

Lexus RC F GT3 Scores Top-Five Finish in Six Hours of Racing at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta

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BRASELTON, Ga. (September 8, 2020) – The AIM VASSER SULLIVAN (AVS) No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3 earned a fifth-place result in Saturday’s IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship race at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta with drivers Townsend Bell, Frankie Montecalvo and Aaron Telitz. The No. 14 RC F GT3 finished in 10th-place with drivers Jack Hawksworth, Michael de Quesada and Daniel Morad in the six-hour endurance event at the 12 turn, 2.54-mile road course.

Montecalvo led the GTD class to the green flag in the No. 12 Lexus after earning his second pole position of the season. Montecalvo ran in the top five for much of his time in the Lexus before Telitz took over for a double stint. Bell ran the last two hours and fought hard to finish in fifth place to give the No. 12 RC F GT3 its fifth top-five result of the season.

After not having driven the Lexus RC F GT3 since the season-opening Rolex 24 at Daytona in January, de Quesada started the race in ninth in the No. 14 Lexus and made his way up to second place during his double stint. Morad then took command of the No. 14 Lexus and ran within the top-10 before turning driving duties over to Hawksworth for the final two hours of the race. However, shortly after an on-track incident caused a flat tire and damage to the No. 14 Lexus and Hawksworth was forced to the garage for repairs. He returned to the track and finished in 10th to record the sixth consecutive top-10 finish for the No. 14 team this season.

Lexus is currently second in the overall GTD manufacturer championship point standings following six IMSA races so far this season. The AVS No. 14 Lexus is currently second in the overall GTD championship standings while the No. 12 RC F GT3 sits third in the points.

Saturday’s race marked the second of four endurance events on the 2020 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship schedule with the series returning to Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta in October for the 10-hour Petit Le Mans. This year, the season will wrap up in November at Sebring International Raceway for the Twelve Hours of Sebring that was rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lexus and AIM VASSER SULLIVAN are scheduled to compete next at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on Sunday, September 27 in a two hour and 40-minute sprint race. To follow all of the racing action, follow Lexus Racing on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) by using #LexusRCF GT3, #LexusPerformance and #LexusRacing.

AIM VASSER SULLIVAN Driver Quotes

TOWNSEND BELL, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your race today?

“I had an earplug issue, so I had to go to some old plugs that turned out to be really old and don’t fit my ears anymore. All of the engine noise was coming in and I couldn’t hear the radio during my two stints so that was a struggle. Nevertheless, the Lexus RC F GT3 was pretty good at the start and then really just gave it everything that we had but just couldn’t hang on to some of those other cars out there so that’s a little frustrating. On a day like that to still come home fifth it’s really a credit to Frankie (Montecalvo) and Aaron (Telitz) to keep the car up there. I just couldn’t do anything there at the end. We had some troubles with a few different areas and just nothing for the guys up front. The AIM VASSER SULLIVAN guys did everything right, we just didn’t have much of a fight there at the end.”

FRANKIE MONTECALVO, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your race after leading the GTD field to the green flag in today’s race?

“It was great to qualify up front. As everyone saw there was some mayhem on the start with cars spinning everywhere. I was on the inside and it kind of stacked up a little bit so I lost the position and fell back to P2 in the first corner. Everyone did their jobs today. We gave it all we had out there, but we just didn’t have the all-out pace. I would say that’s probably the hardest top-five finish we’ve ever had. Everyone was crashing and hitting each other, and we stayed out of trouble fairly well. It was warm out there today. It started to cool off a little bit toward the end of the run. It wasn’t easy. Just pushing lap after lap and traffic made it difficult. It was a hard

fought one today.”

AARON TELITZ, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Can you talk about your stints in the Lexus RC F GT3 at Road Atlanta?

“I finally got some good laps here at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. We were on it every lap as hard as we could. Trying to keep up with some of the other cars out there was just really tough for us. We were giving it our all and that was just all that we had. Frankie (Montecalvo) did a great job qualifying up front and keeping us upfront for his stint. When I got in, I struggled a little bit in my first stint with some traffic, but just kept driving the wheels off our Lexus RC F GT3. Last year, we exited early in the Petit Le Mans, so it was good to finally get a lot of laps under my belt here in the Lexus RC F GT3.”

JACK HAWKSWORTH, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

What happened during your first stint in today’s race?

“It wasn’t much of a stint. Michael (de Quesada) and Daniel (Morad) kept the car clean all day and we got lucky with a caution, so I got in the car and we started in the fourth position for the final two hours of the race. Shortly into my stint, the guy in third made a mistake and I was able to get in third, but unfortunately, we were struggling for straight-line speed. Although our lap times were good, we were always struggling to protect from the cars behind. Coming over the hill off the chicane I think the 16 car touched our right front tire and then we just lost all the pressure in our right front tire, got a flat tire and then the tire destroyed some of the body work. The AIM VASSER SULLIVAN crew rushed to get it back together and get us back out on the track to finish the race.”

MICHAEL de QUESADA, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

Can you talk about your race?

“There’s two sides to this race. There’s the selfish side when you’re thinking about yourself and your performance and then there’s the team side. Obviously, from AIM VASSER SULLIVAN side, it was really good and then we had some struggles and something Jack (Hawksworth) couldn’t control, but it happens in racing. No fault of his own and we just keep moving forward as a team. From the personal side, I had a tough qualifying and definitely had to think about that one all night to get over it. We came back today, and I settled in and once I was comfortable, I could be a little bit more aggressive than usual. It worked out. I think I brought the car in fourth and then unfortunately we had a small fueling issue, which they worked out quickly afterwards. Daniel did a great job, running consistent laps and making no mistakes. Then, unfortunately what happened with Jack was out of our control. I haven’t driven in six or seven months and I’ve only driven the Lexus RC F GT3 in one race before, so it was a big learning curve. When Frankie put nine-tenths on me in qualifying it got me thinking hard. I had to study up last night and I learned a lot and found a lot of pace in today’s race and take that back here to Petit Le Mans. That’s a big race and hopefully we can come out on top.”

DANIEL MORAD, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your first experience driving the Lexus RC F GT3 in today’s race?

“The first stint was really nice because it was my first proper, long run in the car. I only had just under 15 laps of running this weekend before jumping in the car for the race so just getting comfortable and familiarizing myself with the progression of the tire and obviously the Lexus RC F GT3. The second stint was nice because I kind of pulled the pin a little bit more and just sent it. The pace was really good in the second run. I was able to get comfortable with all of the controls, saving fuel and passed it on to Jack (Hawksworth) in good shape and in good track position. Really happy with my stint and nice to join AIM VASSER SULLIVAN and nice to drive a Lexus finally after seeing them on track all of the time so it’s good to be on this side of the fence.”

What was your favorite thing about driving the Lexus RC F GT3 this weekend?

“What I liked about the Lexus is that it really suits a formula car style of driving. That’s been my junior career. I very much hold onto that and I like the high force driving style. The Lexus is unbelievable in the high-speed

corners and a very stable platform. I think it suited me really well because I jumped in it and within a few laps was already comfortable on pace. I think that's its unique strength and it doesn't look too bad out on the track either."

How would you rate your performance after your first start with AIM VASSER SULLIVAN?

"It's hard to say. I didn't have much time. Obviously two stints is great, but I feel like I'm just getting started. Every lap I turn is just getting better and better and more comfortable. It's been great working with Jack (Hawksworth) and all of the AIM VASSER SULLIVAN guys. They've really helped me get up to speed really quickly and made me feel comfortable. It's too bad what happened out there because I just want to keep going. A little bit of bad luck, but it's something you can't control. Performance-wise we all executed to perfection essentially. Considering we didn't finish in a good position on track, I'm pleased with everyone's performance and I think we can hold our heads high."