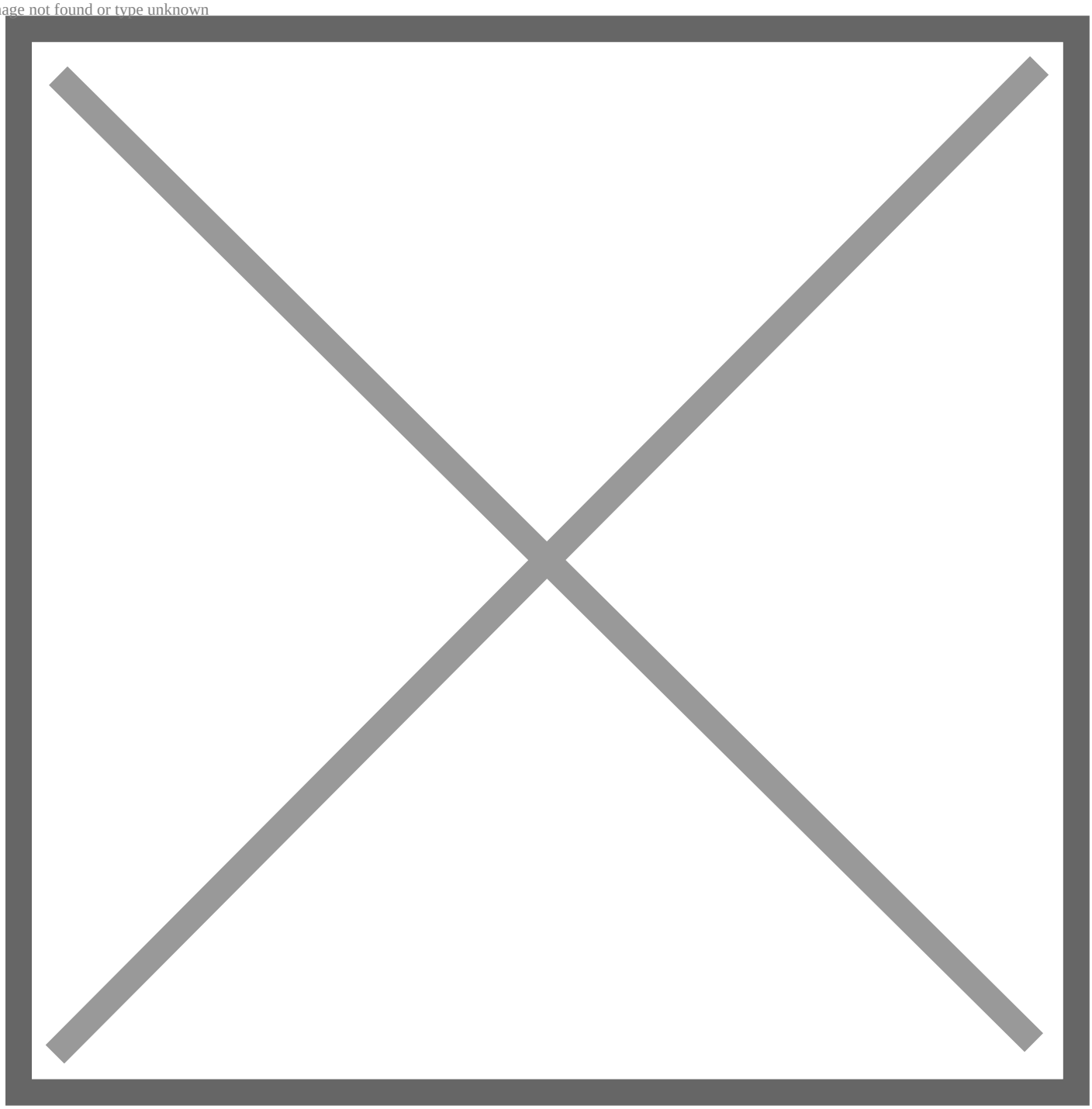
Lexus Driver Aaron Telitz on Embracing Setbacks and Why Prioritizing Fun Fuels Him

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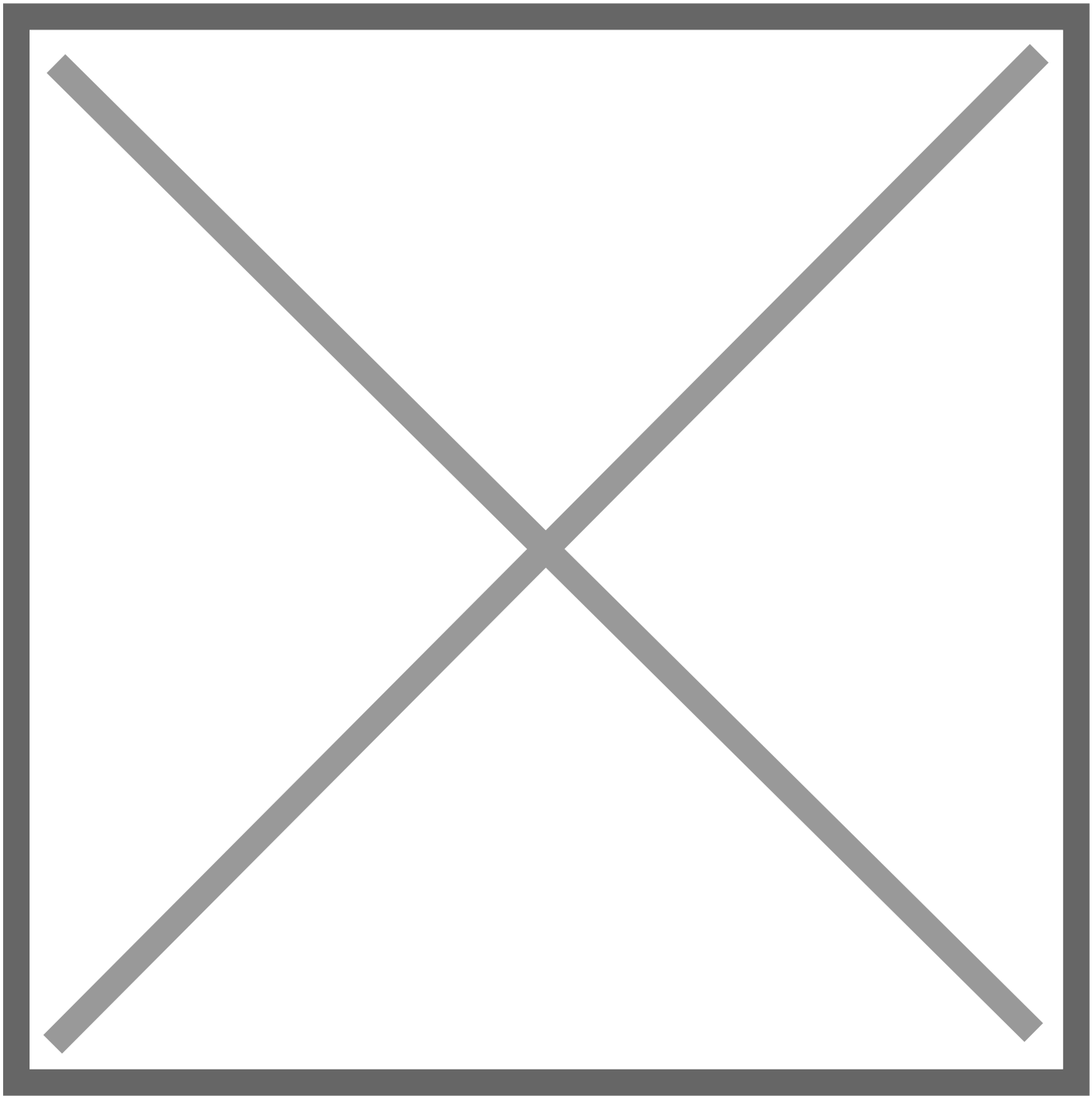
Lexus racer Aaron Telitz began his motorsports journey in go-karts, igniting his passion for the sport at just eight years old.

“I had an older brother who was racing go-karts, and you obviously see your older brother racing karts, and you want to do it too,” he says. “I loved it from the very beginning.”

For the Wisconsin native, the adrenaline-fueled sport remained a hobby until college, when things truly shifted into high gear.

“In college I finally got to try and race cars for the first time, and I won my first-ever car race when I was 20 years old, maybe 21 years old,” he says. “I was a late bloomer into cars, but then I just took it from there.”

Accelerating Forward



Telitz’s career certainly accelerated. He’s now in his sixth season with Vasser Sullivan and is co-driving the No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3 in the GTD PRO class with Ben Barnicoat this season. This year marks the first season for Telitz in IMSA’s GTD PRO category.

Last month, Ben Barnicoat and Telitz earned a fifth-place result in the GTD PRO category in the No. 14 Lexus.

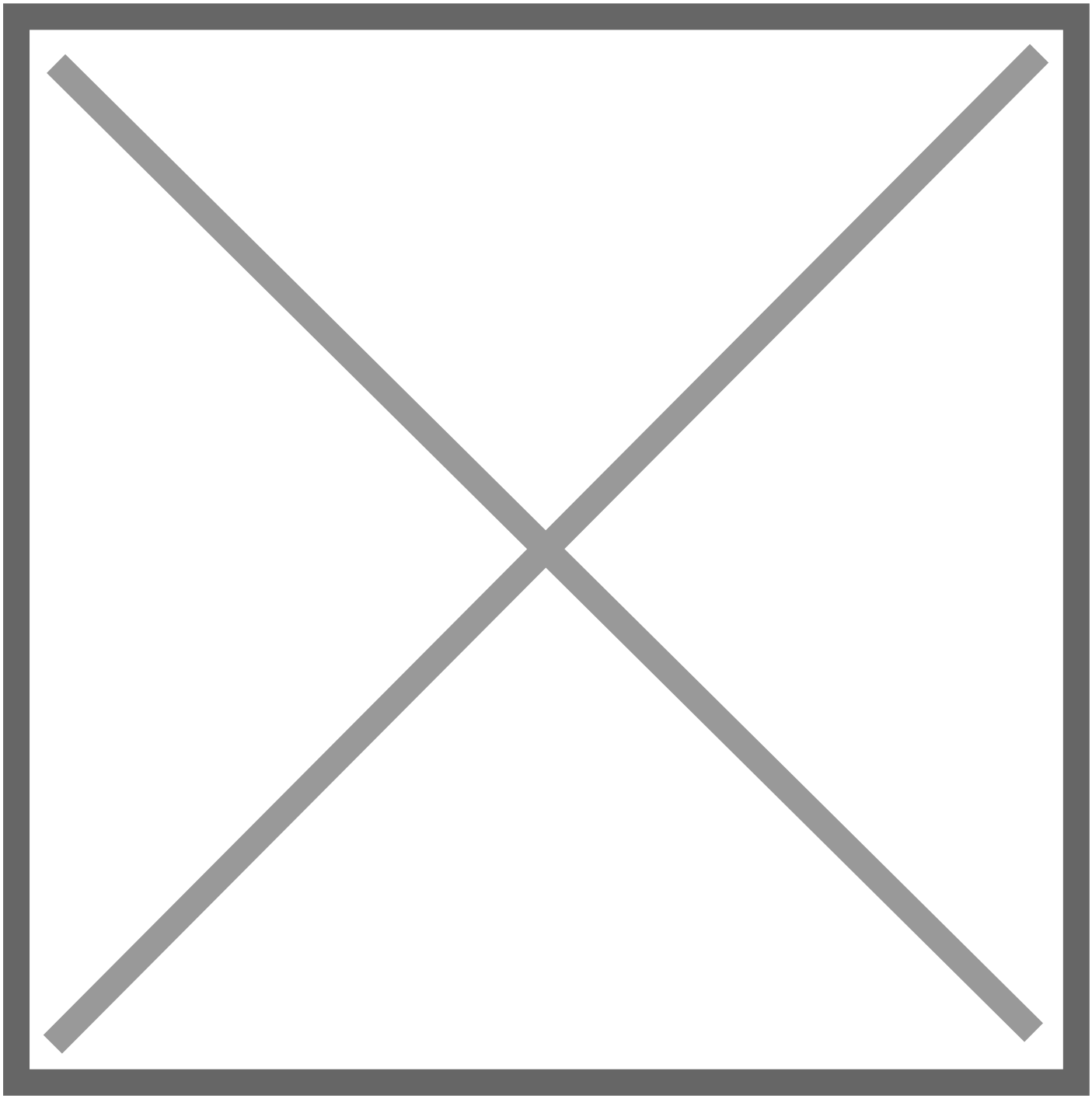
To date, he’s had 76 starts, 5 wins, 16 podiums and 5 poles. While he’s had many successes, nothing stands out more than those first victories.

“My first win was really memorable. It was at Daytona International Speedway during COVID,” says Telitz. “We had just come back off of COVID break and it was the first race back, and Jack (Hawksworth) and I teamed up for the first time, and we won the race starting up front. That was a really good feeling.”

The highlights continued, with many more unforgettable moments to follow.

“I think the biggest one was the double win for Lexus and Vasser Sullivan at Watkins Glen in 2023 when the 12 car and the 14 car won on the same day—that was incredible,” he says of another career highlight. “To get both cars’ winning the race, it’s obviously not an easy thing to do. It was the first time and only time so far for it to happen for Lexus Racing.”

Fun as Fuel



Accomplishing those kinds of feats takes skill, dedication and tremendous focus. For Telitz, there's another element that takes him across the finish line: fun.

"Mentally, it's a lot of not feeling the pressure of a race weekend," he says. "If it's going to be a race weekend and you've got sponsor obligations going on, it's just finding a way to still have fun with it mentally. If you're having fun, you are going to perform better at the racetrack and not get caught up in the pressure."

The Power of No

Although wins and staying the course are key, there will always be obstacles that the fiercest competitors must

overcome.

Telitz believes that embracing setbacks is the best way to move forward.

“In life in general, you’ll get told no a lot, and in racing it’s no different,” he says. “I’ve had moments in racing, whether it’s a sponsor who has told me no or a race team that has said no — you use it as fuel.”

He adds, “It’s not a door shut in your face, that’s just an opportunity to keep going and to keep pressing on with your dream. So, anytime I’ve been told no, it’s always led to something better along the way. I’ve always been able to keep going and not let it stop me.”