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SRT Motorsports - SRT Viper ALMS Race Advance - Round 8 - Circuit of The Americas

September 16, 2013, Auburn Hills, Mich. -

THE VIPER GTS-R IS BACK IN 2013

- SRT Motorsports will field two SRT Viper GTS-Rs in Saturday's race at Circuit of the Americas (COTA), the eighth event on the 2013 American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patron schedule.
- The driver lineup for Saturday's race: Kuno Wittmer and Jonathan Bomarito in the No. 93 Pennzoil Ultra SRT Viper GTS-R; Marc Goossens and Dominik Farnbacher in the No. 91 Rush SRT Viper GTS-R.
- SRT Motorsports' No. 91 team – Goossens and Farnbacher – claimed the GT Class win at Road America on Aug. 11, the first victory for Viper in ALMS competition since Dec. 31, 2000. It was the first ALMS win for Goossens and fifth for Farnbacher.
- The No. 93 team (Wittmer/Bomarito) has claimed the GT Class pole at two of the last three races (Mosport and Road America).

AMERICAN LE MANS SERIES POINT STANDINGS

Team

1. Chevrolet Racing (Corvette) 128
2. BMW Team RLL (BMW) 97
3. **SRT Motorsports (Viper) 89**
4. Paul Miller Racing (Porsche) 42
5. CORE Autosport (Porsche) 32

Driver

1. Oliver Gavin, Tommy Milner 94
2. Antonio Garcia, Jan Magnussen 92
3. Dirk Muller 86
4. **Dominik Farnbacher, Marc Goossens 81**
5. Bill Auberlen, Maxime Martin 64
7. **Jonathan Bomarito, Kuno Wittmer 43**

SRT VIPER RACING HERITAGE

- In 1996, the Viper GTS-R made its debut and competed in a limited schedule in the GT1 class of the European and Asian BPR Global GT Series and the 24 Hours of Le Mans.
- Finished 1-2 at 24 Hours of Le Mans in the GTS Class for three consecutive years (1998-2000).
- Five international GT championships.
- Three-consecutive FIA GT championships (1997-1999).
- Won the ALMS GTS Class, manufacturer's and driver's championship in 2000.
- In 2000, became the first production-based American car to capture the overall win at the Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona.

FOLLOW THE ACTION

- Race Broadcast — 9/22/13 at 1:00 p.m. (EDT) on ESPN2
- Live Streaming — 9/21/13 at 4:30 p.m. (EDT) on ESPN3
- Live Qualifying — 9/20/13 at 2:40 p.m. (EDT) on ESPN3
- Live Timing and Scoring available at ALMS.com.

SRT MOTORSPORTS QUOTES - ROUND 8 - COTA

Gary Johnson – SRT Motorsports Racing Manager

"The SRT Motorsports team had a chance to go to Circuit of the Americas (COTA) a few weeks ago and test with some other products. The team can now work on the car setup without spending time having the drivers become familiar with the track.

"The SRT Viper seems to do well at most of the tracks and we think COTA won't be different. The track has a fairly low-grip surface. Luckily the schedule has us testing there for five and a half hours on Tuesday (Sept. 17) and Thursday (Sept. 19), much more than usual."

IS THAT A BIT DECEPTIVE BECAUSE IF SOMEONE HAS A PROBLEM ON THE COURSE IT CAN WIPE OUT A GOOD BIT OF TRACK TIME? "That's true at any track but it's a four-hour test session on Tuesday. That should be sufficient time to get a head start on the setup."

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO BOUNCE BACK FROM BALTIMORE WITH A STRONG RUN AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS? "It's important for us to have a strong run in each of the three remaining races of the season. We have the cars, the team and the drivers that can make it to the front. Anything but a podium finish from here on out is not something that we want to see."

Marc Goossens – No. 91 Rush SRT Viper GTS-R

WHAT WERE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS? "I think we did the right thing going there. It's a new facility and it was very good to get our reference points on the track – braking marks and race lines. Now we have a feel for what might be needed for our race car when we go back. I think most of our competition has been there too, whether they've already raced there or whether they went there to test to discover the track just like we did.

"I think it was worth the trip there because the track is very complicated in the beginning when you start driving it. There are some areas on the track where you don't have any idea where you're at because they look very similar. For instance, from Turn 3 all the way to Turn 10 it's nothing but esses and there are a lot of chicanes going left-right, left-right the entire time. That can be frustrating because if you miss it in Turn 4, basically you're lap time is going to suffer by the time you get to Turn 10. It was definitely worth going there for the test.

"It's a very interesting track. There's elevation changes at the start that requires very interesting first corner braking for the steep uphill. On the exit of the corner, the track kind of drops away. There are a lot of driver-technical areas where, if you're not spot-on (miss the racing line), you're not going to have a good lap time. Other than that, it's one of those new circuits that has very fluid elevation changes. The track is wide enough to overtake. There's a couple of long straightaways but combined with hairpins and fast corners, it's a complete race track. The big question is what kind of grip level will we have? We weren't there with the SRT Viper GTS-R but with the (Viper) Competition Coupe and (Viper) ACR-X. I think it's going to be a low-grip race track so it's all about having the right setup. It is going to be a challenge but at least we've been there. We've communicated to the engineers what we think is needed. Hopefully we can roll the car off the trailer and be competitive right away."

AFTER A TOUGH WEEKEND AT BALTIMORE, HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE A SOLID FINISH AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS? "I think it's very important and the reason I say very important is because everybody has seen in the last couple of months how we have improved, how much better we've become. I don't think Baltimore can be compared to any other track we race on. It's a street course with lots of bumps, railroad tracks and lots of other things that you don't see elsewhere. The reason we came away with maybe not the best results were the incidents that happened on the track and pit lane. I think our cars were competitive but luck wasn't on our side at Baltimore. Going into that race we were third in points, five points away from the leaders. Obviously, we've lost ground. I think COTA, VIR and Atlanta might be better tracks for us, tracks that suite the (SRT Viper) GTS-R better. It's very important for the entire team for both cars to be up there in the standings. We still think we can do well in this championship, we can still finish on top by the time we come to Atlanta but we can't let go of any points. Everything needs to be spot-on. We have to come away from Austin with the maximum points and hopefully the 93 car can take away some points from the competition too."

Dominik Farnbacher – No. 91 Rush SRT Viper GTS-R

"The race track will be new for us. We have never been there with the SRT Viper GTS-R so we don't really have data from this race track. The good thing is we have test sessions, so we can collect data.

"All of our drivers went there prior to the race and did some testing in a Viper Competition Coupe and Viper ACR-X. That helped familiarize us with the track. The track is very difficult, very technical and very hard to learn. It also has a lot of curbing and you have to know which curb to use because they can be very rough on the car. It was a huge help to go there to test and get familiar with the circuit and not have to go through that process this weekend."

ARE THERE A LOT OF PLACES ON THE TRACK WHERE YOU CAN PASS? "Yes, definitely. The track is made for overtaking and action which makes it exciting for the fans and those viewing the race on television. I can promise there will be a lot of overtaking and action. There are a lot of wide-open places where you can overtake."

HOW CHALLENGING WILL IT BE TO PIT THERE? "Formula One race tracks are top notch and with a lot of room in the pits. It should be no problem."

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO KEEP POSITIVE MOMENTUM GOING AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS AND TO STAY IN THE THICK OF THE POINTS CHASE? "It's important. We lost a lot of ground to the leaders at Baltimore. It's important to do very well at COTA. If we come back strong and get back on the podium, we will be back in business.

"It's going to be a very important race for us. We need to be on the podium in order to get back to the title chase. We have the race car for that and we have the team for that. We just need to bring everything together and make it happen. The last three races are going to be very important for us."

SINCE THIS IS THE FIRST ALMS RACE AT AUSTIN, DO YOU THINK IT EQUALIZES EVERYTHING OUT AMONG THE COMPETITORS? "Not really. Corvette and BMW went there for testing with their GT cars so I think they have a little bit of an advantage. Every time we went to a race track, we actually did very well right away. It shouldn't be a big problem. Bill (Riley) knows what to do. We just need to find a way to get the tires to work at COTA because the surface is very low grip. It requires a good spring setup."

Kuno Wittmer – No. 93 Pennzoil Ultra SRT Viper GTS-R

THE CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS TRACK LOOKS VERY IMPRESSIVE. "It's definitely a very, very interesting circuit and a world-class facility. The fact that Formula One races there and we get to share that circuit just a couple of months prior to their event is an honor. It's a circuit every driver wants to compete on and we're going there. We had the chance to test a couple of older generation Viper race cars there a few weeks ago which gave us a good perspective of the course."

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THE TRACK? "The track is actually pretty wide and has some decent elevation changes. It's interesting how corner one just rises up and then goes back down for corner two which is pretty much a rollercoaster ride. The most difficult part of the circuit will be the esses. It's a pretty wild set of esses and if you make a mistake on the first one or if you're off line, you're going to lose speed throughout all the other ones and that's where a pass could be made on the outside of you by another competitor and, of course, vice versa. I believe one of the most important corners will be the hairpin coming onto the long back straightaway, so we need to have our cars set up real well for the exit there.

"We're very conscious that this championship is winding down. We just need to keep our heads in the game."

HOW IMPORTANT WAS IT TO PHYSICALLY BE ON THE RACE TRACK? "Getting to a track like that which has so many corners, it's very important to get at least a day of practice. At this level of competition, if you show up against the other teams and you haven't even looked at the circuit, you haven't even stepped a foot there, you lose easily a half day of practice. And that half day could be devoted to other items like practicing pit stops or driver changes and not learning a circuit. It was extremely vital to get the four of us out there and learn the layout. That was the important thing and we did just that. Luckily for us, they were Vipers so we have an idea what a front engine V10 feels like on that circuit."

THE EVENT SCHEDULE HAS A GOOD BIT OF TESTING TIME LISTED BUT THAT CAN BE DECEPTIVE. "It's always nice to see a schedule with so much track time but that can be cut down real quick. It's very important that we have a plan of attack for the weekend and we get the cars set up properly since it will be the first time we'll have the SRT Viper GTS-Rs on that circuit. We have to get our cars set up quickly and then go about putting down laps and getting a race pace going. It's very vital that we maximize every single minute that we have on that track. We've got to pretend that every time we come into pit lane it's like a race. It's the only way that we're going to keep our streak going, our streak of success since Le Mans."

Jonathan Bomarito – No. 93 Pennzoil Ultra SRT Viper GTS-R

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT COMPETING AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS? "When you first step foot onto the premises, it's pretty impressive – a world-class facility. The maintenance is pretty impressive. The track itself is a lot of fun. We were able to get there for a day before Baltimore, not in our GTS-Rs but in older generation Vipers to learn the track."

HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE TRACK TIME? "It's definitely a big plus, a big positive before the weekend. As a driver, you get to do a lot more mental imagery and thinking about the track in ways that you couldn't if you'd never been around it. That alone is a huge gain for us and hopefully we'll be able to start working on the car a lot sooner because if we're out there, all four of us, trying to learn the track we're not driving the car as quickly and can't start our chassis development as early. That is so important at this level because you can't really afford to lose any time on track."

DID YOU GET A PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF THE TRACK? "I think the complex from Turn 3 to Turn 9 or so is like fast esses into a blind crest and you're just constantly changing direction with the car. The race car is going to have a lot more downforce and is going to be a lot faster through that section. I think getting a rhythm through the esses will be the key for a fast lap and success in the race."

ONE OF THE CHALLENGES THAT SRT MOTORSPORTS HAS HAD IS GOING TO A TRACK FOR THE FIRST TIME. SINCE CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS IS A NEW VENUE FOR ALMS, DOES THIS EVEN OUT THE COMPETITION? "I hope so. I think it does to some degree. We'll see. We'll find out how competitive we are initially when we roll the cars on to the track for the first time. It's a pretty drawn out week with a lot of track time. I think that kind of takes away from that potential advantage that maybe we would have had. With how much track time we get, how much practice before qualifying and the race, that's a good and bad thing. If you're a team that's struggling, it gives you time to catch up. If you're a team that's strong right off the trailer the first session, it gives other teams time to catch up. It kind of depends what end of that spectrum you're on whether it's a good or bad thing."

YOU ARE SCHEDULED TO BE ON THE TRACK A LOT ON TUESDAY AND THURSDAY BUT THAT CAN BE DECEPTIVE IF SOMEONE HAS A PROBLEM. "Every test and practice session will be critical. Maximizing your track time and the changes you make to develop a competitive setup are essential. Even though we get a lot of practice, it's super-important that the car runs flawlessly, the drivers don't make any mistakes and we learn as much as possible each time we're in the car."

Bill Riley – Vice President and Chief Engineer, Riley Technologies

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS AND HOW ARE YOU PREPARING FOR THE RACE? "To me, it's great to go out there. I've heard so much about it and can't wait to go out there and see the facility. I hear it's an unbelievable race track."

THIS IS THE FIRST ALMS EVENT AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS. DOES THAT EQUALIZE THINGS AMONG THE TEAMS? "Some teams have tested there but we have a big test day there on Tuesday. We have a pretty good base setup, similar to what we used at Mosport and Road America, to start off with. I'm excited about the Tuesday afternoon test as we have a fairly long list of items that we wouldn't try on a race weekend but since we have this test day, we can go through a lot of those things. I'm looking forward to that."

YOU RAN VERY WELL AT MOSPORT AND ROAD AMERICA. DO YOU THINK YOU CAN RUN WELL AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS BECAUSE OF THE DESIGN OF THE TRACK? "I don't know where our advantages are really strong but I think it should be a good track for us because it requires a lot of high-speed handling which is one of our strengths. I feel pretty confident that we're going to have a pretty strong weekend."

Matt Bejnarowicz – Lead Engineer, SRT Motorsports

HAVE YOU HAD A CHANCE TO LOOK AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS AND SEE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST? "It's a pretty technical track. The nice thing is that it's new to everybody so I feel like we're on equal footing with our competitors. At other tracks, the teams we race against have as much as 10-year histories. We're excited about this opportunity."

BECAUSE CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS IS NEW TO THE ALMS SCHEDULE, DO YOU FEEL THAT IS AN EQUALIZER AMONG THE TEAMS BECAUSE YOUR COMPETITORS HAVEN'T BEEN GOING THERE FOR MANY YEARS? "I think so, at least I hope so. I hope that's the case (laughs). I guess we'll find out. I'm sure people have been there testing and have a leg up already but you hope that everybody is a little bit more equal to the way that you're going into the event."

HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR THE RACE? "We know the track layout and we have run simulations to get the gearing right and predict what the car wants for certain types of corners. We know the flow of the track is pretty rhythmic so the car has to be very responsive. We call it a technical track because several of the corners back up. People who have driven there say you have to look two or three corners ahead because everything is a sequence. When you think about the car setup, we know there are some high-speed corners that are important so the car needs downforce but more importantly, I think that the car has to be pretty responsive and the driver needs to keep a rhythm. We do understand that the track is fairly low grip so the car needs to be able to accept a lower grip surface and we know the curbing is pretty important there to set a fast lap time. You kind of put all those together in a mental picture, run some simulations, and then kind of pull our book of knowledge from different race tracks and figure out where we need to start the race weekend.

"The thing we do know is it's a state of art facility. It's brand-new so the track surface is very smooth. Coming from Baltimore which was our roughest track, this will be quite a bit of a change."

IS IT REWARDING TO RUN WELL WHEN YOU ARE PREPARING UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES? "I think so. It's always rewarding to go to a new race track especially when it's a facility like COTA. The schedule gives us a lot of practice time and test time. We have a promoter test which is an additional five hours of testing. In a typical race weekend, we have two hours of practice. Now, we have an incremental five so it really gives us an opportunity to not only set the car up for the track but also look at some development on the car to improve potential in other areas."

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