

## a New Beginning for 2014



championships in the GT class at the last race at VIR, but the driver's cup was still up for grabs and they wanted to do big business in the last outing for the Corvette C6.R. Qualifying was close, with five of the eleven entries – and at least one car from each of the five manufacturers – separated by a half a second.

The racing was also close for hours, with leaders dropping back after contact with other cars or mechanicals. Pole-sitter Matteo Melucelli damaged his Risi Ferrari in a scuffle with Jan Magnussen in the No. 3 Compuware C6.R, the No. 56 Team RLL BMW Z4 taking over the lead. Ryan Dalziel ran off the track and into the tire wall in the No. 91 SRT Viper about halfway in, the No. 4 Corvette C6.R was bitten by electrical gremlins. Seven hours in, Risi was back in the lead until Olivier Beretta ran into the wall trying to pass a GT Challenge car. The Risi team would recover to finish third.

That put the dark horse No. 17 Team Falken Tire Porsche 911 GT3 RSR into first, a team which had quietly climbed up the order from sixth in class on the grid. Drivers Nick Tandy, Wolf Henzler and Bryan Sellers held on to win the race, ahead of the No. 56 Team RLL BMW driven by Dirk Muller. The fifth-place finish of Magnussen and co-drivers Antonio Garcia and Jordan Taylor gave Magnussen and Garcia the driver's championship. It is the ninth time Corvette drivers have won the trophy since 2001.

In GTC, the No. 45 Porsche 911 GT3 RSR of Flying Lizard Motorsports driven by Nelson Canache, Spencer Pumpelly and Madison Snow won from pole to flag. They were followed by the No. 27 Porsche 911 GT3 RSR car driven by Andy Lally, Patrick Dempsey and Joe Foster. Flying Lizard also won the GTC team championship, but the driver's championship went to Jeroen Bleekemolen and Cooper MacNeil.

The Petit Le Mans will be back next year on 4 October as well, but under new management now that the ALMS is officially dead. The Tudor United SportsCar Championship (TUSCC) will officially begin with the Rolex 24 at Daytona. Testing will occur at Sebring International Speedway and Daytona International Speedway in November. The first event on the TUDOR schedule in the 52nd Anniversary of the Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway.

One major change in the TUDOR series is a maximum car count for each of the four classes. The maximum car capacity guidelines will be based on the space available at each venue.

The Prototype (P) class will have a tentative cap of 20 cars at Sebring International Raceway, Long Beach, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, Detroit's Bell Isle and Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The P class will be capped at 19 cars at all other venues.

The Prototype Challenge (PC) class will be tentatively capped at 10 entries for all TUDOR Championship events.

The GTLM class a tentative cap of 12 to 19 cars depending upon the venue.

Also, a number of DP Technical Changes have been mandated in the new series, such high-downforce aero updates that will cost each team about \$75000. In the past steel brakes were required but now carbon fiber discs and pads are permitted, but will require additional brake cooling and a change of wheel bearings. An approximate of a 50 horse power increase will be seen in most cars.

These changes will cost each team much more to run in the 2014 series. These changes plus the change in management has a number of fans wondering if the racing will improve. 2014 will be a challenging year for the series.

*Photos by MSA Staff*

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