



## The Red Dragon Wins the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen Stephen Simpson Takes the No. 99 Three-Wide to Secure Late Race Pass for Victory

Just six races into the 2018 IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship, the No. 99 Red Dragon™ returned to victory circle, winning the historic Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen. It was the first victory for the GAINSCO Auto Insurance No.99 Red Dragon since winning at the Circuit of The Americas in 2013 under the GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing banner.



It is a new era for the Red Dragon, racing with new drivers and a new team for the first time in its 13-year history, but the scene was reminiscent as the iconic livery returned to the Gatorade Victory Circle at The Glen for the third time.

GAINSCO Auto Insurance announced their partnership with the Minnesota-based JDC-Miller MotorSports in December of 2017. Led by John Church, the team had an impressive debut in the premier "Prototype" category in 2017, finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in their rookie season with drivers Stephen

Simpson, Misha Goikhberg and Chris Miller in the United States' highest level of Sports Car Competition. The trio earned their first of back-to-back podiums in 2017 at the Sahlen's Six Hours at The Glen. Choosing this team to partner with, Bob Stallings said John Church's JDC-Miller MotorSports squad reminded him of his GAINSCO team in their early days, just before their record-setting breakthrough in 2007.

Coming off of two strong performances at Mid-Ohio and Detroit, the JDC-Miller MotorSports team felt confident going into the next string of races. However, challenging practice sessions on Friday and Saturday caused some concern for the Red Dragon's performance ability on race day. The team completed a successful test at Watkins Glen just a few weeks ago, but their findings did not correlate come race weekend and they fought an ill-handling race car most of the weekend. Stephen Simpson qualified the Red Dragon on Saturday; his time was fast enough for ninth position on the grid, and he radioed to the crew that it was all he could get out of the No. 99 ORECA LMP2. Hard work prevailed, the engineers continued their quest for mechanical improvements, and the GAINSCO crew worked late into the evening Friday and Saturday to produce the race-winning car.

Despite scorching heat and thick, humid air, race fans filled The Glen Sunday in anticipation for a six-hour shoot out. Honoring America's Independence, the race showcased a festive salute to The United States with patriotic liveries, complimentary admission for veterans and the 198<sup>th</sup> Army Band adding to the pre-race pageantry. Stephen Simpson took in the sights and the sounds from the grid, likely more meaningful this year, as he became an American citizen last month.

As the green flag flew, a howitzer cannon fired and the Red Dragon piloted by Simpson rocketed to the top five on the first lap. Lap after lap Simpson pressured his competitors. His drink bottle failed on the 18<sup>th</sup> lap and the cockpit temperatures were 102 degrees. At one point he asked his team via radio: "Guys, it is unbelievably hot in here; is there anything I can do to get airflow." His crew quickly responded, advising Simpson to remove a small piece of foam that keeps dust from coming into the cockpit. It worked, Simpson found some relief, and the team repaired his drink bottle on the first stop. He made the choice to double stint the Continental Tires so they would have a read on the performance should they need that option late in the race. It was a good move, it worked, and they did need that knowledge to help their fight for victory at the end.



Misha Goikhberg took over the driving duties two hours into the race. Stephen turned the Red Dragon over in second position. Goikhberg also completed a double stint, with nearly two hours behind the wheel. He steadily kept the Red Dragon at the top of the charts, defending position despite changing track conditions due to the heat. Two great stops and consistently fast lap times allowed him to turn the car over to co-driver Chris Miller in first position.

Miller, the team's third driver for endurance races, returned to the cockpit for the first time competitively since the 12 Hours of Sebring in early March. He does not race competitively full-time but keeps his skills sharp by almost daily karting sessions at the Stockholm Karting Center in Minnesota. Miller took over the driving duties just over halfway through the race with the immense pressure of keeping the Red Dragon out of trouble and in contention. His time behind the wheel was challenged by series regulars pressuring the Red Dragon for position. Miller prevailed and turned the car back to Goikhberg in perfect condition.

Goikhberg had a single stint ahead...just under one hour. He wasted no time picking cars off for position, first the #52, then #54. Mission complete, he pitted for Simpson to take the Red Dragon to the checkered flag. The No. 99 returns to the track in sixth place with a full tank, fresh tires and a rested Stephen Simpson.

Just a few laps later the yellow flag falls, anticipating a sprint to the end, engineers John Hayes, Barry Mumm and team owner John Church made the brilliant call to bring Simpson into the pits. They knew they could double stint tires, so they chose to top off the fuel only. The No. 99 crew made one final perfect pit stop. From that point Stephen would still need to play it safe on fuel when the opportunity presented itself, but he knew he had a car that could win. The race re-started for the final time. Front runners Juan Montoya and Jordan Taylor battled for position through the Watkins Glen International Inner Loop chicane, and Simpson snuck to the inside taking the three prototypes three wide and shot past Jordan Taylor and Juan Pablo Montoya for the race lead.

With 30 minutes to go, Simpson defended Montoya's hard charging Penske Acura. Fuel was a concern, but Simpson was perfect behind the wheel and raced the Red Dragon to victory with a late race pass that will be remembered for years to come.

The memories will last a lifetime, but the celebration was short. The team returns to Watkins Glen International on Monday for a tire test before turning their focus back to race mode for this weekend's Mobil 1 Sports Car Grand Prix at the Canadian Tire Motorsports Park.

**Stephen Simpson:** "I'm just so proud to get the Red Dragon and GAINSCO Auto Insurance back to victory lane. It really was a team effort; Misha and Chris drove great and the team made really good calls. This JDC-Miller MotorSports team fights so hard. We're a small team but you wouldn't know it, they know how to run with the big boys and I think that was evident today. We had good driver changes and tire changes. I think the first stint at the start of the race was important: we were able to get ourselves to the top two or three and that set the tone for the race. We wanted to try double stinting the tires in case that would need to be an option at the end and we did it fine. They biggest challenge in that stint was the heat. By the final stint, I knew what to expect and it also wasn't quite as long so it was a bit easier. I've been thinking about this win and how it slipped away from us last year every week for the last 12 months.... tonight, I can sleep peacefully."

**Misha Goikhberg:** "It's incredible for us as a team, and for GAINSCO Auto Insurance. We really struggled this weekend. At the end of the day Friday we were really scratching our heads. The guys worked late that night making changes, but honestly yesterday the Red Dragon wasn't much better. Today, we had a car we could compete with; our engineers John Hayes and Barry Mumm made great decisions with the set-up and then again through the race. It was a team effort and I am so pleased. Now we head to Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, my home racetrack and we ran very well there last year. It will be great to go there as a race winner next weekend. Best thing is to get the monkey off our back. Every weekend fans come to us and talk to us about the Red Dragon and how much they love the Red Dragon. It's an honor to drive it, but there was a lot of pressure to perform! Now we can celebrate the Red Dragon with our fans."

**Chris Miller:** "I am just so excited and to do this with our partner GAINSCO Auto Insurance just makes it even better. We are all incredibly honored to be able to drive the No. 99 Red Dragon that we all watched for so many years. To be the overall winners at a historic race like the Sahlen's Six Hour and in these colors is just a career highlight for sure. I think we've all felt some pressure to get it done, to get the Red Dragon back to victory circle in IMSA and we've done it and in just six races. For the JDC guys as well, we're a small team and this is a big deal. Stephen and Misha drove exceptionally well. At the end of the race they carried us to victory. It was an awesome day and an awesome race."

**Bob Stallings:** "The team ran a very good race and the call from John Church from the pits was mega! I am so proud of the GAINSCO/JDC boys."

**John Church:** "Great day for our team. It was a great team effort today - we had a good car and a lot of fun. I couldn't be happier for the team. This one got away from us last year, so it's extra rewarding to win it today."



**Media Contact:**

Katie Brannan

P.R. GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing

Cell/Texts: 775.783.9033

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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](http://www.gainscoracing.com).

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