



Press Release

RISI COMPETIZIONE PETIT LE MANS AT ROAD ATLANTA PREVIEW - 2018

A Race Engineers' Perspective

**Risi Competizione Ferrari 488 GTLM No. 62: Toni Vilander (FIN)
Miguel Molina (ESP)
Andrea Bertolini (ITA)**

Houston, Texas (October 5, 2018)...Rick Mayer, race engineer of the Risi Competizione No. 62 Ferrari 488 GTLM team, gives a preview of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship Motul Petit Le Mans, October 11-13 at Road Atlanta.

The team announced the drivers joining Risi Competizione for the 21st annual Petit Le Mans race to pilot the No. 62 Ferrari 488 GTLM will be Toni Vilander, Miguel Molina and Andrea Bertolini.

The Track: Road Atlanta is one of the favorite tracks for Risi Competizione and most of our drivers. Favorites tend to be the ones you've had success at, and this is no exception. It's a fast track layout with a variety of different types of corners, technically challenging for both the drivers and engineers. It's a busy track for the drivers. The track requires a lot of concentration and continuous driver inputs of throttle, and steering. You have to hustle the car here to go quickly.

The requirements to go fast at Road Atlanta are always the same: You need a good platform for the high-speed corners - Turn 1, the Esses and Turn 12; You can gain a significant amount of time using the apex curbs effectively at Turn 3 and the exit curbs of Turn 5; The curbs at both Turns 7 and 10 also yield lap time. However, as much as you need the curbs for a quick lap time, you have to exercise caution as using them repeatedly here 'could' lead to failed drivetrain components. It's a long 10-hour race and you need to be somewhat kind to the car; you have to finish to win. Top speed is very important as there are few places to pass.

Setup: Stiffer (springs and anti-roll bars) is better for platform support, but curbing is so important here, it's a compromise. A stiff setup also makes cleaning the pick-up off the tires easier as you can load the tires harder. With such a big field (and short track), the number of times that a GT car may have to go off the racing line, and therefore experience pick-up, will be increased. Numerous safety car periods are common at Petit making clean hot tires for restarts an important consideration in tire compound choice and setup. Dampers that give support, but blow-off on the curbs, can make a big difference here, not just in lap time but longevity of the drivetrain components.

Top speed and downforce level will be based on peer group straight speeds. Greater overall downforce is the quicker way around the track and better for tire life, but you can't let the competition drive around you on the straight. Passing will be difficult, especially in GTLM with the nine super-competitive cars from five different manufacturers. The best passing spot will be braking into Turn 10. However, if you can't keep up on the straight you won't be in a position to out-

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brake someone into Turn 10. The track isn't particularly hard on brakes, but you need the brakes to last the 390+ laps that the GTLM cars will run during the race. Keeping the car low to the ground (low running ride heights) is a challenge at Road Atlanta. Your options are to run very high ride heights (Sebring track levels) or stiff springs or bump rubbers and packers to hold the car up in the large compression areas. The main areas where the car will contact the track are the bumps in the middle of Turn 1 (left rear) and the curb in Turn 3 (right side), either the curb itself or the landing from launching off the curb. Your ability to setup around these features will ultimately determine how low to the track you can run the car.

The Race: Traffic will play a large role as always at Petit particularly with the large car count. Keeping out of trouble will be crucial for success. With a 10-hour race, pit strategy is easier as you're not forecasting the leaders lap count or time to finish as in previous years when it was a distance based race.

Pit work needs to be only fuel, tires and driver changes with the occasional addition of engine oil. Anything extra or slow pit work will put you at the back of the field quickly. It's so hard to pass same class cars, you can't lose positions in the pits.

Qualifying is less important at these long races than our usual 2 hour and 40 minute events, but keeping up in the lead pack will always be vital due to the level of competition and how difficult it is to pass at Road Atlanta. The current caution rules should keep the GTLM front-runners on the same lap.

Risi run Ferrari's have fared well at Petit over the years; it's one of the team's more successful venues. Let's hope history repeats and we can end the season on a high note.

Tune-In Information:

Qualifying will broadcast on IMSA.tv on Friday October 12 from 3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. EDT. The race begins Saturday, October 13 at 11:05 a.m. EDT with the entire race on IMSA.tv. Television coverage is from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Fox Sports 1 and from 12:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. on Fox Sports 2.

The entire race will be streamed live on FSGO with FS1 authentication. Fans can also listen in with audio commentary via IMSA.com, RadioLeMans.com and Sirius XM Radio and follow the race live with in-car cameras, IMSA Radio and timing & scoring available worldwide on IMSA.com and the IMSA App.

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