

## **Corvette Racing Wins 24 Hours of Le Mans**

Corvette Wins GTE Class, Scores Seventh Win for Chevrolet

LE MANS, France - "The car's a lap down, but we can make that up," said Corvette Racing team manager Gary Pratt with six hours remaining in the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Pratt's words proved prophetic as the No. 73 Compuware Corvette C6.R driven by Olivier Beretta, Tommy Milner and Antonio Garcia relentlessly pursued the class-leading No. 51 Ferrari 458 Italia, cutting the margin by seconds every lap. American driver Tommy Milner overtook Ferrari driver Toni Vilander with two hours and 10 minutes to go, and steadily increased his lead as he completed his double stint. Garcia then took over the yellow and black car for the final hour and the run to the finish.

The No. 73 Corvette C6.R completed 314 laps and finished two minutes and 29 seconds ahead of the runner-up Ferrari. Today's victory was the seventh class win at Le Mans for Corvette Racing, and its first in the GTE Pro category. It came as Chevrolet celebrates its 100th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of the team's first Le Mans victory in 2001. It was the sixth Le Mans title for Beretta, the third for Garcia, and the first for Milner.

"This is my first time at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, but I've watched Corvettes race here my whole life," said Mark Reuss, President GM North America. "To come here for the first time on the 100th anniversary of Chevrolet and to have another Corvette victory is beyond words."

The contest was a dramatic one, as the No. 74 Corvette C6.R of Oliver Gavin, Jan Magnussen, and Richard Westbrook suffered a stunning reversal of fortune. After leading for nearly 16 hours, the car was extensively damaged in a crash in the 17th hour. Although Magnussen was uninjured in the high-speed shunt, the car was retired on the spot.

The No. 73 Corvette C6.R had been running steadily in the top five, and the No. 74's misfortune moved it to second in the GTE standings. More than a lap behind the No. 51 Ferrari 458 Italia at the time of the accident, the No. 73 Corvette drivers chased down the class leader. As rain began to fall in the 20th hour, Garcia was gaining 1.5 seconds per lap. Milner took over at the 21st hour and continued to reel in the Ferrari, gaining as much as six seconds per lap during his stint.

Milner made the pass for the lead on the Mulsanne Straight on lap 283. "That was the hardest drive of my life," said the 25-year-old racer. "It would have been a lot easier if it hadn't been sprinkling, raining, not raining, and then wet - all that plus the pressure of the situation. I'd been super comfortable in the car all day long, but I was certainly not comfortable then. I was just trying to drive the car to what the track would allow. Every lap it changed, every corner it changed.

"When you start racing, you hope that one day you can compete for a win," Milner noted. "To get one here at Le Mans in my first year with Corvette Racing is very cool."

"I was very happy with how the race turned out, even though it did not always go our way," said Garcia.

"We had ups and downs - we didn't get a break with the first safety car, we had punctured tires, and so on. Every time I was in the car, I tried to go as fast as possible and stay out of trouble. You have to never give up here, and just keep pushing. Today it paid off.

"In the final minutes, everything comes into your mind," the Spaniard added. "It went perfectly, a real easy last stint compared to all the ones before it. This was the first time I drove a car at the finish at Le Mans, and it was very special. There is no better time to win this race than in the centennial year for Chevrolet. Now I'm already thinking about next year."

Beretta became ill after driving behind the safety car during an extended caution period, and drove a limited time in the second half of the race.

"Today was not my sixth win, but a win for the team, Tommy, Antonio, and all of the engineers and crew who did a wonderful job," Beretta said. "I was sick in the middle of the night from following the pace car, but I recovered. I'm very happy for the entire team."

Corvette Racing scored six wins in the GTS/GT1 class at Le Mans (2001-02, 2004-06, and 2009). The team moved to the GT2 class in 2010, which was renamed GTE Pro in 2011.

"If I were to write a script to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Chevrolet and the 10th anniversary of Corvette Racing's first win at Le Mans, this would undoubtedly be it," said Corvette Racing program manager Doug Fehan. "Louis Chevrolet was himself a racer, and his motto, 'Never give up!' is a philosophy we embraced from our first visit here. I think the result today embodied the spirit of Chevrolet's co-founder and of that iconic phrase."