

IMSA Media Conference

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Daytona, Florida, USA

PJ Hyett

Daniel Serra

Parker Thompson

Press Conference



DANIEL SERRA: Yeah, so I'm very happy. It's nice to be on pole. I like qualifying. I like when the car is flying like today. I think the team did an amazing job. The track was quite different from this morning. Everything that we change works very well. Yeah, that's it.

I think the starting position doesn't decide your end position in the race. It's six hours of race. We have a lot to do tomorrow. But, of course, is better to start in the front. Track position is quite important, especially in this track that is very difficult to overtake.

Anyway, I'm very happy. I have to say a big thank you to the team that gave me a really nice car.

THE MODERATOR: Our GTD pole winner, Parker Thompson in the No. 12 Vasser Sullivan Lexus. Third career pole, third pole of the season. His last pole was at the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach. He was a 2023 winner in the GTD class in last year's Sahlen's Six Hours of the Glen.

Parker, this is a place that the Lexus has been strong. You won here last year. Fast here today. How do you keep it going?

PARKER THOMPSON: Well, there's obviously a lot of expectation after we won GTD last year and GTD Pro. We know our Lexus agrees with Watkins Glen. Agreed today again in qualifying.

This place is unbelievable for a qualifying lap. Fun to drive in the race, but for one lap, squeezing everything you can out of it, it's probably the best one lap you could ever get as a race car driver. Tons of commitment.

Glad I got it done today for the 12 team. They deserve everything. It's good we finally built some momentum on the other side of the garage.

Like I said, nobody remembers who wins the pole, they only remember the guys in Victory Lane. So we've got a job to finish tomorrow.

Q. PJ, I don't think you've been racing professionally for terribly long. Was that one of the best individual laps you think you put together?

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. We're pleased to be joined by our award winners.

We'll start here PJ Hyett in the No. 99 AO Racing Oreca LMP2 07. This is his second consecutive LMP2 pole position and also his second pole position in IMSA competition.

PJ, congratulations. Quite a qualifying session there for the LMP2 class. Obviously with your team, everything that's been happening between your own success and qualifying, if you could tell us about what all this means to you right now.

PJ HYETT: It's been a special year for AO. I mean, I felt like last year we were taking all the lumps. We're getting some of the payoff this year between Rexy's success.

Sebring was really humbling because I got the pole but I made some mistakes in the race. As excited as I am for getting another pole here, the focus is on tomorrow and our team putting together a great race.

Overall, though, yeah, I'm thrilled with how the team has been doing. We're still a relatively small upstart. We've only been doing this for a season and a half now. To have these poles and have race wins on the GTD Pro program is amazing. I'm absolutely thrilled.

THE MODERATOR: Our pole winner in the GTD Pro class, Daniel Serra in the No. 62 Risi Competizione. This is Daniel's second consecutive GTD Pro pole here at Watkins Glen, second in IMSA competition. The team won the Rolex 24 at Daytona and second at Sebring.

Daniel, obviously there's something about this place that you must like, given this is your second pole in a row here. What are you going to do going into the race tomorrow to keep it going?



PJ HYETT: Yeah, absolutely. I think I got my first racing license when I was 38 years old, and I'm 41 now. I haven't been doing this for very long.

It's one of those, like, unbelievably magical things about motorsports. I wouldn't call that a perfect lap, there's still 12 things I could have done better about that lap. When you see the time after you go over the start/finish, yeah, it's a magical feeling.

Q. Parker, you have a nice buffer of GTD Pro cars behind you. It's a six-hour race. Do you think that's going to make a big difference tomorrow?

PARKER THOMPSON: Well, the key part of that it's a six-hour race. We just got to make sure we keep the car clean. Generally speaking, there's always some chaos at the starts, especially with the split start as we saw last year.

As long as we keep all the fenders on the 12 and everything straight, we'll have a car that can compete for a win at the end. I have a big task of making sure I get through the first stint. We'll cycle through and have something for the end hopefully.

Definitely an endurance mindset. I know six hours is a long time. Everybody is going to be... They'll have that switch that they flip. Everybody will be sprint for the first 10 laps. At the end of the day, six hours is a long time.

Q. PJ, you said being on pole with Sebring, but the race itself wasn't your proudest moment or something like that. Can you talk about what you learned at Sebring and how you can apply that to tomorrow's race.

PJ HYETT: Yeah, I mean, like Parker was just talking about, there is sort of a mental shift. You push all in for these quallie laps to do the best you can to put your team in the best possible position.

I was over the moon. I couldn't believe that I had gotten pole at Sebring. But, again, there are the most magical parts about motorsports when you do a lap like that and you get pole, however there's the trough of that roller coaster when you make mistakes.

It's a very humbling experience to go from the highest of highs to the lowest of lows when you spin, hurt your car and lose a couple laps during the race.

For tomorrow, yeah, I'm unbelievably excited for myself and the team that we got another pole. However, succeeding and being on that top spot of the podium

tomorrow is far more important than sitting here, so yeah.

Q. You're off of a pretty successful weekend at Le Mans. How much does that momentum carry forward?

PJ HYETT: Yeah, absolutely a great point. Part of the reason we were on the podium at Le Mans is essentially our MO was no mistakes, keep the car in one piece. I feel like that should be exactly our MO for tomorrow, is stay out of trouble. Obviously go as fast as you can, but within your limits.

It's going to be real hot in that car tomorrow. I think from a fitness perspective, it's going to be taxing for everybody.

But, yeah, I think lessons learned from Le Mans, if you keep your car in one piece, you can kind of automatically work your way towards the sharp end of the field by the end of it.

THE MODERATOR: Guys, congratulations. Best of luck tomorrow.

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