

Fastest Race Lap and Another Top Ten for Goikhberg and Simpson



Acura Sports Car Challenge at Mid-Ohio

2018 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship

No. 99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance®/JDC-Miller MotorSports/ORECA/Gibson May 7, 2018

The IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship returned to the rolling hills of central Ohio for the first time in five years last weekend, when they raced at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course outside of Columbus. It was a good weekend for the No.99 GAINSCO Auto Insurance®/ORECA, as they earned their third 7th place finish of the season at Mid-Ohio. The weekend kicked off with scattered thunderstorms and near flooding conditions in various parts of the track. The conditions eventually shortened Friday practice substantially when the IMSA Stewards decided to throw the red flag as stream of water flowed over the track and the pit lane turned into a near river.

Fortunately for the JDC-Miller MotorSports crew, they completed a two-day test at Mid-Ohio immediately after Long Beach last month. Mother Nature wasn't any more cooperative then, as it snowed during the test, but they did end up logging 150 miles which proved to be very helpful during the rain shortened weekend.

Conditions improved on Saturday, and Misha Goikhberg qualified the Red Dragon™, earning the team's best qualifying result of the season. Goikhberg was on pace immediately and steadily set times good enough for the top five throughout the session. Although Goikhberg was eventually bumped to the 8th starting position, it was a solid result.

Thunderstorms were predicted again on Sunday, but it turned out to be the best weather over the course of the weekend. The two biggest storylines going into race day were the weather and traffic/yellow flag predictions. Mid-Ohio is shorter than most road courses and just one corner was predicted to be a potential passing zone. With 14 Prototypes and over 40 cars racing on the circuit at once, the statisticians were predicting several yellow caution flag periods due to accidents caused by traffic. The drivers and engineers spent hours strategizing the race plan; when to pit, when to change drivers, etcetera, depending on when the yellows appeared.

Under sunny skies and 80-degree weather on Sunday, the green flag fell with Misha Goikhberg behind the wheel of the Red Dragon. Drivers and teams made it through the first tank of fuel without incident. Misha remained in the car for another 45-minute stint, with the team hoping to complete the driver change pit stop under yellow conditions. Holding a competitive race pace, Misha kept 8th position under his control through both stints and turned the Red Dragon over to his teammate Stephen Simpson on the second pit stop. Stephen hit the track in the middle of a dog fight. Hoping to reach the top-five or better, Simpson's times dropped and speed increased ap after lap. On the 98th lap of the race, Simpson topped the charts and set a race lap quicker than anyone else had or would all day...including the factory-based DPI cars. A yellow flag would have presented a great opportunity for Simpson to attack the 6th position car of Sebastian Saavedra, but it never happened. The 125-lap race was caution free. Simpson decimated a 35 second gap separating the Red Dragon from sixth to just three seconds by the end of the race, bringing home 7th position. The No. 99 team is one of only two in the Championship to have finished every race this season inside the top eight.



Stephen Simpson: "It's crazy – everyone executed very well today, and we had a good strategy, Misha had a good couple of stints, our pit stops were good and really, what this shows is that this field is super competitive. Despite all of that, and setting the fastest lap of the race, we were 7th. It certainly isn't a result to celebrate, but our little teams stays consistent and that is why we are running in the top five in the championship. I think we were all a little surprised that A. there was no rain today and B. that there were no yellow flags. We were planning for a bit of rain which I wouldn't have minded, and coincidentally a huge downpour hit as we left the track. As far as the yellows, we were prepared to take advantage of any opportunities those may have presented. I was chasing the No. 52 as hard as I could possibly drive, they did a really good job this weekend as well. Through some of the higher speed corners the air was dirty, and I couldn't quite get there. They had a great car today. When I set the fastest lap, I knew it was decent, but I felt like there was a bit more. At the same time, it was hot, the car was sliding around a lot and I think I had two wheels on the grass two or three times. Nevertheless, it was great to set the fastest race lap with the Red Dragon."



Misha Goikhberg: "I think we got everything we could out of the car. We executed very well on the pit stops. We found out after that we could have double-stinted the tires and we should have done that because it cost us a bit on the out lap...but we learned something there. It was a surprise there were no yellows...it was full race pace lap after lap. I think we might have moved the GAINSCO Auto Insurance car a spot up in the points championship, so that is always a good day."

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About [GAINSCO, Inc.](#) GAINSCO, Inc. is a U.S. holding company specializing in automobile insurance, automotive sales and service, auto racing and investments. GAINSCO was established in 1978 as a Texas corporation and is based in Dallas, Texas, with a regional office in Miami, Florida. GAINSCO's insurance company subsidiary is MGA Insurance Company, Inc. As GAINSCO Inc.'s insurance brand, GAINSCO Auto Insurance® is the primary sponsor of the No.99 Red Dragon in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. GAINSCO distributes policies through a network of thousands of independent agents and digital marketplaces across the southern states. GAINSCO Auto Insurance uses its motorsports sponsorship and marketing campaign to build brand awareness and advance its distribution strategies.

About [GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing™](#): Committed to excellence in road racing since its formation in 2001, GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing's legacy includes two Sports Car Championships, 16 victories and 31 pole positions in the Rolex Sports Car Series. Its legacy of all-star drivers includes Bob Stallings, two-time Daytona Prototype Champions Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty, seven-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Champion Jimmie Johnson, two-time IndyCar Champion Jimmy Vasser, GT Champion Darren Law, C.A.R.T. Champion Cristiano da Matta and celebrated American drivers Memo Gidley and Rocky Moran Jr. The team ceased operations after the 2017 season, opening the door to partner with JDC-Miller Motorsports in the 2018 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. For more information, visit www.gainscoracing.com.