

Vasser Sullivan Scores First Endurance Win for Lexus at Petit Le Mans

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BRASELTON, Ga. (October 1, 2022) – Jack Hawksworth, Ben Barnicoat and Kyle Kirkwood earned the first endurance victory for Lexus in Saturday’s Petit Le Mans at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta in the season-finale of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. With the win, Lexus and the Vasser Sullivan No. 14 team clinched the GTD PRO IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup trophy for the Road Atlanta event.

Hawksworth started the race from pole and the No. 14 RC F GT3 ran among the leaders throughout the entire 10-hour endurance event. The trio of drivers combined to lead a class-high 211 laps (of 386) around the 12-turn, 2.54-mile Georgia road course enroute to the historic victory. Hawksworth had an intense battle with Porsche and Ferrari down the stretch for an epic finish to the 10-hour event.

The win is the first endurance race victory for Lexus and Vasser Sullivan and marks the 12th win for the Lexus RC F GT3 in IMSA competition.

In the GTD class, the No. 12 RC F GT3 was taken out of the race in hour four while running second when a DPi competitor aggressively made contact with Aaron Telitz and the Lexus made hard contact into the tire barrier. Telitz, Frankie Montecalvo and Richard Heistand started the race 5th in the GTD class and ran among the top five majority of their time on track, combining to lead 15 laps. The No. 12 went on to finish 13th in the GTD class.

Lexus and Vasser Sullivan combined to earn three GT wins this season, nine podium results and four pole positions. Hawksworth and Barnicoat scored the first GTD PRO win for Lexus earlier this season at Road America.

The Petit Le Mans concludes the 2022 race season. Lexus finished second in the GTD PRO manufacturer’s championship, and the Vasser Sullivan No. 14 Lexus team finished second in the IMSA GTD PRO championship.

The 2023 season will kick off with the Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway on Saturday, January 28, 2023. 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

JACK HAWKSWORTH, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

How does it feel to be the 2022 Petit Le Mans winners?

“Unbelievable! It was an absolute fight out there today. All of the Vasser Sullivan boys just kept fighting all day. Ben (Barnicoat), Kyle (Kirkwood), myself – we just got after it there. To get Lexus their first endurance win – this has been six years in the making. It’s something really special. I’m a bit overwhelmed. Thank you to my teammates, to the whole Vasser Sullivan team and everyone involved. It’s an amazing day.”

BEN BARNICOAT, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

How excited are you to win the 2022 Petit Le Mans?

“What a day! You can see how much this means to everyone here. The whole Lexus family. I joined them a year ago and to be able to do this at my first Petit Le Mans is incredible. I couldn’t have done it without Jack (Hawksworth) and Kyle (Kirkwood) and this entire Vasser Sullivan team. It’s amazing!”

KYLE KIRKWOOD, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

What does it mean to win the 2022 Petit Le Mans?

“This is probably the biggest moment in my racing career. It’s been a long time coming for Lexus and Vasser Sullivan. It’s a dream come true for us. It’s all due to all the hard work that happens behind the scenes by this Vasser Sullivan team that no one sees. Jack (Hawksworth) is the one who has been there since day one. He’s developed this car and he’s the one that went out there and got that win for us. It’s been an absolutely incredible moment. I’ve never seen a team so happy to win and I’m so proud to be a part of it. It’s been three years for me now. We’ve been close so many times and tonight it finally came true for us.”

AARON TELITZ, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

What happened to take you out of the race early?

“It was a pretty disappointing day today to end the 2022 season for 12 car for Vasser Sullivan and Lexus. I got taken out by a prototype car who made a ridiculous move early in the race. We weren’t even halfway through the race. I feel bad for the guys that this is the ending to our season. To be fair, it feels like that was the story of our season. Just bad luck. It took us out of a few race wins that we could’ve had and possibly being in championship contention. We’ll reset and recuperate over the winter and get ready to come back swinging in 2023.”

FRANKIE MONTECALVO, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

Are you disappointed to end your season this way?

“That’s a tough way to end the season. I feel like if we didn’t have bad luck, we wouldn’t have any luck at all. It just stinks — it was the icing on our cake for the year. We’ve all done everything right and we just keep getting caught out in stuff out of our control. I’m glad to see Aaron (Telitz) is alright. The team did a phenomenal job! We were up front the entire time we were in the race. Richard (Heistand) had a great start and Aaron was just getting into his stints and running perfect, so it really stinks for the team and for everyone out here that puts so much hard work into it.”

RICHARD HEISTAND, No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your experience racing in the four endurance events for Vasser Sullivan this year?

“It’s just been a tough year. I’ve done the four endurance races. Unfortunately, we were out early at Daytona and then got unlucky with the red at Watkins Glen. We were competitive at Sebring but had some mistakes there and could’ve done better. Here again, we looked competitive and got caught out of the race again. It’s been a tough year where you put in a lot of effort and did a lot of things well. It’s a hard one to swallow. I’m happy that Aaron is okay after that big hit.”