

## **Strong race and early lead for Pacific Mobile No 61 Ford Riley Late race tire failure dashes hopes for a podium result**

(Birmingham, AL) 11 April 2010- The Pacific Mobile No 61 Ford Riley finished eighth in the Porsche 250 at Barber Motorsports Park and while that might not have been the result the team had hoped for, they are not disappointed with the performance of the car, In Fact, everyone on the team is very happy with the way the car performed considering that once again, the track at Barber required some last minute magic to get the setup that works on this challenging race course. At the end of the day, the Pacific Mobile No 61 Ford Riley recorded sixteen laps in the lead and was among the fastest cars on the circuit – especially in the closing laps.

Starting from seventh on the grid, Mark was up one position by the end of the first lap and less than half a second back of the fifth-place car. A caution on lap thirteen saw the leaders come in to the pits and the No 61 followed suit only taking on fuel and gaining track position. Sitting fifth at the green flag and just two-tenths back, Mark was on a charge and gained another spot when another car spun up front.

Another yellow four laps later and the team elected to leave Mark on track and the No 61 was now in first place. Mark held the lead for sixteen laps holding off the competition and working his way through traffic. With 38 laps on the tires, Mark finally pulled in for a green-flag pit stop that would now put the team on an alternate strategy to the rest of the field.

A full tank of Sunoco fuel, new set of Pirelli P-Zero tires and with Burt behind the wheel, the No 61 returned to the track in tenth spot. Over the next twenty laps, Burt kept pace with the leaders and worked his way forward eventually going to fifth and then third as once again, the leaders came to pit lane. Burt also brought the Pacific Mobile No 61 Ford Riley to pit lane for fuel and tires, which would be enough to take the team to the end of the race. Burt was now fifth and within striking distance of the leader. He would set successive fastest laps for the car (75-78) recording a 1:21.486 at 101.600 mph – fifth fastest in the race. He continued to close on the car ahead and that's when disaster struck.

In a battle for fourth spot, Burt flat-spotted the left front tire under heavy braking. The tire damage was severe and over a few laps it delaminated and blew forcing Burt to the pits on lap eighty-five. A quick change of the left front wheel and Burt was on his way, but the Pacific Mobile No 61 Ford Riley was back to eighth and well back of the seventh-place car. But this did not deter Burt who would close that gap by nearly twenty seconds over the final fifteen laps as he continually outpaced the leaders. Unfortunately, there was just not enough time left to close up and gain position and Burt brought the car home in eighth place.

"The team did a fantastic job and delivered a great car for the race," Burt said after the race. "We struggled through the practice sessions searching for the right setup and once again, Ian (Willis), Jim (Malicki) and the entire crew performed their magic overnight and we had an awesome race car today."

Burt continued, "The car was quick and we had pace. Mark had a very good stint and it was incredible to see him put the Pacific Mobile No 61 Ford Riley in the lead and keep it there even when he was on tires that had reached their limit. We are disappointed that we did not finish better but we are certainly not disappointed with what we had to race today. That should carry us into the next race with quite a bit of confidence."

Mark Wilkins commented, "The car was amazing and it was very quick today thanks to the AIM crew and the folks at Roush-Yates. Even when I was on old tires at the end of my stint, the car was just great to drive. I certainly had a lot of fun out there and I'm really looking forward to VIR in two weeks."

"The team and the drivers really showed their stuff today" said team principal Ian Willis. "Even

after the blown tire which put us back, Burt kept plugging away and was turning faster laps than the leaders at the end. These guys just don't give up. It was great for all of us on the team to see Mark put the car in the lead and we can all head to VIR with the knowledge that we can run up front once again. We now feel that first podium of 2010 is within our grasp."

The team now heads back to Toronto to prepare the car for the next race at Virginia International Raceway in two weeks. (April 24).

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#### AIM Autosport Facts:

Established in 1995, AIM Autosport's mandate is 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 No. 61 Ford Riley with drivers Mark Wilkins and Burt Frisselle in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series. The team also competes in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear and the Cooper Tires presents the USF2000 Series powered by Mazda. Both series are an integral part of the new Road to Indy driver development series. AIM won the 2008 Star Mazda Championship with driver John Edwards.

related web sites:

[www.aimautosport.com](http://www.aimautosport.com)

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