

One to go - with some unfinished business

AIM Autosport sets goals for season ending race in Utah

Woodbridge, Ontario - September 11, 2008: If momentum means anything, the final race in the Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 should be something special for the AIM Autosport team. Momentum has played a very big role since the race at Daytona back in July when Mark Wilkins recorded the team's first pole. Since then, The Exchange Traded Gold No. 61 Ford Riley has been on pole two more times, made three trips to the podium and led each of the last five races. In two of those races, Brian Frisselle would drive from the back of the pack to hand over the car in contention for a good result. Both resulted in podiums so yes, momentum must mean something and the hope is to carry that forward to the final race at Miller Motorsport Park next weekend.

Going into the race in Tooele, Utah, AIM Autosport sits fifth in the team championship. just six points out of third place. Mark and Brian are in a tie for ninth in the drivers' championship. Both are a far cry from being nineteenth after the Rolex 24 in January, but it has been a steady climb ever since. Starting in the top five twelve times certainly helps the cause but racing is also a tough master and on more than one occasion, gremlins (both mechanical and natural) have kept the No. 61 Ford Riley from reaching the intended goal. Each and every race however, the entire crew was back with stronger focus and greater dedication to get the job done. Then they knocked over that first domino with the win in Montreal. Now the goal is to cap off the season with a strong enough effort to move up a few positions and serve notice for 2009.

The good news is that Mark and Brian will have some assistance in reaching that goal in the 1000 kilometer race with the addition of Cristiano da Matta. The 2002 CART Champion and former F1 driver brings a level of technical expertise to the team and both Mark and Brian have expressed their excitement at learning from someone with da Matta's skills, technical insight and knowledge. Cristiano has expressed that he is excited to be joining with "these two young guys who are out there kicking butt right now."

Of course winning the race and keeping the appropriate cars a safe number of positions back, is job one, but there are a couple of other milestones to consider. Mark has the opportunity to tie for the most poles by a driver this season (three) and if he does so, it would bring a tie for the most poles by any team (four). AIM Autosport is also one of only two teams to record multiple wins in 2008 while Mark and Brian join only a handful of drivers making three or more trips to the podium. It should be an exciting weekend in Utah.

"Other than having an extra weekend off since New Jersey in what has been a hectic two month schedule, nothing has changed in the program," commented team principal Ian Willis. "For everyone at the shop, Miller is 'just the next race'

and we have the same goal in mind as if it were any other ... have a strong, fast car capable of winning. Of course there are some differences with the addition of Cristiano and the consensus is, this just makes us stronger." He continued, "Brian and Mark are certainly excited by the prospect of having Cristiano in the car while the crew know they have to bring their 'A' game like they always do. It will be a pretty fantastic way to close out the year and give us momentum going into '09."

The Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 is on track for the SunRichGourmet.com 1000 at Miller Motorsport Park in Tooele, Utah starting with official practice on Friday, September 19 starting at 10:20 a.m. PT (12:20 p.m. ET). The race is scheduled to start at 11:08 a.m. PT (1:08 p.m. ET) Saturday, September 20. The 1000 km race will be broadcast live on SPEED TV starting at 1:00 p.m. ET.

AIM Autosport Facts:

Established in 1995, AIM Autosport has a mandate to identify, train and manage emerging motorsport talent. AIM has provided many young drivers with a solid foundation on which to build a career in professional racing. The success of the AIM driver development programs has been achieved through the dedication of our employees and the ongoing support of our commercial and technical partners. Away from the track, AIM Autosport serves the needs of the racing community with a purpose-built preparation shop situated in the Toronto suburb of Woodbridge, Ontario. AIM fields the Exchange Traded Gold #61 Ford-Riley Daytona Prototype in the Rolex Grand Am series with drivers Mark Wilkins and Brian Frisselle. The team also competes in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear with John Edwards at the wheel of the #7 Formula Mazda.

Photo credit: Caitlin Fell

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