



## Michael Shank Racing Secures First Ever Podium at Home Race with Pew and Negri



*Dallara Proves very fast before traffic foils double podium late*

Michael Shank Racing Media Contact:  
Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management  
[Media@sundaymanagement.com](mailto:Media@sundaymanagement.com)

317-908-2985

--Photo Courtesy Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course--

(LEXINGTON, OH)18 June 2010-- Boasting history, proximity, and a huge roster of fans and family on hand, there was no question of who the home team was at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on Saturday evening as a chorus of cheers and applause greeted the team during the post-race podium celebrations.

Bucking years of bad racing luck at the home track, Saturday's EMCO Gears Classic saw John Pew and Ozz Negri finish on the podium with a hard fought second place with the No. 60 Crown Royal XR Ford-Riley, fighting back from a drive-through penalty to score the duo's second runner-up finish of the season and move to third in the team championship standings.

The sister No. 6 Michael Shank Racing Dallara-Ford finished fourth after a run to the podium was spoiled by GT traffic in the closing laps of the race.

The strong team result was a tremendous comeback after a huge team effort to be prepared to compete following the setback of Watkins Glen two weeks ago, with the double-top-four result feeling very close to a victory. And while it was not a win, it was certainly celebrated as such by the tremendous group of fans and supporters on hand for the race.

Pew drove the opening stint, starting from the 10th position on the grid in the Crown Royal XR machine and moving up early in the going. His strong stint was called short, though, as a standard GT pass ended with contact, and a drive through penalty for Pew as officials deemed the incident to be his fault. Unfortunately, it would not be the only time that GT traffic would frustrate the team. After subsequently turning the Crown Royal car over to Negri, he had his work cut out for him.

Negri took over and settled in for a long two-hour drive in sweltering heat with track temperatures as high 130 degrees. For the duration, Negri and his crew set out to methodically work a strategy, conserving fuel as much as possible. The strategy worked to perfection as Negri steadily made his way to the front, eventually moving ahead of a fuel-conserving Michael Valiante to takeover second place and keep it all the way to the finish.

"I have given Michael Shank Racing their first win, their first pole, and now their first podium at the home track and I can't tell you how grateful I feel to have this opportunity to race for this team, it is just incredible," said Negri. "My engineer-Dave Kanning-is just a genius. He called the perfect strategy. I have to admit I doubted it at the time in the car, but I trust him completely. It was amazing. John gave me a good car, and it was only getting better at the end and I was just saving fuel as much as I could.

"Dave Kanning did a great job with the strategy and had the numbers crunched and did it as usual," said Pew. "The track was pretty greasy during the first stint and the car was a handful for a little while. I had contact with a GT and sorry to the team for that, it was not what I meant to have happen. But we had a great comeback. Ozz drove his heart out, every lap. The whole team really deserves this. Too bad the No. 6 isn't up with us, but it is great for the team today."

For the 6 crew, simply making it to the grid was achievement of epic proportions. Since their Riley chassis was destroyed in the Watkins Glen conflagration, the team took up the charge with a chassis from Dallara, of which they had no previous experience.

In less than seven days, the car was built, given a brief shakedown test, and then sent off to duty at Mid-Ohio. The entire effort, from the loading of the car to the final sponsor decal preparations added by Mike Shank, was an all-hands-on-deck focus on success. The weekend was a hectic one on and off the track, as the team also entertained VIP guests from Ford, JDM Investment Counsel, CAP & Associates, and scores of friends and family.

When Brian Frisselle qualified in fifth place, the team had known they had turned a corner. By race day, Frisselle, taking the opening stint was in the thick of the fight for the podium from the drop of the green flag. He turned the car over to Valiante, and thanks to solid pit strategy that took full advantage of numerous yellows, was soon at the head of the race. In all, he would lead 14 laps, before the need to watch his fuel economy in order to avert another pit stop.

With only minutes remaining, a certain team 2-3 finish was spoiled when Valiante caught poorly-behaving GT traffic, and with the engine turned down to fuel conservation mode, was unable to defend. The 6 finished in fourth place, yet on pure speed could have come home much stronger.

"I don't know how you can put it to words, the dedication of the people in our group is just beyond anything I could expect," said team owner Mike Shank as he received congratulations from nearly everyone in the paddock. "It's just unbelievable how these guys came through and kept working and wouldn't stop working even when the car just was not great on Friday. They just kept going, and I'm just so pleased for everyone, we just needed this result.

"Ozz drove with everything he had, nothing left. Same with Michael. It's tough, I feel so badly for Michael and Brian, they did such a great job. Brian said right away, and I'm just so grateful. We were the best in class today, and this is certainly going to be a day to remember. But tomorrow morning, we start working on Daytona."

"Considering slow we were in the first session, nearly five seconds off the pace, and considering all of the

work it took by the entire team to even be here, this race was a victory,” offered Valiante after another trademark inch-perfect drive. “We finished fourth do to fuel economy strategy, but we had a car that should have finished second based on pure speed.”

“All told, fourth place for what this team has gone through is a great result,” said Frisselle. “We unloaded not the way we expected after the way our test went and we just battled through and had a great car in the race. Michael was in a tough situation, he had to save a lot of fuel. And we lost a spot at the end because of that, but still a great result for the team and all the partners--Ford, Dallara, and everyone at Michael Shank Racing.”

After round 7 of the 2010 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series, the number 60 moves into third place in the team championship battle while the 6 car sits 6th in the team standings.

The team will get some well-deserved rest, and immediately begin preparations for the Brumos 250 at Daytona on July 3rd.

Source: [www.michaelshankracing.com](http://www.michaelshankracing.com)  
[www.sundaymanagement.com](http://www.sundaymanagement.com)



#### **About Michael Shank Racing:**

Based in Columbus, Ohio, Michael Shank Racing was formed in 1989 when Mike Shank first began driving racing cars professionally. Shank retired from the cockpit in 1997 to focus his efforts on running the team, which quickly found success in the Champ Car Toyota Atlantic Championship. With several race wins under his belt, Shank was named as Team Owner of the Year twice in four years. Michael Shank Racing joined the Rolex Sports Car Series in 2004 as the team proved as quick in endurance racing as in the sprint formula car format. Michael Shank Racing scored a debut Rolex Series win in 2006 at Miller Motorsports Park, and fans selected the victory as the 2007 Rolex “Moment of the Year.” After opening the 2008 season with a front-row sweep of the Rolex 24 At Daytona, the team closed out the year taking wins in the final two races of the year.



#### **About Crown Royal Canadian Whisky:**

Crown Royal Canadian whisky is the number one selling Canadian whisky brand in the US by value and has a tradition as long and distinctive as its taste. Specially blended to commemorate a grand tour of Canada made by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain in 1939, Crown Royal Canadian whisky’s smooth, elegant style reflects its aristocratic origins and is considered the epitome of Canadian whisky.

For more information visit [www.crownroyal.com](http://www.crownroyal.com).

It’s about quality, not quantity.

#### **About Diageo:**

Diageo (Dee-AH-Gee-O) is the world's leading premium drinks business with an outstanding collection of

beverage alcohol brands across spirits, wines and beer categories. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Guinness, Smirnoff, J&B, Baileys, Cuervo, Tanqueray, Captain Morgan, Crown Royal, Beaulieu Vineyard and Sterling Vineyards wines. Diageo is a global company, trading in more than 180 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the New York Stock Exchange (DEO) and the London Stock Exchange (DGE). For more information about Diageo, its people, brands and performance, visit us at <http://www.diageo.com>. For our global resource that promotes responsible drinking through the sharing of best practice tools, information and initiatives, visit DRINKiQ.com. Celebrating life, every day, everywhere, responsibly.