

Lamborghini makes history: Sellers and Snow clinch first IMSA GTD Title

Braselton, Ga. (October 13, 2018) - As with many classic dramas, the best was saved for last as the championship of the GT Daytona (GTD) class for 2018 came down to Saturday's final race of the season – the Motul Petit Le Mans.

The anticipation to see who would take the title had been building since early September as the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GT Daytona (GTD) was set to come down to the No. 48 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 and its Acura NSX rival on a perfect day for racing at the 12-turn, 2.54-mile (4.09 km) Road Atlanta circuit tucked into the North Georgia hills.

At the end of the grueling 10-hour race, the Paul Miller Lamborghini skillfully piloted by Bryan Sellers, Madison Snow and endurance teammate Corey Lewis accomplished what they set out to do – take home the first-ever IMSA championship for their team owner and Lamborghini.

The trio piloted the Huracán to a third-place finish, one spot behind the No. 86, and that was good enough to finish the season with a four-point advantage at the end of 11 races, 333-329. The championship was a first for Paul Miller Racing after the team had come close to winning as they had finished on the season podium three times in the last four years. Lamborghini won the class manufacturer title over Acura by 12 points (345-333).

“Honestly to crown off a dream year, the Paul Miller Racing team has done an incredible job,” said Chris Ward, senior manager, Motorsport Automobili Lamborghini America. “The drivers have performed above all expectations, and then to come away with a championship win against fantastic competition. I’m sure the fans were given a spectacle that they’ll remember. Today’s race was an amazing event, just fantastic. I can’t wait to roll into the paddock at Daytona for the Roar (Before the 24 in January).”

The gap was a mere seven points entering Saturday's race with the Lamborghini duo of Bryan Sellers and Madison Snow holding the lead over Katherine Legge in the Acura. The chase for the championship had an extra ingredient of intrigue as the two cars started next to each other after they were separated by less than two-tenths of a second following qualifying.

As the green flag fell, the No. 48, who has held the class lead for the last nine races, quickly moved to the front of the GTD field while the No. 86 soon fell off the pace. Things got interesting at the mid-point of the race as Legge's co-driver, Alvaro Parente, closed to second place behind Snow in the No. 86.

Following a series of pit stops over the next few hours, the teams swapped places within the top four of the class. With around two hours remaining, Sellers climbed in the car and guided it back to the top of the class. During that time, the Acura once again fell off the pace, running anywhere from fourth to sixth.

As the race entered its final stages, Sellers found himself in third place, and one spot behind the Acura and that is how the race ended to give the team the championship.

It was the second endurance race victory for the trio in 2018 as they also won the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring presented by Advance Auto Parts back in March. The victory was the team's third in 11 races as well as the eighth podium of the year.

QUOTES

Bryan Sellers: "There are no words. First of all, I want to say thank you to the Panoz family. None of this would have happened without them. And sorry, to miss him (Dr. Don Panoz, who passed away last month) and his memory will live on, but today was incredible. Our whole season was a fight. The 86 is probably one of the toughest competitors that I've ever run against in all the season's I've done this. Madison and I talked at the beginning of the season, we felt if we could just knock off podiums and top fives we'd have a shot at this. Man, it came down to the wire, and one or two points and it feels so good. These two guys next to me are unbelievable and it was such a team effort. It started back in Sebring, it's a good combination, we have a lot of fun and it works. Today was great. The whole thing was a concern, we bounced up, we bounced down. We were first, we were third, we were fourth, and then they were leading, and they were third and fourth. And at one point in time they were eighth and we had a 30-second lead on them and then you're thinking, no problem. And the next thing you know it goes yellow and they're back in front of us for four hours. It was like this emotional roller coaster, and then in the final stint we lead with two stints to go and the next thing they say is you're P4 and the 86 is leading. And I think 'how did that happen?', we just pitted out of the lead. So, it was emotional. In the end, we got a little lucky and it did come our way, but it was hard work that got us there. Paul Miller is the reason we get to do this. This is his 10th year doing this, and this is his first driver championship and first team championship. I just think when you look at someone's commitment over the years that he's done it, he's a lifetime racer and without him the three of us don't get to do this and stand up here and stand on the podium. But it's not just us, he employs all the guys behind the scenes that make this work. You're really fortunate to have a team owner like him who supports us tells us all year, "do what you do. We're here and we're here for you." And it's been great."

Madison Snow: "We ended the race with our hands full of trophies and champagne so that's a pretty good way to end the race. We were third in the race, but first in the championship. So that's the big thing for us. We knew the 86 was on us all season, and it was all about consistency. Being up there and being in the fight. Paul Miller brought us a car every single weekend and every single track and that's what got us here today.

Paul Miller, owner: "It's been amazing. Getting my first shot here three years ago when I didn't know anybody, but after a few races they were family to me. And to have three years of that, it's amazing how well you get to know your people and how close we get. It's been all growing that got us here."