

IMSA Media Conference

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Daytona, Florida, USA

Laurin Heinrich

Scott Andrews

Ben Keating

Press Conference



SCOTT ANDREWS: Yeah, we're all really happy with that pole. Thanks to Lone Star for giving me the responsibility to qualify the car.

It's always fun. Actually I haven't qualified a car for, yeah, a long time. So they obviously gave me a rocket ship.

It's been -- any type of result this year has been a long time coming. We've had one of the fastest cars all year. We just haven't been able to show it in the results.

So, yeah, we're all really stoked and really happy to put the Mercedes-AMG GT3 on the front row.

Actually, all of us at Laurin, our car was good for lap one. Unfortunately, not making any excuses, stoked for pole, but we had a bit more in the tank. Yeah, we got balked by one of the drivers that forgot to use his mirrors.

Anyway, it was good. We basically did it with the race car. We didn't make any changes, and we feel like we've got a really good long run car as well especially.

We're really looking forward to the race. Yeah, we'll see what happens. Obviously it's a very long race, but to start off the front row in the mix, and it's also really nice to start with the GTD PROs because they know what they're doing. Should be pretty safe. Yeah, we're looking forward to an exciting race.

THE MODERATOR: Also, welcome our LMP2 pole winner, driver of the No. 2 United Autosports USA ORECA LMP2 07, Ben Keating. How was your adventure out there today, Ben?

BEN KEATING: Today was really special. Really, really good. The last pole I had in LMP2 was at Daytona. So it's been a while since I've been on the pole.

Last year I did it coming to the checkered flag by 100th of a second, and I didn't think there was anything more in the car. Today to beat that time by 3/10 of a second, I didn't think it was possible.

So really, really happy with the lap and excited to be starting up front, particularly at this track and this race because there's always mayhem everywhere, and I have a better chance of staying out of it if I'm up front.

THE MODERATOR: Let's get started with our post-qualifying press conference for the 27th annual Motul Petit Le Mans. We have our GTP3 in their respective pole positions. Big step in the pole position today, and you're vying for the championship. How did it go out there today?

LAURIN HEINRICH: Yeah, I knew about the championship situation before the qualifying. We were 99 points ahead, and the points gap is always in ten steps, so getting that 100 points gap, that mark, was really important for us.

We knew that there's Martins, which our championship competitors, the 23 car, that they are quite quick around here. I knew they would qualify well so I would just have to be on pole. That would be the solution.

We did that. When I went out of pit lane, it was a red flag as soon as we started pushing. So I could get a feel for the car, which was quite different compared to yesterday.

Yeah, that was I think quite good for me because I could adapt my driving style. I could think about what to do different.

The next push attempt after red flag, then the lap first 18.2, then 17.8, so the tire still came in after the red flag over the multiple laps.

My level I think it was quite good, but obviously the gaps are super small on this short track. I think it was very important for us, as you said, not only to get pole for this important race, but also to get the points and increase the gap in the championship.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, obviously not a full-time, part-time team coming in here. You showed your stuff today. How good did your run go, and how do you feel about things going into tomorrow?



THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

Q. How weird is it to have a delay like that in the middle much a race where you're trying to find a clear lap and then all of a sudden you have to go back to the pits and sit there and wait? You can start, Laurin, and go to Scott, because you both kind of experienced the same thing.

LAURIN HEINRICH: As I say, it breaks a bit the rhythm. Obviously the tension starts building up, and it was exactly at the point where the tires are ready, the car is ready, and you start pushing. You do the first sector. Obviously you are really excited, and then all of a sudden red flag, and it completely breaks the rhythm.

I think that's really where also you can -- you as a driver can make a difference, and, yeah, just stay focused. Use it as your advantage even because you had a feel for the car in the first part of the lap, and then you can do it better next time.

I think for us it worked quite well. Yeah, as I said, it reset everything a bit. Obviously you have to rethink your tire warm-up strategy because the tire is already ready when you are going out of the pit lane, and you don't want to take any juice out of them on the outlet, but you want to have some ready as soon as you start pushing.

You need to manage that a bit, but I like these situations where you can make a difference.

SCOTT ANDREWS: Yeah, exactly what Laurin said. You have to do a complete reset, but then it's obviously important because the warmup changes, the warmup procedure changes, and these new Michelins are so finicky in quallie. You really get maximum three laps here because it's a short track to do your lap time.

Like I touched on before, our car was set up to do it on lap one. Actually for us it kind of hurt us a little bit, but somehow I was able to, yeah, manage to put it together. And obviously our car was very, very quick.

But, yeah, it's a mental thing, and you just have to then be very focused and wary and communication with your engineer and your tires are in the right window to start your lap.

THE MODERATOR: Ben, you said you didn't think you could go any faster than last year. You were 3/10 faster. How did you do it? Where did it come from?

BEN KEATING: Literally, I have never driven a car that

was as hooked up as the P2 we had today. I give all the credit to the team. It was an incredible setup. I was able to carry way more speed through the corners, and I was able to get to the throttle a lot earlier than I could any other time. It was a lot of fun to do the lap just because the car was so hooked up.

It's a lot of fun to drive a good car.

BEN KEATING: Scott, I want to know, how does it feel to beat your old roommate?

SCOTT ANDREWS: For those that don't understand, well, me and Robby Foley were roommates for six years. Nothing bad happened. I just moved to Texas with Lone Star. So it's old Miami roommates front row, so that's kind of cool. Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Well done, guys. Thank you.

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