

Rolex 24 at Daytona - Daytona International Speedway -January 28-29, 2017

January 30, 2017

Image not found or type unknown



- 3GT Racing's No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3 finished 14th in the GTD class (36th overall) in the Rolex 24 at Daytona, marking the debut of the RC F GT3 in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and Lexus' return to North American sports car racing. Drivers Robert Alon, Austin Cindric Dominik, Farnbacher and Jack Hawksworth piloted the No. 15 Lexus entry.
- Farnbacher (15 laps) and Hawksworth (11) each took turns leading the GTD class in the 24-hour race.
- Hawksworth turned the fastest lap in the No. 15 Lexus – a lap of 1:48.241 on the 3.56-mile road course.
- The No. 14 Lexus finished 27th in class (54th overall) after an early incident forced the race car to retire while Scott Pruett was piloting the RC F GT3. Drivers Ian James, Sage Karam and Gustavo Menezes did not make laps in the 24-hour race.

ROBERT ALON, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your first race with 3GT Racing?

“Our race went really well. The Lexus was great. I think we had a car that could possibly win. We were up front two different times, but suffered two tire failures that I believe didn't have anything to do with us, but we gave it everything we had and I think we did a pretty good job. Honestly, the team just – you could tell they are going to do anything they can to keep us going and keep us in the right direction. The Lexus was awesome – a brand new car running that long, mechanically having pretty much no issues at all was amazing for its first 24-hour race ever. It was very, very impressive.”

AUSTIN CINDRIC, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your experience racing with the Lexus RC F GT3 in your first Rolex 24 at Daytona?

“Definitely a crazy race for the No. 15 Lexus. We started out and we were strong and moved into the top-10 by the end of my triple stint there and once the rain started coming down Jack (Hawksworth) and Dominik (Farnbacher) moved us into the lead which was really cool. Unfortunately, we had a few tire issues but a 24-hour race with a brand new race car, if that's the only thing that's going to relegate us a lap down I think that's really impressive and very representative for what this program has in the future.”

DOMINIK FARNBACHER, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

How was your first race with 3GT Racing?

“First off of all, thank you – arigato – that's how you say it in Japanese. It was a big effort for the whole team. The goal was to finish the race and we did that, so the minimum goals were achieved. Too bad that we lost a car, the first car, early on, but nevertheless we put both crews together, we combined our experience from both cars and the crews worked fantastically together and combined forces to lead the second car through the night and to the goal. It was a good race despite all the little incidents we had – the tire blow outs and small issues – but we finished the race and to see all the smiling faces here it's a pretty good impression. I mean, the car has never done a 24-hour race before, so this was more or less the glory race for it.”

JACK HAWKSWORTH, No. 15 Lexus RC F GT3

What does it mean to you and the 3GT Racing team to finish the Rolex 24 at Daytona?

“It's a big accomplishment really when you think this is the first race of the Lexus RC F and it just happens it's the 24-hour one, so the hardest race on the schedule and the biggest test and I think we can be pretty proud of it. We led laps. We charged through the field in the rain. For me, if we wouldn't have let loose in the dry yesterday then we would've been very quick as well in both wet and dry conditions, so the Lexus was good in all conditions. I think we had two unfortunate blow outs on the rain tires which seemed to be kind of a theme and unfortunately one of the blow outs didn't cost us much, but the other blow out damaged the car significantly so it took a bit of time to prepare that and everything last night. But the guys got to work and did a good job to get us back out there and we got back on the track today. Had a few little issues that pop up and whatnot at the end of the race there, but the car was really strong all the way

through, so I think we can take pride in the fact that we led some laps, take pride in the fact that we finished and move forward to Sebring where I think we can hopefully put it all together and get a strong finish.”

SCOTT PRUETT, No. 14 Lexus RC F GT3

What caused your incident?

“Well, we were just rolling around. The Lexus was running. We were just putting in the hours, you know? Not exactly sure what took place. We were racing pretty hard there in a group. It felt like I got just a little nudge from behind. It could have been just the air taken off the rear wing cause we were in a pack or something, but it snapped pretty hard, pretty quick down in turn one and unfortunately it got into the fence on the left hand side, so I don’t know if we’ll get going again. You just feel disappointed for all the guys, all the team, everybody that’s put this thing together and this is not how you want to start.”

What emotions do you go through with an incident like this?

“Just disappointment. There’s so many people here that are a part of this program that have put so much energy and effort into getting here and then to have something like this happen it’s just frustrating. It’s not how you want to get things going.”

PAUL GENTILOZZI, team principal, 3GT Racing

How optimistic are you for the future of this program?

“I really am optimistic. We knew coming in we had a couple infrastructure hurdles – the front tire made it hard to tune the car to be effective – and we’re brand new to the series BOP. Now the series has a good database of information. It’s a long journey and we just made the first step and were in it for the full deal.”

How did you make the decision for John Gentilozzi to guide the No. 15 Lexus after the incident with the No. 14?

“Well, John (Gentilozzi, 3GT Racing technical director and son) and I have been on the radio opposite each other for near 20 years. He became my race engineer when he was 17 when I was a Trans-Am driver and John’s better at than I am. I mean, I’m okay. I’ve got experience in different areas. Things I know maybe are effective, but when it became one car, he’s my best guy. You know if you’ve got two quarterbacks, you send in the best quarterback. Simple as that.”

JOHN GENTILOZZI, technical director, 3GT Racing

How was the decision made for you to move from lead engineer for the No. 14 Lexus to the No. 15 after the incident?

“I think Paul (Gentilozzi, 3GT Racing principal and father) and I discussed it and I’ve got a lot of experience running the race operations side of things and I know the rule book really well and have had sort of every weird experience ever and, you know, he likes to take a little nap at three, four in the morning. He’s just done and he’s earned the right to go to bed, so at some point I was going to take over anyway and once I got in there, we just start grinding it out and our engineer and I had a really good relationship going and we just got it done.”