't really fit the kind of season I believe we've had. I think we are all very motivated to end the year at Petit Le Mans on a high and remind everyone what a force we've been this season."

PARKER CHASE, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you looking forward to joining AIM VASSER SULLIVAN for the season-finale Petit Le Mans?

"I'm thrilled to get things kicked off with AIM VASSER SULLIVAN this weekend at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. The Lexus RC F GT3 has always been a fast race car at Road Atlanta on top of the pace thus far that they've had this year. I've only raced once at Road Atlanta in 2017, but suffered some issues, so I'm hoping for a good return this weekend."

TOWNSEND BELL, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Do you enjoy racing at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta?

"Road Atlanta is another great North American track that we get to race at. I've been racing at Road Atlanta since 1998 and back before we had simulators, I can remember signing up for a track day there and bringing a rental car there to learn the race track. It's a great race track and I look forward to ending the season with a solid finish along with Frankie (Montecalvo) and Aaron (Telitz)."

FRANKIE MONTECALVO, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you looking forward to racing the Lexus RC F GT3 in the Petit Le Mans this weekend?

"I can't believe this is already our last race of the season. Nevertheless, going into the Petit Le Mans, I cannot be happier. The Petit Le Mans is actually the first ever sports car race I attended as a fan. This race is truly amazing with the beautiful track and the fans that make this event the whole package. I've had the pleasure of racing Petit five times over the years with a best finish of third in class. This year's Petit will be my first in the Lexus RC F GT3 and with AIM VASSER SULLIVAN. The Lexus RC F GT3 should be very strong at Road Atlanta with this track suiting our cars characteristics well. I have great confidence with this team and driver line up that we will make a competitive push for the top step on Saturday."

AARON TELITZ, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you excited to get back behind the wheel of the No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3 at Road Atlanta?

"I can't wait to get back behind the wheel of the AIM VASSER SULLIVAN Lexus RC F at Road Atlanta. It's been a long time since Watkins Glen, but I've had some Indy Lights races to keep me fresh. I really want to finish the season strong with Townsend (Bell) and Frankie (Montecalvo). I feel like we have a great shot at a podium. I have some fond memories at Road Atlanta early in my career so I'm hoping to add to them this weekend."