



### **Red Dragon Finishes Seventh at MoSport Debut; Championship Tightens Mobil 1 Sports Car Grand Prix - Canadian Tire Motorsports Park**

The No. 99 Red Dragon™ raced north of the border yesterday; making its debut at The Canadian Tire Motorsports Park outside of Toronto, Ontario. Still enjoying the jubilation of their Watkins Glen victory just five days earlier, Stephen Simpson and Toronto resident Misha Goikhberg returned to the site of one of their best performances in 2017 the historic MoSport. Known to be one of the riskiest race tracks in North America, it also happens to be Goikhberg's home track and his favorite. He narrowly missed the pole position and finished second last year. That experience coupled with their success at Watkins Glen, a similar track in topography and high-speed characteristics, gave the GAINSCO crew confidence for a repeat podium performance.

Unfortunately, they were greeted with challenges and shortened, red-flagged practice sessions. Accidents shortened both Friday practice sessions, one for Helio Castroneves in the no. 7 Penske and another for the no. 32 ORECA of James French and Kyle Masson. The No. 32 was irreparable and missed the race. The No. 99 crew made a few changes to the car but did not get the opportunity to get a good read on the changes because of the shortened track time.

Misha Goikhberg qualified the Red Dragon on Saturday. The crew made set-up changes overnight, but the speed wasn't there, resulting in a 9<sup>th</sup> place start. The JDC-Miller MotorSports teammate car of Robert Alon and Simon Trummer had a better weekend, they qualified second. One of the benefits of a having a two-car team is the ability to share data and information. It also offers the engineers the opportunity for one car to try a certain set-up and the other car to try something else. The No. 99 team applied the set-up from the No. 85 on Saturday night and the Red Dragon improved in Sunday's warm-up, setting the fifth fastest time in the session.

The green flag fell for the two hour and forty-minute race under sunny skies and in front of a massive crowd at 2pm. Goikhberg took the green flag and had a solid start. Midway through the first 'stint' a Porsche spun out. Goikhberg called to the timing stand to ask if he should pit. If the yellow fell, it would present a perfect opportunity to take service. The Porsche tried to re-enter

the circuit but eventually stalled and the yellow flag fell. Goikhberg's track position was perfect to enter the pits just before the yellow; he pulled in received fuel and re-entered in second position. Race control always closes the pits at the fall of the yellow flag, but the Red Dragon had already committed to the pit lane and they were able to take advantage of the caution period for their service. The rest of the field had to come in a few laps later, once the pits were re-opened, which allowed the Red Dragon to catapult to the front of the field. A result of perfect timing, perfect strategy and great communication between Goikhberg and the timing stand.

The race restarted, and the Red Dragon was back in position to contend for a podium, if it could just hold off the relentless badgering by the seemingly quicker Mazdas and Cadillacs chasing for position. Goikhberg drove as hard as he could to hold his position, particularly aggressive at turn five to keep the factory backed DPi cars behind him. Eventually tire degradation prevailed and he lost several positions approximately three laps before the fuel window opened for his pit stop. The No. 99 crew was faced with extra challenges in the pits this weekend as the pit lane falls downhill. They prevailed and completed the driver change, fueling and tires.

Stephen Simpson took over with just over an hour left in the race. He battled for position, racing coincidentally, Simon Trummer in the No. 85 Banana Boat...the team's other entry. As he fought for positions, other competitors had troubles of their own, including the No. 6 Penske of Dane Cameron and Juan Pablo Montoya, who Simpson so famously passed for their race victory just one week earlier. The Red Dragon took the checkered flag in seventh position. Not the result the team was hoping for, but a solid finish to a somewhat challenging weekend.

With just three races left in the 2018 championship, the Red Dragon sits in the middle of a very competitive points battle with 174 points, just one point behind the Penske Acuras of Helio Castroneves and Ricky Taylor and three points behind Juan Pablo Montoya and Dane Cameron in fifth.

The next race will take place at Road America, the picturesque four-mile track in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, the first weekend of August.

**Misha Goikhberg:** "It was a challenging weekend for us. We didn't quite have the speed and we made a few small mistakes that added up. We learned a lot about the car and scored valuable points toward the championship. We ended up with a better result than a few of our closest competitors in points standings, so that should help us a little bit. I'm looking forward to a rebound at Road America and getting the Red Dragon back to victory lane soon."

**Stephen Simpson:** "We went to Canada with high expectations and I think we were all a bit surprised by the challenges we faced through the weekend. This series is so competitive, and you never know what is going to happen. It is disappointing we were not able to maximize the gift we received with the yellow, but at the end of the day, we still brought home 24 valuable points to the championship. We've already turned our focus to Road America and we think we

learned some things this weekend through our challenges that will help us there and through the rest of the season.”

- Of note: Stephen Simpson and teammate Michael Johnson, a paraplegic driver finished second in the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge race on Saturday. It was the second straight podium for Simpson and Johnson driving the Audi.



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**About [GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing™](#):** Committed to excellence in road racing since its formation in 2001, GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing’s legacy includes two Sports Car Championships, 16 victories and 31 pole positions in the Rolex Sports Car Series. Its legacy of all-star drivers includes Bob Stallings, two-time Daytona Prototype Champions Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty, seven-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Champion Jimmie Johnson, two-time IndyCar Champion Jimmy Vasser, GT Champion Darren Law, C.A.R.T. Champion Cristiano da Matta and celebrated American drivers Memo Gidley and Rocky Moran Jr. The team ceased operations after the 2017 season, opening the door to partner with JDC-Miller Motorsports in the 2018 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. For more information, visit [www.gainscoracing.com](http://www.gainscoracing.com).

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