



PATRICK LONG, SPENCER PUMPELLY PATRICK LINDSEY, JASON HART, DANIEL GRAEFF

No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche for Park Place Motorsports Set for 51st Rolex 24 After Setting the Pace at the Recent Roar Before the 24 Test Days

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Jan. 22, 2013) – A new racing season unveils a brand new contender for the 51st Rolex 24 At Daytona GT-class victory when the No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Cup entry for newly christened Park Place Motorsports hits the 3.56-mile, 12-turn Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway road circuit for this weekend’s traditional twice-around-the-clock endurance marathon.

While the racing team may be in just its third month of existence, key members of its all-star driver lineup, engineering staff and crew are certainly no strangers to Daytona’s hallowed victory lane and, buoyed by their strong showing at the Roar Before the 24 test days earlier this month, as well as that of the sister No. 72 Vess Energy Services Porsche GT3 entry, Park Place Motorsports has served notice it will be a force to be reckoned with this weekend.

Led by veteran road racer Patrick Long, the world’s only American Porsche factory driver, a three-time American Le Mans Series champion and a 2009 Rolex 24 winner, the No. 73 Racing4Research team left the Jan. 4-6 test weekend fastest among all 41 GT-class entries that took part. Moreover, the lineup that also includes two-time Rolex 24 winner Spencer Pumpelly (2006 and 2011) alongside co-drivers Patrick Lindsey, Jason Hart and Daniel Graeff also enjoyed a nearly flawless test weekend on *and* off the track from an executional standpoint – a rarity for a brand new organization. Under the direction of team principals Lindsey and John Horton, who also serves as head of engineering, the Park Place Motorsports unit that opened its doors to the public Nov. 10 has performed like the collection of successful and seasoned veterans that it is, and it has not missed a beat since.

As the team looks to ride its recent wave of momentum into official Rolex 24 practice and qualifying that begin Thursday and, ultimately, all the way to the ultimate result when the checkered flag falls Sunday afternoon, the No. 73 Porsche team will be proudly representing the Children’s Tumor Foundation’s Racing4Research program, which has become quite the fixture at recent Rolex 24s and is now in its sixth year. Graeff, who is a member of the organization’s board of directors, will be making his fifth consecutive Rolex 24 start in the Racing4Research entry.

Meanwhile, the No. 72 Vess Energy Services Porsche effort is spearheaded by Mike Vess, chairman and managing owner of Wichita, Kansas-based Vess Oil, a company he co-founded in 1979. His lead driver, Canadian veteran Jean-Francois Dumoulin, is a 2004 and 2007 Rolex 24 winner, and they are joined in the driver seat by Mike Skeen, Chuck Cole and Grant Phipps.

Practice for the 51th Rolex 24 At Daytona begins Thursday morning with GT-class qualifying set for 4:10 p.m. EST. Race time Saturday is 3:30 p.m. with SPEED kicking off 15 hours of live TV coverage beginning with its prerace show at 3 p.m. SPEED.com will stream live video from 11 p.m. Saturday to 9 a.m. Sunday, when live SPEED television resumes through the race’s conclusion. Live radio coverage will be provided by the Motor Racing Network (MRN) and Sirius NASCAR Radio Channel 90 in multiple segments. Check local listings. Live timing and scoring during all on-track sessions can be found at www.grand-am.com, and on mobile devices at m.grand-am.com and the GRAND-AM smartphone app.

Patrick Long, co-driver of the No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Cup for Park Place Motorsports:

You left Daytona three weeks ago having laid down the fastest lap at the Roar Before the 24 test days. How does that affect your outlook for good result in the actual race this weekend?

“Speed is only one-fifth of what it takes to win the Rolex 24 and, with that, it means very little to have the fastest lap at the test when you get to the end of the month. But it’s still a good omen and we’ll take it for our partners, the Children’s Tumor Foundation, and all the guys who worked so hard to get us up and running. Our partners and our people are the main reason we shoot for the very best every time we hit the track. But, being that this will be my 10th Rolex 24 in a row, and I’ve learned very well that, about 3-1/2 hours into the race on Saturday everybody forgets what happened at testing and who won practice and who won qualifying, and the focus is really about getting into your groove and being mistake-free on the track and in the pits, and hitting your marks. I hate to sound like a 31-year-old who’s preaching to my more successful and elder teammates, but I keep driving home that we need to just race the race. It’s great to be at the top of the timesheet, but we’re pretty confident there were a few key players out there from other manufacturers who hadn’t showed everything, yet, which is part of the racing game. So, by no means have we been counting our chickens.”

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Park Place Motorsports is a brand new entity, but the people behind the scenes seem to be seasoned veterans. Does that put you at more of a comfort level when it comes to tackling the Rolex 24, in particular?

“There are a number of guys on the team who I have been fortunate to run with on previous teams I’ve driven for and, with some of them, we’ve actually been able to win the (Rolex) watch. A couple of those guys, in ’09 when we won the GT race here, we were on the same team. A couple of us guys share that bond and we want to repeat. I don’t think any of us have repeated since we did it together, so we really want to do it again this year.”

Having won this race before, how would you describe what it takes to do it without getting caught up in its oftentimes frantic pace?

“The goal is a win. But, without trying to sound like a ‘been-there-done-that’ kind of guy, what I’m preaching is that age-old, ‘We’ve got to race the race and we’ve got to hit all our marks and not worry about who was P1 in qualifying or practice or any of that.’ The GT race has not really come down to a battle royale in the last few hours like the DP race has the last five or six years. So, if we go off of that, we just need to be there all the way through. That’s as plain and simple as it is.”

Spencer Pumpelly, co-driver of the No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Cup for Park Place Motorsports:

You are a two-time winner of this race. How would you size up your chances of getting a third Rolex 24 win this weekend?

“The Rolex 24 is something I’ve always related to a poker hand. You can arrive at the track as prepared as humanly possible, but anything can happen once you start playing the game, so what you always want to have in your hand are pocket aces. After what we saw at the test earlier this month, right now I think we’ve got pocket aces. We seem to have the best of everything going into the race. So while the race can take many different turns as it always does – some things being within your control and some that are out of your control – you want to go into the race weekend as solid as possible, and I think that’s the position we’re in now. We’re definitely a legitimate contender.”

The Roar Before the 24 Test Days appeared to go very smoothly for this brand new entity, Park Place Motorsports. Did you believe that to be the case?

“It was my first time with the team and I was very pleased getting to know all the guys and getting to work with them. We put a really competitive car on the track and we’ve got a lot of guys with a lot of experience that should work to our advantage this weekend. This team last year was always very quick and always seemed to put great cars on the track. So the speed of the car and the fact we were quickest isn’t surprising. The fact the car and the team are operating so well is also a testament to the experience the guys have so, even though the team is new, a lot of the players involved have a lot of experience. We’ve got a lot of 24-hour wins under the roof of that garage, so I’m glad to be a part of it.”

Patrick Lindsey, co-driver of the No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Cup for Park Place Motorsports:

You’re about to tackle your first career Rolex 24 this weekend as part of a solid driver lineup and an experienced and successful crew. What is your outlook for the first official race outing for this Park Place Motorsports program you created?

“Obviously, we were very happy with the way things went at the test, not necessarily because we laid down the fastest lap of the weekend, but because of how smoothly and efficiently everybody went about their business. Coming back for race weekend, we just want to pick up where we left off and continue that momentum from the test. Being that this will be my first Rolex 24, I probably have some things to prove to myself, but this 24-hour race is really all about teamwork and about taking care of the car and doing the best we all can for each other. That’s the mentality we took into the test weekend, too. We have to keep working together as a team and that’s all there is to it. The test was a dress rehearsal for the 24. We don’t have a lot of track time before we race this weekend, so that’s what we used the test for. The fact that the Racing4Research Porsche showed speed is a huge bonus.”

Your brother-in-law John Horton runs the racing side of things and seems to have everybody running on all cylinders. What has been your approach to building the racing side of this team?

“John and I try to promote a non-ego, non-competitive environment for the guys. Everyone has his own responsibility, everyone has his own input and it is valued and taken into consideration at all times. In some cases, it’s a little more of a laissez-faire kind of atmosphere where everybody gets to do his own thing and has leeway, but everyone’s ultimately accountable. So, people do the right thing by the team because it’s their job on the line. I think, given the room to do that, everybody performs better. It’s not as structured as a lot of other teams, but it does give you an idea as to why the team operates the way it does. We have a lot of talented people. No one’s in there trying to make a name for himself. People have already done a lot before they ever even came here, so they come in with the mentality of mutual respect for everybody else. It’s a great atmosphere.”

Talk a little bit about this strong driver lineup you have been able to assemble.

“It’s going to be a fun weekend, to say the least. Patrick (Long) and I had a chance to race against each other in 2011 in the SCCA World Challenge. I gained a lot of respect for Patrick. Obviously, I knew of him, and then having the chance to run against him in 2011 was fun. He won the championship that year. I had a good car and I drove OK that year and, it was fun competing against names like Patrick Long and Johnny O’Connell, and driving with Patrick this weekend is going to be a great opportunity to learn some things. I’m excited to have him and Spencer (Pumpelly), who both have a ton of experience in these cars. Jason (Hart) and I will ultimately be the workhorses in the race, and then we’ll hand the car over to those two guys to close it out.”

Jason Hart, co-driver of the No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Cup for Park Place Motorsports:**Your overall thoughts as you head back to Daytona for the first Rolex 24 for Park Place Motorsports?**

“I think we’re really going to have an enjoyable 24 in the fact that we have the Park Place Motorsports primary car representing the Children’s Tumor Foundation and its Racing4Research program, and it looks really, really good and showed lots of pace at the test earlier this month. We also have a new entry, the No. 72 Vess Energy Porsche, that’s also looking very good considering this is its first outing. Our ultimate goal, obviously, is to win the race, which the 73 car certainly showed it is capable of doing. At the very least, the goal here, as it is every year, is for both of our cars to take the checker. Whatever happens beyond that, it’s icing on the cake.”

How did you feel about the team’s performance during test days, and was it at all surprising?

“It was very exciting and made me feel blessed to be working with such an outstanding collection of people. The team jelled like a family that’s known each other forever, which was truly amazing since it was really our first outing at the racetrack. Being with Park Place Motorsports and having the support of the Children’s Tumor Foundation and Racing4Research is really a special feeling. We are surrounded by a seasoned group of professionals who did an absolutely fantastic job at the test. It’s such an amazing atmosphere to be working with such great people, and I can’t wait to get back to the track this weekend.”

What are your thoughts about fielding a second Park Place Motorsports entry?

“We’re really excited that one of our friends and clients, Mike Vest, decided put together the No. 72 Vess Energy car for the race. It will be his first outing in the Rolex Series, and his first 24-hour, as well. So, he is on cloud nine, and we’re right there with him. We have a good group of drivers to join him, including Jean-Francois Dumoulin and Mike Skeen. It’s going to be very exciting, very fun.”

Daniel Graeff, co-driver of the No. 73 Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Cup for Park Place Motorsports:**Your overall thoughts as you head back to Daytona for your fifth consecutive Rolex 24 in a Racing4Research-sponsored entry?**

“This is a very strong effort, to say the least. We have high expectations and justifiably so. It’s a great team, a great driver lineup. I think we really have good stuff. You can’t discount this group, by any means. As far as CTF (the Children’s Tumor Foundation) is concerned, being aligned with these guys has been nothing short of wonderful. It’s just a top-notch organization in Park Place Motorsports. And to have this driver lineup and this effort, this is perhaps our best shot at getting a tremendous result both in terms of raising money for the foundation and what we do on the racetrack.”

With this being the sixth Rolex 24 for the Racing4Research program, you have to be proud of how successful the program has become.

“We found pretty immediately that we were doing something that was so differentiated from any other charitable organization, using automobile racing as a fundraising backdrop. A lot of drivers have brought their own charities over the years, but they’ve typically been one-off efforts. And numerous other programs have come and gone. But this was the first time, to my knowledge, that a foundation truly figured out that racing was the main platform to raise dollars and awareness. Our growth with GRAND-AM has been tremendous. We’ve branched out into NASCAR with Ryan Newman. I’ve run some K&N Series events. We’re involved with Lucas Oil off-road trucks. We’ve had excellent representation in GRAND-AM through Justin Bell, who we drove with last year and who also is going to involve his Mustang team in the World Challenge series. And Ryan Eversley in his 360 Motorsports ST has been very supportive in getting our word out. All of these things that started with one decal on one car five years ago have really dovetailed into the biggest single way the foundation raises money. We’re uniquely positioned, now, because we have become sort of a staple in the Rolex Series, and we’re looking to grow now that NASCAR has brought together these two factions (GRAND-AM and the American Le Mans Series) in road racing. We’re poised to take off to the tune of where road racing was back in its heyday. And, back to this weekend, CTF really honored to be part of this Park Place program because this is the biggest opportunity we’ve ever had in the biggest race of the year.”

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About Children’s Tumor Foundation/Racing4Research: Developed by the Children’s Tumor Foundation (CTF), the Racing4Research (R4R) program utilizes competitive, professional auto racing as a vehicle to increase awareness of Neurofibromatosis (NUro-Fibro-muh-TOE-sis), or NF, and raise funds for research through corporate sponsorship, personal donations, and individual fundraising by NF Heroes: children and adults from around the country who live with neurofibromatosis. NF affects one in every 3,000 children, more than cystic fibrosis, Duchenne muscular dystrophy and Huntington’s disease combined, and can lead to a wide variety of complications, including blindness, bone abnormalities, cancer, deafness, disfigurement, learning disabilities and excruciating and disabling pain. The Racing4Research program offers children and families living with the disorder a uniquely empowering weekend, and has raised over \$2 million dollars since its inception in 2008. Donations can be made at www.Racing4Research.org.

About Park Place Motorsports: Park Place Motorsports is an extension of Dallas-based Park Place Dealerships, which represents upscale manufacturers Porsche, McLaren, Mercedes-Benz, Jaguar, Lexus, Bentley, Maserati, Lotus, Rolls-Royce, Volvo and Smart. Park Place Motorsports augments the unparalleled attention its dealerships provide by offering customers a premium level of support in relation to their motorsports activities. Services include maintenance and repair, driver and racecar support, and parts engineering and distribution. These offerings are authentically promoted by Park Place Motorsports’ flagship GT team in the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series.

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