

Rolex 24 At DAYTONA

Sunday, January 26, 2025

Daytona, Florida, USA

Matthew Bell

Lars Kern

Marvin Kirchhöfer

Orey Fidani

Media Conference



might be someone near you who is probably more familiar with that given you're part of (indiscernible) management. What pre-race advice did he give you? What did he think of you winning?

MATTHEW BELL: I haven't got a clue. I haven't seen my phone yet. He said when someone is really close behind, don't lift. That's how he won his.

I just drove around like that basically, and yeah, I'm sure he'll be very happy. We're equal now. I've just got to go win five Le Manses, five Sebrings, five Petit LeMans.

Q. I asked the other GT drivers about it, but there was no letup. All of the victories were so tight today and there was a lot of beating and banging and stuff going on. Could you just talk about the nature of the race? This is kind of how it is now at the Rolex.

MARVIN KIRCHHOFER: It's been a while actually being up here, so that's why. It's been very emotional. I think it was quite intense, as you said, in every category, especially the last 30 minutes after the restarts. We know the restarts are crucial in IMSA racing.

Basically what the fans love to see, what is nice for us sometimes in the car but sometimes not too nice when you're outside the car and you see your teammate trying to hang on or going for a win, which once again, Matt has done an outstanding job in that perspective, and I think the emotion running very high -- I've never seen Lars trying, so you can tell how much it meant to the whole team.

Everyone was obviously super, super happy about the result, and I think for the fans, for everyone, I think this was probably the best race finish everyone could have asked for.

Q. (Indiscernible).

MATTHEW BELL: Yeah, we knew we had a good car from the start of the Roar. AWA put in so much work since before the checkered flag at Petit Le Mans, and when we hit the track on Friday two weeks ago we felt we had something underneath us that we could go and take on the

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, we have our GTD winners at the 63rd Rolex 24 at Daytona in the No. 13 AWA Corvette ZO6 GT3 R. From left to right, Matt Bell, Lars Kern, Marvin Kirchhöfer, and Orey Fidani.

Matt, this is his second IMSA victory, first since a GTD victory at Motul Petit LeMans in 2014.

Lars, this is his second IMSA victory, first since the 12-hours of Sebring in 2021.

This is Marvin's first career IMSA victory. Previous best was second at Watkins Glen International in WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca last year.

Orey, this is first IMSA victory. Three second place finishes.

Q. Matt, can you touch base on that final stint and going up against the Heart of Racing in GTD there in the final stint?

MATTHEW BELL: Yeah, the restarts were intense as we always are in IMSA WeatherTech racing. Honestly, my brain is fried. I can't even remember what happened. It was awesome racing, I have to say. All the competitors that we were going toe to toe with today were really hard, really fair. I can't remember where he overtook me. He got us in the pits. I just had to get my head down. If I saw a GTD car ahead of me I just tried to overtake it.

I remember vaguely getting a little bit of a nose up the side coming out of Turn 5. We were good in the infield. We were strong in the infield. Just managed to squeeze on past and get my head down after that and try to build a gap. Yeah, it was fun. It was definitely fun.

Q. Question for Matt: You won in a Corvette. There



... when all is said, we're done.®

competition with.

So that gives you some confidence. I said this to everybody multiple times, that we were just waiting for the dream to stop, it can't be this good kind of thing.

Yeah, it was a lot of hard work, but super happy with it, and just to your first question, as well, the racing from the GTD side I have to say was super hard but super fair, I have to say.

All the competitors that I went toe to toe with, it was proper IMSA racing, the real spicy stuff that may be a little over the limit. Looked like it was going on ahead on the red panel cars. That looked entertaining.

But yeah, I have to also congratulate all the competitors that we were racing with here. It was proper racing.

Q. Orey, the Mustang guys were in here earlier and talking about the turnaround in fortunes for their program. It was a pretty traumatic start with this car, with this team last season. Your emotions from what's been another remarkable turnaround in just 12 months?

OREY FIDANI: The Chevy guys are pretty awesome. It's some of the best support I've ever had with customers programs over the years that I've ran. There's hiccups with new cars, so I figured I'm going to stick it out and just work with these guys, and they were awesome and fixed everything, and it turns out we had a pretty awesome car to race at the end of it.

Q. Matt, you're from Newcastle in the northeast of England. You've seen your fair share of fights, I'm sure. How does this match up?

MATTHEW BELL: Yeah, I think that could hold up with some of the best ones I've seen. The IMSA WeatherTech series, I've loved every race I've ever done over here.

Like I say, from my side of things, I thought all the racing was super hard but super fair against all the guys that I was against. It was a lot like that last year. We had some intense battles at Road America in particular and Petit LeMans, as well.

I love this championship. This is the best championship in the world to me. I love racing over here. I love the circuits. I love the series, and I like winning. Today went all right.

Q. Orey, you join a long line of Canadian winners at the Rolex 24. Seems like there's a renewed effort to grow Canadian domestic homologated racing. How

important is that to you to keep that conveyor belt of talent going, whether it's young drivers or bronze drivers like yourself?

OREY FIDANI: Pretty important. Canada is small, pretty small in terms of racing community, and I'd like to continue to grow it.

Hopefully we'll see in the next couple years possibly might take over ownership of Mosport from the father and keep that going so I can continue to promote some Canadian drivers and keep that track alive.

Q. Matt, when with you spoke over the winter, you said to me, in exact quotes, the Corvette is the best GT car out there you can buy and that you were extremely confident that you guys could win this race. How does it feel to back that up and score Chevrolet such an important win for this customer program?

MATTHEW BELL: I mean, yeah, as I said, we spoke -- there were trials and tribulations that Graham has already alluded to the first part of last season, but from the very get-go, the silver lining was the thing was awesome to drive. So we knew the fundamental thing that you need in racing is pace.

You need a car that you can go and win with, and if you've got a hardworking group of people around it, if there's anything to fix, it's going to get fixed. Yeah, everybody put their heads together. Orey had a huge amount of faith in everybody as he's already said, and we knew from last year if we stayed on this train, there's going to be success coming.

Yeah, every now and again, I'm right. It's quite rare, but it is right rewarding. That's the one and only time -- well, hopefully not the only time this year, but yeah, very happy to see a huge amount of hard work come to fruition.

Q. Lars, tell us a little bit about it from your perspective, just what this means.

LARS KERN: Yeah, I mean, in the past years I was always racing with a different brand who I am still related to, and yeah, it feels amazing achieving this result with this group of people. As Orey and Matt already mentioned, the AWA team and Jim, what they built up over the last year is pretty incredible.

We knew right from the beginning that we were going to have a good car, and as Matt mentioned, it was kind of like the feeling, okay, when does this dream stop because we felt pretty confident or we didn't really speak about it, but in our little group, we were like, okay, this feels pretty



awesome.

Normally around Daytona, a car never feels really good because you're on low camber, pretty high pressures, so it doesn't feel great. So yeah, going into the race, it was like, okay, we have to pass, let's see how it goes. What Matt and Marvin did in the last couple of stints was absolutely awesome.

I just had to walk away for the last hour. I was just lying down and I got follow. It was absolutely incredible, and I'm proud to be a part of this team.

Q. Lars, I know you were kind of telling me before, but talk me through that stint near halfway when you were moving up in the field. Was there a point at which you thought, okay, the win is on here?

LARS KERN: Yeah, it's always the same, like if there's no car coming from behind and you keep on overtaking it feels pretty all right.

At that point I was like, okay, I think we're in a good position, so I went up to P2. After that I was like, okay, if I've got to hand the car over to these two guys, I think we should be in a safe spot.

As I, what he did at the end was absolutely incredible. I could not believe and I still cannot believe. It's going to take some days to think in, weeks, months, I don't know. Yeah, absolutely incredible feeling.

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