

Kamui Kobayashi to Join Lexus Vasser Sullivan Lineup for Canada

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BOWMANVILLE, Ontario, Canada (June 29, 2022) – Lexus and Vasser Sullivan travel north of the border to compete in an IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship sprint race at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (CTMP) on Sunday.

Kamui Kobayashi will substitute for Jack Hawksworth in Canada as he recovers from injury. He will partner together with Ben Barnicoat in the GTD PRO Vasser Sullivan No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3 entry for the two-hour and 40-minute race. Kobayashi is a two-time World Endurance champion and has been driving in WEC for Toyota Gazoo Racing since 2016. The Hyogo, Japan native has an impressive resume having raced globally in Formula 1, WEC, Super Formula and IMSA among other series. He was victorious in the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2021 and is the course record holder at the famed circuit. Kobayashi has also scored overall wins in the Rolex 24 at Daytona in 2019 and 2020.

Barnicoat has secured two podium finishes in his first full-time season competing in IMSA's GTD PRO category, including back-to-back second-place finishes with Hawksworth at Long Beach and WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca. He also earned his first career IMSA win at Detroit in June, driving in the GTD class with Kyle Kirkwood. The No. 14 Lexus currently sits second in the GTD PRO standings and Lexus ranks second in the manufacturer's championship.

Aaron Telitz and Frankie Montecalvo return to the No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3 for the fifth sprint race of the season. The driver duo has earned two podium finishes this season with third-place results on the streets of Long Beach and in the Lexus Grand Prix at Mid-Ohio. Telitz will make his first Canada start while Montecalvo finished on the podium there in 2019. The No. 12 Lexus ranks fifth in the overall GTD standings and third in the IMSA GTD Sprint Cup.

It marks the first time since 2019 that the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship returns to the 10-turn, 2.459-mile road course. CTMP was the site of the first pole for the Lexus RC F GT3 in North America in 2017. Lexus has also earned two podium finishes at the Canadian road course. In 2018, Dominik Baumann and Kyle Marcelli finished second in the GTD class in 2018, while Montecalvo and Townsend Bell scored a third-place result there in 2019 for Vasser Sullivan.

Live flag-to-flag coverage of Sunday's race can be viewed on NBC at 3:00 p.m. ET. To follow all of the racing action, follow Lexus Racing on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) by using #LexusRCFGT3, #LexusPerformance, and #LexusRacing.

Vasser Sullivan Driver Quotes

KAMUI KOBAYASHI, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you looking forward to racing in the Lexus RC F GT3 in Canada this weekend?

"I'm thankful for the opportunity to drive the Lexus RC F GT3 with Vasser Sullivan this weekend in Canada. I wish Jack (Hawksworth) a good recovery from his injury and hope he is back in the car soon. Obviously, my experience is quite low in a GT car. It's going to be quite different than what I'm used to driving and it's going to be challenging, but I'm excited to see how well the RC F handles. I have a lot of support from the Vasser Sullivan team, Lexus and TRD, USA to help make me comfortable going to Canada. It will be a challenge, but I'm looking forward to it."

BEN BARNICOAT, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

What is your outlook for racing in Canada this weekend after a top-five finish at Watkins Glen?

“It’s great to be heading straight to Canada on the back of a positive endurance race at Watkins Glen International where we showed great pace in the Vasser Sullivan No. 14 SealMaster Lexus RC F GT3. We’ll be looking to continue the momentum going into Canada. I’m extremely excited to be sharing a car with Kamui (Kobayashi). He was a Formula 1 driver when I was growing up, coming through the ranks of motorsports so that’s going to be an amazing opportunity for me to share our Lexus with a driver of his caliber and also help guide him with our RC F GT3. We’re aiming to have a strong weekend and continue pressing on for the championship as we head into the second half of the season.”

AARON TELITZ, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you looking forward to your first time racing at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park?

“I’m really looking forward to racing at CTMP for the first time in my career! I’ve heard great things about the track and it’s my teammate Frankie’s favorite track on the schedule. It will be great to get back north of the boarder for the first time since 2019 as well!”

FRANKIE MONTECALVO, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Do you enjoy racing at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park?

“It’s been two years since last racing in Canada. Mosport is my favorite track in North America and the Lexus RC F GT3 is a perfect platform for this high-speed circuit. The Vasser Sullivan team is in sync after Watkins Glen and ready to fight for a win.”