

Second place for the Porsche 911 RSR

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25/08/2014 The Porsche 911 RSR of Team Falken Tire earned an impressive second-place overall finish in the Oak Tree Grand Prix in Virginia.

Without the prototype classes, Sunday's race was the first race held exclusively for the GT Le Mans (GTLM) and GT Daytona (GTD) classes in the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship. Porsche factory driver Wolf Henzler (Germany) held the overall lead entering the last lap, narrowly missing the victory. The Porsche North America factory effort had a more challenging day finishing eighth with the No. 912 Porsche 911 RSR and tenth with the No. 911 entry. With Team Falken Tire's podium result, Porsche now leads the GTLM Manufacturer point standings with two races remaining in the season.

Porsche now leads the GTLM Manufacturer point standings

While fast all weekend, the No. 17 Team Falken Tire entry driven by Henzler and Bryan Sellers (USA) focused on fuel strategy to put the car in the position to win. Sellers opened the race running near the top-five before relinquishing the iconic, rear-engined Porsche 911 RSR to longtime teammate Henzler. With fuel conservation in mind for the full race, the No. 17 was able to use a late race yellow flag to remove all doubt they could reach the finish line. Henzler, leading as a result of other cars pitting for fuel, held off multiple attacks by the No. 62 Ferrari. On the final lap, the red machine passed the Falken-entry and was able to hold on to the top spot at the end. Henzler crossed the line in a close second, the best finish for the team in 2014.

The story of Porsche North America's weekend centered around the No. 911 Porsche 911 RSR. The works effort was looking strong entering the weekend but an accident on Saturday morning would force them into a newly rebuilt car for today's race. Even more challenging than rebuilding the racecar overnight was the injury to factory driver Richard Lietz. The Austrian suffered a fractured left upper arm in the two-car accident and was unable to continue driving this weekend. After visiting his teammates at the track this morning, Lietz has returned home for surgery.

Lietz has returned home for surgery after car accident

With the car prepared in time for the early morning warm-up, Michael Christensen (Denmark) was drafted into driving both Porsche North America entries in the race. By using a rebuilt car, the No. 911 was forced to start at the back of the GTLM and GTD combined field with Nick Tandy behind the wheel for the opening stint. Adding insult to injury, the native of Great Britain was penalized for jumping the start of the two-hour, 45-minute race, and later drove the car off and back on the track while pushing to make his way to the front. Christensen started the No. 912 and was prepared to take the checkered flag in the team's No. 911. However, an ongoing engine issue – which first reared its head at the one-hour, 45-minute mark dropping Tandy from second-place – would sideline the No. 911 with 19 minutes remaining while Christensen was behind the wheel. The car was classified 10th in GTLM.

The saga of the No. 912 revolved around the No. 911 with Christensen replacing the injured Lietz. The first-year Porsche factory driver started the No. 912 handing the wheel over to Patrick Long (USA) just one hour into the race before making his way to the No. 911. Long was embroiled in a hard battle around the 3.27-mile track suffering right rear wheel and bodywork damage during his stint. While he was able to continue, with right rear suspension damage the team elected a fuel conservation strategy as opposed to outright speed. The No. 912 would finish eighth on the day.

First podium finish of the season for Dempsey Racing Porsche

In GTD class, the best story for the Porsche 911 GT America contingent was the first podium finish of

the season for the Dempsey Racing Porsche of Patrick Dempsey (USA) and Andrew Davis (USA). They had to start at the back of the pack because they missed qualifying due to an accident in practice. The fifth place of Leh Keen (USA) and Cooper MacNeil (USA) in the Alex Job Racing Porsche 911 GT America put them into a tie at the top of the GT Daytona Driver Championship.

The next Tudor United SportsCar Championship race will take place on September 20 on the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas, USA.

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