



Press Release

Risi Competizione Persuing Further Success at Iconic Petit Le Mans Race

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

(Houston, Texas, October 9, 2018) ...After a break from competition in the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) series during 2018, the popular Risi Competizione Ferrari team is back on track seeking to write more history at the iconic Motul Petit Le Mans race. The fall classic race at Road Atlanta in Braselton, Ga., is the 21st annual Petit Le Mans, scheduled for October 13.

Risi Competizione drivers for this year's Petit Le Mans are all Ferrari GT factory drivers, as usual. Finn Toni Vilander, Spaniard Miguel Molina and Italian Andrea Bertolini will share driving duties in the Rosso Red Prancing Horse. Vilander has two victories, four podiums and two poles in six entries at the 2.54-mile, 12-turn road course. Bertolini will be making his fifth appearance and has one podium at Petit, while Molina is a Petit rookie.

The Risi Competizione team, who is celebrating its 21st anniversary, has extensive history at the 10-hour Petit Le Mans race. With four victories, 10 podiums, and six poles in 23 entries over 17 years, the American Ferrari team of Team Principal Giuseppe Risi is one of the best-known teams on track. Their history dates back to the first ever Petit Le Mans race in 1998 when Wayne Taylor, Eric van der Poele and Emmanuel Collard drove into the history books in the Doyle-Risi Ferrari 333 SP in the inaugural Petit Le Mans race.

Risi Competizione cars have collected three additional victories at the popular IMSA season finale. In 2008 Jamie Melo and Mika Salo won from pole position in the Ferrari 430 GT2 and again in 2009 with Melo, Salo and Pierre Kaffer, also in the 430 GT2. In 2016 Giancarlo Fisichella, James Calado and Vilander took the Risi Ferrari 488 GTLM to victory.

The first practice session for the 2018 running of the Petit Le Mans begins Thursday morning, October 5 at 11:10 a.m. for one hour with Practice 2 from 3:15-4:15 p.m. and night Practice 3 is 7:30-9:00 p.m. Friday morning Practice 4 will run at 11:40 a.m. for an hour and GTLM class qualifying is 4:45-5:00 p.m. All times are Eastern.

The Motul Petit Le Mans 10-hour race on Saturday begins at 11:05 a.m. after morning warm up from 8:30-8:50 a.m. Live timing and scoring is available for all on-track sessions at IMSA.com and the IMSA Smartphone app.

Rick Mayer, Risi Competizione Race Engineer:

You are bringing together three Ferrari GT factory drivers for Petit Le Mans this weekend, but ones that have not regularly raced on the IMSA circuit this year. How do you get them all up to speed and working together cohesively?

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“We’ll have some discussion with the drivers and go over the important rules. We’ll do this every day up to the race. IMSA has some unique safety car and wave by rules that are different then PWC and WEC.”

The Risi Comp team has only done two IMSA races this year (Daytona and Sebring), along with Le Mans with Keating Motorsports. Have you kept up with the IMSA Balance of Performance (BoP), activities and progress of the other teams to be able to focus on the strengths the team needs for success?

“We constantly monitor all the IMSA changes. Our BoP isn’t ideal currently. We’ll struggle a bit with power comparatively, as we did at Sebring. But it’s a long race and we’ll see how it plays out.”

How do you expect the Ferrari 488 GTLM to fare against the other manufacturers in the series finale?

“I think we’re as ready as we can be for Petit. Others have a championship to worry about and forward reaching BoP considerations. We’re just looking for the best finish possible at Petit Le Mans.”

The Risi Competizione has had a lot of success at Petit Le Mans and the drivers all know how to manage a car for an endurance race. What are the three most important factors everyone will have to achieve or accomplish to be in the hunt for a victory?

“All our drivers are proficient with an endurance mentality. The drivers need to stay out of trouble on track. We need to make no mistakes in pit lane and we need good strategy calls.”

The level of competition in the IMSA GTLM class is fierce. Losing a lap can be detrimental at Road Atlanta and especially because passing is difficult. What will it take to run a perfect race?

“It will take no driver errors or pit lane errors in the race and we need a fast car for the last two or three hours, where it counts.”

Andrea Bertolini, driver, No. 62 Ferrari 488 GTLM:

Firstly, welcome back to Risi Competizione. The last time you raced with the team was at the 12 Hours of Sebring in 2015. How do you feel about re-joining the team and competing at Petit Le Mans this year?

“For me whenever I have the possibility to race with Giuseppe Risi, I take it. It’s my second family in the U.S. We are friends for a long time with GR and all the team members. We raced together a long time together with the Maserati, and other races together. It’s my U.S. family. Giuseppe Risi is a really special person and whenever I have a chance to race in Risi Competizione colors I am so happy and proud.”

You have raced at Petit Le Mans four times previously, going back to 2005 with Risi and have collected one class podium (2nd place) in a Maserati with Doran Racing in 2007. What do you think about the Petit Le Mans race? What do you like best about the Road Atlanta circuit?

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“Road Atlanta is a really nice circuit. It’s like an old-style circuit. From the driver’s side, you enjoy driving it a lot. I know it well from many races there. Petit Le Mans is always a special race in the U.S. and everyone knows the level of competition is so strong, even everyone in Europe. It is always a hard race for the team, the car, the driver and you really have to focus the entire race.”

You will be co-driving with two other Ferrari GT factory drivers, Toni Vilander, and the new kid, Miguel Molina. Share some of your thoughts and memories about these two drivers. Will this be the first time you are working with the two of them together?

“At Competizioni GT we are nine drivers and we are really close, like brothers. We spend a lot of time together, like with the training camps. We are really friends. We know each other for a long time, especially Toni, and we’ve had a strong relationship. It’s the second year with Miguel. He’s a real friend, a young guy, very professional. I am like a big brother to these guys. We share everything together. We all have the same mentality and passion, which is really important to work together with a team, like for Risi Competizione. To have team spirit is always important, and when you have the opportunity to race with Risi Competizione and with two strong drivers like Toni and Miguel, it is always a big pleasure.”

You have been a long-time driver for Ferrari. What makes the Ferrari brand so special and what other projects and races do you do for them?

“I have spent all my life with Ferrari. For me it is more than 26 years, 25 as a factory driver. I am lucky in my life because when you work as a factory driver for Ferrari every day is something new. I test the future cars for GT, for F1, the F1 simulator, etc. We work always to improve the performance. It’s interesting and unique. I have learned a lot over the years from drivers I worked with like Michael Schumacher and Fernando Alonso and others. All the experience in my life in motorsport I put together to help make the best car ever. I also race in ELMS, Blancpain GT and have done many, many tests – tire test, engine development, and more. It’s quite a busy schedule.”

Toni Vilander, driver, No. 62 Ferrari 488 GTLM:

Glad to have you back with the team since Daytona and Sebring earlier this year. You’ve had a good year winning two championships in the Pirelli World Challenge Series. Talk about being back with Risi and back to IMSA competition.

“It is nice to be back with Risi Competizione. I’m not sure what to expect as we’ve been out of racing for much of the season, but this is a professional team, so they will be ready. We will try hard to be competitive and fight for a good result.”

You and Miguel were teammates this year. Talk about the relationship you formed as co-drivers and your thoughts on racing together at Petit Le Mans.

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"We had a good year with some success together. Road Atlanta is a new race track for Miguel, but he's a fast learner, so he will be fine."

Andrea and you have both been Ferrari factory drivers for many years. What are your expectations for being teammates for Petit le Mans.

"We know each other well so it is easy to start the week. We should be very good as a driver line up. We all work together well and will face whatever issues together and with the team to overcome and go for a victory like we did two years ago."

This will be your seventh Petit Le Mans race with Risi, dating back to 2010. Your results have included one victory and two podiums with them, along with another victory with Extreme Speed in 2012. What makes your pairing with Risi work so well?

"The team works well and that track normally is quite good for us. So, let's see what happens this year."

In the past you have said you like the Road Atlanta circuit and the fast laps you can produce here. What's your favorite corner or section of the circuit and why?

"It's too difficult to say because I like the whole lap."

Miguel Molina, driver, No. 62 Ferrari 488 GTLM:

You are a rookie to the Road Atlanta circuit and the Petit Le Mans race. How do you go about getting up to speed?

"Yes, this will be one of the handicaps for me this weekend, but the team provided me some good on boards and data. This is always helpful to arrive there and be ready for the first session. I think it will be quite challenging but I'm looking forward to the race."

You've driven for Mr. Risi and with the Risi Competizione team only once before – this year at Daytona. What do you think about them and what are your expectations going into this race?

"I raced for Risi early on this year and I felt really good with all the members of the team, that time I race in the GTD class with my Mexican colleagues, but this weekend will be another step of racing in the GTLM class. Risi Competizione has always been a reference in IMSA and I'm proud to race for Mr. Risi."

You raced at several American circuits this year in the Pirelli World Challenge with your teammate Toni Vilander. How did you enjoy learning new circuits? How special was it to win a championship in your first season competing in America?

"So far it has been a very positive season, achieving the championship in PWC was for sure the highlight of the year. I had a lot of fun with Toni and now we know each other well to race here at Petit and do a good job together, also with Andrea. During the year I leaned the new tracks on my small home simulator, which is the perfect way to learn the tracks and at least know where to go in the

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out lap of the first session, then you are getting up to speed while driving.”

Championships will be won or lost at Petit this weekend, what are some of the most important things you must do to be able to battle for victory?

“I think we need to be focused on our own race, minimize the mistakes, stay out of trouble and be able to race at the last three to four hours where everything will be decided. I know Petit Le Mans is a challenging race, but we are ready for that. We have the car to put us in good strategy for the end of the race and we will do that.”

Tune-In Information:

The race will begin with live television coverage on FS1 from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and will continue on FS2 from 12:00-9:30 p.m. All times are Eastern. You can also listen to it on imsa.com or imsa.tv. The race will be streamed live in its entirety for international audiences on IMSA.tv and the IMSA Mobile App.

For more information, please go to www.risicompedizione.com and follow us on [Facebook/RisiCompetizione](https://www.facebook.com/RisiCompetizione) and Twitter [@RisiComp](https://twitter.com/RisiComp).

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