



KONICA MINOLTA



# WAYNE TAYLOR

## *Team Owner Bio*

The theme for three-time sportscar-racing champion and team owner Wayne Taylor as the team he founded in 2007 celebrates a highly successful decade of existence is “unfinished business.”

With the introduction this season of his brand new racecar for 2017, the No. 10 Konica Minolta Cadillac DPi-V.R, Taylor is reunited with the Cadillac brand he first campaigned in the North American sportscar ranks from 2000 through 2003 alongside his longtime co-driver and business partner Max “The Ax” Angelelli.

After two years of development involving carmaker Cadillac, chassis manufacturer Dallara, and engine manufacturer Earnhardt Childress Racing – orchestrated behind the scenes by Angelelli – and an intensive testing program involving Taylor’s team and drivers Ricky and Jordan Taylor, there are high expectations for the all-new Konica Minolta Cadillac DPi-V.R as it competes for the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship beginning this season.

“The truth is that it is unfinished business for me and for Max, especially, as we ran the Cadillac program in 2000 to 2003,” Taylor said. “And just when we felt we were getting to a position where we thought we were going to be competitive, the program ended. As the series evolved and the new DPi formula was introduced this year, it made sense for Cadillac to come back and show its technology here.”

When you ask sports car racing veteran Wayne Taylor the exact moment he knew he was destined to become a racecar driver, there’s no hint of hesitation.

“Ever since my eyes opened,” Taylor said. “I went to the first round of the Formula One Grand Prix in South Africa from the time I was 2 years old. As far as I can remember, it’s all I ever wanted to do.”

That passion for motorsports has helped Taylor, a native of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, become one of the most decorated sportscar drivers in racing history, then one of the sport’s most successful team owners.

His impressive driving resume includes wins at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Rolex 24 At Daytona, the 12 Hours of Sebring and the inaugural Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta, not to mention IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and IMSA World SportsCar titles.

With plenty of wins to his name in the world’s biggest sports car races, Taylor’s challenges for the past decade have been the toughest but most rewarding yet.

In November 2006, Taylor announced the formation of the team that bears his name – Wayne Taylor Racing. He continued to take to the driver’s seat for cameo roles with his team through the 2014 Rolex 24 while his longtime co-driver, friend and business partner Max “The Ax” Angelelli carried on as full-time and then part-time driver with various co-drivers in IMSA competition.

While Taylor had been acclimated for quite some time with the pressures of being a winning racecar driver, owning a team presented a new set of challenges and rewards.

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“The hardest part was waking up every morning and thinking about what a massive responsibility it is,” Taylor said of his being a team owner. “There’s a responsibility directly to our partners and then to also be responsible for every single person who’s employed by us. I’m fortunate because most all the people I have on board are people I had worked with in the past and have a lot of experience with. That part makes it easier. If you surround yourself with good people and partners like I think I have, it makes it a lot easier.”

To get to where he is today – a successful sports car driver and team owner – Taylor worked his way up the racing ladder in his native South Africa. He started racing karts, moved to the Formula Ford series and graduated to the South African F2 Championship. In the premier single-seat championship in South Africa, he captured the 1986 series title, his first of what would be several driving titles.

“It was special because I really didn’t have the sponsorship or the money to do it,” Taylor said. “It was also so important to me to win the South African championship before I could make the next step. It was a huge relief, and it was one of my goals. It was just after that when I tried to pursue a career in Formula One. It became quite evident that you weren’t able to get there just on talent. It would require finding sponsorship. I quickly figured out that if I wanted to maintain being a racecar driver, I’d have to look at other formulas. That’s when I decided to turn my back on single-seat racing and pursue sports car racing.”

In 1987, Taylor left South Africa to pursue a sports car career. His first race was the 24 Hours of Le Mans, where he finished an impressive fourth.

He competed in select races in the FIA World Sportscar Group C Championship in 1988 and moved to London at the end of the season to compete in the full circuit in 1989.

During that 1989 season, the last three races took place at racetracks in the United States. As a result, Taylor decided it was time to try racing in America.

“I just loved everything about racing in America,” Taylor said. “I had three pretty good races, including putting the car on the pole in San Diego. I quickly realized that I wanted to be racing in America. I went back at the end of 1989 and got a call from Jim Miller and moved over to the U.S. in January of 1990.”

Taylor started his U.S. racing career by competing in IMSA for the factory Chevrolet team.

In 1994, Taylor was the IMSA World SportsCar champion, a feat he duplicated in 1996 thanks to wins in the Rolex 24 and the 12 Hours of Sebring. Wins in the 1998 24 Hours of Le Mans in the LMP class and the Petit Le Mans in a Ferrari 333SP also became proud moments in Taylor’s illustrious sports car career.

“The Rolex 24 At Daytona win in 1996 was really something,” he said. “And then we went to the 12 Hours of Sebring and won that. I would say that is really something because it was the first time for both. Then in 1998, winning the Sports Prototype division at Le Mans in a Ferrari and winning the inaugural Petit Le Mans was also hugely special because Ferrari is such a big name in motorsports. To win in a Ferrari at Le Mans was huge.”

Asking Taylor to compare which championships and prestigious race wins are most special is like asking him which of his two sons he loves more. But his 2005 IMSA championship with Angelelli might have meant the most because he was able to accomplish the goal alongside his good friend.

Starting with the win at the season-opening Rolex 24, the team won five races and captured three poles during the 2005 season. Taylor and Angelelli also became the only duo in Rolex Series history to complete every lap of the season – a perfect 2,056 of 2,056.

“To win the Rolex 24 with Max, my friend, and Emmanuel (Collard), that was incredibly exciting,” Taylor said. “Winning the Rolex 24 and the championship was really something. To have won all of those races, the 24 and the championship with Max, it’s pretty hard to beat that one.”

The special 2005 season was bookended by a runner-up result in the 2004 Rolex Series championship standings and a third-place finish in the 2006 title chase. In those three years of competition, Taylor and Angelelli scored nine wins, five poles, 22 podiums, 31 top-fives and 36 top-10s.

Once he established his team in time for the 2007 season, the winning tradition continued for Taylor, but this time as full-time team owner while his one-time pipe dream of seeing his sons Ricky and Jordan take over full-time co-driving duties actually became a reality for the 2014 debut of what is now known as the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship – a merger between the Rolex Series and the American Le Mans Series.

The first nine seasons of Wayne Taylor Racing netted 21 wins and 55 podium finishes, including seven wins and 18 podium finishes for Angelelli and Taylor's eldest son Ricky from 2010 through 2012. Angelelli and Ricky Taylor finished runner-up in the championship in 2010 and 2011 and fifth in 2012. With Ricky Taylor having departed to the No. 90 Spirit of Daytona Corvette DP team, Taylor's younger son Jordan assumed the role as Angelelli's full-time co-driver for 2013 and the two promptly took the series by storm, winning five times, including a sweep of the final three events of the season, to capture the final Rolex Series driver championship.

And, for just the second time since Taylor brought his longtime primary sponsor SunTrust Bank to the Rolex Series in 2004, a new primary sponsor adorned the stunning black No. 10 Corvette DP in early 2014 – Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A., Inc.

At the start of the 2014 season, one of Taylor's longtime dreams of pitting his two sons as full-time co-drivers came to fruition as Angelelli assumed the role of third driver in the four iconic events that make up the Tequila Patron North American Endurance Cup at Daytona, Sebring, Watkins Glen and Road Atlanta.

In their first three seasons together as full-time co-drivers, the Taylor brothers combined for seven wins, 18 podiums and four pole positions. One of the most thrilling victories came in the 2014 season-ending Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta for the Taylor brothers and Angelelli, which came 16 years after Wayne Taylor co-drove to the overall win in the very first Petit Le Mans.

And Taylor also enjoyed one last hurrah in the driver's seat at the 2014 season-opening Rolex 24, where he joined his sons and Angelelli in co-driving to a solid runner-up finish.

“This has been all about surrounding yourself with great people, and I feel our people are the best,” Taylor said. “We’ve had our share of ups and downs, and the racing has evolved into such a competitive level. We used to feel disappointed if we didn’t win. Then we would be disappointed if we weren’t on the podium. Then top-fives became something of great value. And now it’s tough enough to just get a top-10. Still, we fight on because championships are what this team has always been about, and we plan to continue to deliver.”

Taylor lives in Apopka, Florida along with his wife Shelley.