

Pacific Mobile/Biosign car finishes 3rd at Mid-Ohio Thrilling finish as AIM Autosport charges and nearly takes 2nd

Lexington, Ohio (2010.06.20) Every member of AIM Autosport's Grand-Am Daytona Prototype team is elated following a brilliant race to third place at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course yesterday. After being in the hunt throughout the 2h 45m timed race, a push in the final stages saw the Pacific Mobile/Bioisign No. 61 Ford Riley charge to the podium finish and, given another lap, could well have claimed second in the EMCO Gears Classic presented by Keybank. The result advances drivers Burt Frisselle and Mark Wilkins to 2nd in the Driver Championship while AIM Autosport moves into a tie for 7th in the Team Championship.

The race got underway shortly after its scheduled start time of 5:00pm ET and, thankfully, the rough weather that had threatened earlier subsided and gave way to a hot (84°F/29°C), sunny conditions.

Starting from 3rd, thanks to his superb qualifying effort on Friday, Burt quickly moved into 2nd place and kept pace with leader Memo Rojas in the Telmex car. Having targeted running with that dominant car on Wednesday, Burt surely relished having it in his sights now. For 14 laps, Burt chased the leader, the gap fluctuating as they surged past traffic from the GT class.

On lap 15, the first of six full-course cautions saw most cars head for the pits. Burt brought the car in for fuel, but at the end of the stop, the hot, sticky tires caused the car to bog down and stall as Burt dropped the clutch to leave the pits. Several cars rushed by while Burt re-fired the motor and he rejoined the race in 9th place.

Within four laps, Burt had fought his way to 6th place and by lap 23, had clawed his way to 3rd, just 2.995 seconds behind the leader. Ten laps later, still in third, he was just 1.283 seconds behind the leader.

On lap 35, Burt pitted during a full-course caution. While the crew added fuel and changed tires, Burt let Mark take the wheel for the run to the finish. The team sacrificed track position in order to take a full load of fuel and when Mark headed back into battle he was 9th.

Trying to chase down the Telmex car ahead of him and keep another car at bay, Mark had quite a chore. It's hard work, the sun was beating down, he was wearing a helmet and racing overalls, he had a hot engine at his back and, to top it off, his suit-cooling system wasn't working.

On lap 46, the team took advantage of another caution period to call Mark in for fuel. They checked his cool-suit system, but nothing could be done. He re-entered the race in 6th position, still sweltering.

By lap 50, Mark had advanced to 5th. Five laps later, another caution presented the opportunity to top off the tank and take new left-side tires. The Pacific Mobile/Biosign car was 8th when Mark drove back onto the track.

Mark may have been searing in the cockpit, but he put plenty of heat on his competitors: claiming 7th, cranking out quick lap after quick

lap, claiming 6th and then charging after 5th place.

With 35 minutes left, Mark set the team's fastest lap of race (1:19.450 @ 102.313 mph) and four laps later, sat just 0.191s behind the 5th-placed SunTrust car, which was hounding the Action Express entry.

Lap after lap the trio of cars chased around Mid-Ohio until lap 96 when the cars ahead of Mark touched and the Action Express car spun off the circuit. Mark avoided the melee and advanced to 5th. The wayward car managed to get back on the track but dragged dust and gravel with it. The next time around, the SunTrust car spun on the debris. Again, Mark steered clear and moved up another place.

With just 10 minutes to go, the lead cars were conserving fuel in order to get the finish, but AIM's Pacific Mobile/Biosign car had plenty of fuel and Mark kept charging. With 4 minutes remaining, Mark claimed third and began closing on second place. Gaining almost 0.7 seconds per lap as the clock wound down, Mark finished just 0.154s behind the Crown Royal XR car, which chased the Telmex car to the checkered flag.

"The car was just fantastic and we had something for these guys today," enthused Mark after the race. "One more lap and we were up another step!

"Burt had a great first stint, getting up there right at the start to battle with Memo. It's only a matter of time before we get to the top step of the podium. Everyone on the team can be very proud."

"AIM has done it again," said Burt. "The guys have done an awesome job.

"It was tough out there in the heat, but the car was just amazing on old tires—which we discovered in morning practice—so we went with that and it paid off. We were able to go much longer on the Pirelli P-Zeros today than you usually would. Pretty amazing given the heat."

The GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Cask No. 16 now heads south to Florida to race in the Brumos Porsche 250 at the legendary Daytona International Speedway. The race takes place on July 3, starting at 11am and will be broadcast live on SPEED and MRN (Motor Racing Network).

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AIM Autosport

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 Autosport 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.

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