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SPORTS CAR SERIES

# Runner-Up at Rolex 24 Something To Celebrate

## *Newly Christened Velocity Worldwide Corvette DP Performs Flawlessly At the Hands of Angelelli, Jordan Taylor and IndyCar Champ Hunter-Reay*

**Date:** Jan. 26-27, 2013

**Event:** 51<sup>st</sup> Rolex 24 At Daytona (Round 1 of 12)

**Series:** Daytona Prototype division of the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series

**Location:** Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway (3.56-mile, 12-turn road course)

**Start/Finish:** 12<sup>th</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> (Running, completed 709 of 709 laps)

**Winner:** Scott Pruett, Memo Rojas, Juan Pablo Montoya and Charlie Kimball of Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates (BMW)

It wasn't that frustratingly elusive win to end its eight-year victory drought at the Rolex 24 At Daytona, but second place in this weekend's 51<sup>st</sup> renewal of the traditional GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series season opener was most certainly the next-best thing. And the drivers and crew of the newly christened No. 10 Velocity Worldwide Corvette Dallara DP team of Wayne Taylor Racing will gladly take this runner-up result and do just a little bit of celebrating.

Max Angelelli, his new full-time co-driver Jordan Taylor and defending IZOD IndyCar Series champion Ryan Hunter-Reay put nary a wheel off for 24 consecutive hours of hard-nosed racing Saturday and Sunday en route to team owner Wayne Taylor's best Rolex 24 result since he and Angelelli co-drove to a thoroughly dominating victory in 2005 en route to their equally dominating run to that season's Rolex Series championship. The last Rolex 24 podium for Wayne Taylor Racing was the team's very first race in 2007 after first opening its doors in the fall of 2006. That third-place finish came at the hands of Angelelli, Wayne Taylor, Jan Magnussen and four-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Series champion Jeff Gordon.

After the No. 10 Corvette DP established itself as a fixture at the front of the pack from the opening hours of this weekend's Rolex 24, Angelelli made a fast and furious effort over the final hours to bring home another victory in the twice-around-the-clock endurance marathon. He led for a final time with just eight minutes left to go, but a trip down pit road for a splash of fuel enough to get him to the finish gave the lead back to Juan Pablo Montoya in the No. 01 Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates BMW Riley, and Angelelli ended up taking the checkered flag 21.9 seconds behind Montoya in second place.

The Velocity Worldwide trio of Angelelli, Jordan Taylor and Hunter-Reay led 56 of the 709 race laps covered this weekend, with all three drivers spending time at the point. But, in the big picture, they nor any other car-and-driver combination proved to be any sort of match for the Nos. 01 and 02 Ganassi BMWs, which spent 537 laps in the lead, including 421 by the race-winning No. 01 car Montoya shared with its full-time co-drivers and the three-time-defending-champion duo of Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas, along with Charlie Kimball. The No. 02 car, shared by IndyCar stars Dario Franchitti and Scott Dixon, Joey Hand and NASCAR regular Jamie McMurray, proved to be equally powerful but retired 116 laps short of the race distance because of drivetrain issues.

To complicate matters for the No. 10 Velocity Worldwide effort and its fellow Corvette DP competitors, engine airflow restrictions imposed just prior to the race weekend designed to slow down the Corvette DPs left Angelelli and his teammates at a loss for words in trying to describe how they would keep pace with the BMWs for a solid 24 hours.

"We did not have the power to compete fairly, so we thought a strategy to make it to the end of the race and beat them with fuel mileage was our only hope," Angelelli said. "So we took fuel and didn't change tires on the last stop, even though I had many, many laps on my tires, and we were hoping just to make it like that with the strategy and get the win. But we didn't have quite enough to do it. The 01 car is in another league. But, anyway, we are very happy with our Velocity Worldwide team, and our Corvette DP performed very well. I told everybody on the team I would never give up, and they know me. But look, this is the Velocity Worldwide team. They made an effort, not me. They made an effort with pit stops and strategy, and it was almost perfect. So, it's kind of like a win for them."

Angelelli, who qualified 12<sup>th</sup> and started and finished the race, was credited with 22 of the 56 laps led by the No. 10 Corvette DP. Thirteen of those came during a more than two-hour caution period for fog that settled in and around the speedway grounds as the sun was coming up Sunday morning. Stellar driving by Angelelli and swift pit work by the Velocity Worldwide crew got Angelelli in front just before the race went yellow for the fog.

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The 21-year-old Jordan Taylor, who was making his first start with his father's team after his older brother Ricky Taylor left to join the No. 90 Spirit of Daytona Corvette DP entry, proved he will help Angelelli and the Wayne Taylor Racing stable pick up where it left off last season by exhibiting the cool decision-making ability and crafty driving talents of a seasoned veteran. Taylor led one lap, but solidly kept the racecar in the top-four throughout all of his driving stints this weekend."

"I guess, when you get down to it, we were the best of the rest, you could say," Taylor said. "Ganassi was somewhat in a class of its own. Our team did a great job. We didn't have one mechanical problem the entire race. We never had to do anything in the garage. It was just fuel, tires, driver changes and that was it. Everyone executed the race. It was just unfortunate the way the cars were going that (second place) is where we ended up. You've got to be proud of everyone. Looking at the long run, we are in a championship here, so leaving here with second-place points is not a bad place to start the season."

Hunter-Reay, who was back alongside Angelelli for the first time since he joined the veteran Italian and Wayne Taylor for the 2006 Rolex Series season finale at Miller Motorsports Park in Tooele, Utah, led the most laps in the No. 10 Corvette DP with 33. He also proved to be a smooth and steady competitor with each tour of the 3.56-mile, 12-turn superspeedway circuit, and managed to give the No. 01 Ganassi BMW driver fits – whenever he could get near them.

"It was an excellent job, an excellent team effort by everybody involved," said Hunter-Reay, whose best finish in six previous Rolex 24s was third place in 2010 with the NPN Racing BMW Riley team. "Team Chevy, Wayne Taylor Racing – the preparation was second to none. We had a phenomenal race, really, when you look at how it all went. No mistakes, never went to the garage, never a hiccup, had great pace. We were struggling a little bit on some of the regulations with power. We had a little bit of a disadvantage there that we had to work against."

While the No. 10 Corvette could get no closer than 21.9 seconds of the No. 01 Ganassi BMW after 24 hours of racing, it crossed the finish line some 34 seconds ahead of the defending race-winners – the No. 60 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley quintet of Oswaldo Negri, John Pew, A.J. Allmendinger, Marcos Ambrose and Justin Wilson. Most importantly, Angelelli and Taylor leave Daytona with second-place points – the team's best start to a season since the 2005 championship campaign. Last year, the No. 10 Corvette DP was out of the race after just 30 minutes and scored 14<sup>th</sup>-place points.

"Just representing Team Chevy, it's such a big deal for me," said team owner Wayne Taylor. "When I think I have been in America for 22 years and, when I first came here, I drove for Jim Miller, who is now Pratt and Miller, our Corvette DP bodywork designer. My program manager when I was driving at that time was Mark Kent, who is now director of Chevrolet Racing. In 1991, when Jordan was born, we were racing at Lime Rock Park and Jim Miller said to me, 'I'll have a plane for you because Shelley (Taylor, wife) was pregnant with Jordan. And now, all this time later, he is in this car, with this team, with Mark Kent and everybody. I'm happy. I wanted to win so bad for Team Chevy, and so much for Velocity Worldwide and all our partners. I'm really happy. I'm relieved, I guess, you know. I was not prepared to not be the face of Team Chevy with my team. I know there are a lot of teams, but I wanted to be the one."

"I'm really happy. Coming into the season, we've all been excited with this new partnership with Velocity Worldwide, and our partnership with Team Chevy, and I think Ryan Hunter-Reay, winning the championship last year and driving with me back in 2006, coming with us. Max, of course, is my family and part of everything we've done. And then Jordan coming on board this year, there was so much expectation. And there was so much drama coming into this race with horsepower and this and that. In the end, I felt that this team did more than anybody else. I don't remember one pit stop that we didn't beat everybody. And everybody just executed perfectly and we were just about there."

The next event on the 2013 GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series 12-race tour is the GRAND-AM of the Americas at the new Circuit of the Americas Formula 1 circuit in Austin, Texas. Race day is Saturday, March 2, with same-day delayed television coverage provided by SPEED beginning at 5:30 p.m. EST.

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