

Monterey Sports Car Championships Include Presentation at Stanford University by American Le Mans Series

One would think that finishing its season at the Monterey Sports Car Championships this season at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca with two class championships hanging in the balance would be enough excitement in one week for the American Le Mans Series.

The Series, known for its global leadership in green racing, felt it had one important stop to make along the way, however. Wednesday, on the campus of Stanford University, the American Le Mans Series made a special presentation to faculty and mechanical engineering students involved in the university's "Future of the Automobile" class.

Recognized by the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and SAE International, the American Le Mans Series is renowned worldwide for its innovation and technology development, particularly in the area of alternative fuels.

Scott Atherton, President and CEO of the American Le Mans Series, led off with an overview of how the Series has become the worldwide motorsports leader in alternative fuels. That distinction, along with other technical innovations, has allowed it to become one of the world's leading motorsports series. Atherton emphasized how the Series' green initiatives and the Michelin® Green X® Challenge competition has allowed it to stand apart and entice not only fans but avid consumers as well.

"Since 2008, with the Green Challenge," said Atherton, "we knew we were competing in the great race of the 21st century. Knowing that, it has been our collective goal to get to a greener tomorrow ... faster. The way we are doing this is by providing a world class platform to showcase technologies that have a direct link from the race track to the production line. Since our inception we have been claiming we are a series that is for the fans, but now more than ever we are being known as a series for the consumers."

Paul Drayson, Great Britain's Minister of Science and Innovation and Drayson Racing team owner followed. As a recognized voice worldwide on sustainable energies, fuels and climate, he emphasized the role that science and technology have on the environment and the need to work toward zero emissions and controlling climate.

"Climate change is the biggest concern facing our generation. As a human race we are consuming resources at a rate that is unsustainable. For example, science is showing us that the Arctic Ocean will be ice-free during the summer months as early as 2013. I'm an engineer. I'm an optimist. Therefore I believe that the human race can rise to the challenge and can be motivated to change - by making green cool by using science and technology to find the answers."

Race car driver **David Brabham**, on the verge of claiming the ALMS series championship in LMP1 class with Scott Sharp, was even more adamant. It was Brabham

who wrote a letter to Series' founder Don Panoz in 2004 beseeching the Series to take a look at more ways to be responsible for the environment.

"When I wrote the letter back in August of 2004," said Brabham. "the one thing I knew was that racing needed to change because the environment was changing and people's ideas were changing. It is a fact that the next generation is going to be dictated by what we do today and that is why we have to continue to develop cars and push the technology in competition....to facilitate change."

Steve Pruitt,

Driver Johnny Mowlem to an opportunity to run hybrid technology in a race car. That resulted in Corsa Motorsports working with one of Europe's premier automotive hybrid groups, Ginetta-Zytek, to serve as the test ground for emerging, next generation hybrid technology.

"We at Corsa Motorsports and the American Le Mans Series are coming forward and bringing new technology to the grid," said Pruitt. "With hybrid technology, the Series is bringing the most sophisticated cars to the race track, and it is through such racing applications that we are developing efficient vehicles for consumers to buy in their dealer showroom."

But it was GM's Corvette Racing program manager **Doug Fehan** who put everything into perspective.

"At Corvette Racing, 'we build em. We race em.' We see on a daily basis how technology transfers. Everything we achieve in racing is what consumers can achieve on the roads – aerodynamics, fuel efficiency, rolling resistance, frictional losses. It is through automotive engineering that we are able to look at the mind, look at the science and develop the sport of the new century. And that development is wide open right now.

There is great opportunity for young people just entering the automotive industry to make a great impact on the future of this vital industry."

Just another day on its way to Monterey? Hardly. But then again you may just have to ask the students and faculty at one of America's leading higher institutions of learning.

The American Le Mans Series concludes its season Saturday in Monterey, California with the Monterey Sports Car Championships at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. Green flag is 5:45 ET/2:45 PT October 10. Sirius 126 and XM 242 will air the race live along with ALMS Radio at www.americanlemans.com. SPEED will telecast the race Sunday,

October 11 from 2:30 – 6:30 pm