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Alegra Motorsports, Defending Rolex 24 GT Winner, Is Ready to Roll

CORAL GABLES, Fla., Jan. 22 — The defending Rolex 24 GT class winner, Alegra Motorsports, has assembled a solid nine-driver line-up for the two Porsche GT3 Cup cars it will field in the 46th edition of the twice-around-the-clock classic this weekend at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla.

The two Alegra Motorsports Porsches, number 22 and number 29, are sponsored by Gatorade, TodayMD.com and Tornos. They are part of the biggest GT field ever entered in this particular race. The current entry list stands at 42 GT cars and 25 Daytona Prototypes. All of their drivers and crews will try to keep all of their high-performance parts working at speed for 24 hours of grueling competition starting at 1:30 p.m. Saturday.

Driving car 22 will be team owner Carlos de Quesada of Coral Gables, Fla.; Marc Basseng of Leutenbach, Germany; Nathan Swartzbaugh of La Habra Heights, Calif. and Patrick Pilet of Le Chesnay, Yvelines, France. Pilet is substituting for Marc Lieb, who was scheduled to drive that car but will not be available due to medical reasons.

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Pilet, 26, is the 2007 Porsche Carrera Cup champion, earning four victories, three seconds and one third enroute to the title. He was the France champion in the Formula Renault series in 2004 and that series' vice-champion of France in 2003. He was also the champion of France in the Formula France series in 2001 after getting his start in karting.

The driver lineup for car 29 will be Scooter Gabel of Tampa, Fla.; Louis-Philippe Dumoulin of Trois-Rivieres, Quebec; Bob Woodman of Beaufort, S.C.; Chris Gleason of Johnstown, Pa. and Jake Rosenzweig of Boston, Mass.

Along with de Quesada, Jean-Francois Dumoulin and Basseng, Gabel was part of the driving squad for last year's GT-winning entry. He has won many races at Daytona in Motorola Cup and KONI Challenge action.

Louis-Philippe Dumoulin, a front-runner in the GS class in KONI Challenge, returns to Alegra Motorsports after running selected Rolex Series races with the team last year. He competed in the Formula Atlantic Series in 2003 and he was the 2002 Canadian Formula Ford champion.

Woodman, of Bob Woodman Tires, brings a wealth of experience from his years in sports car racing, including several appearances at the Rolex 24. His knowledge of Pirelli tires will be valuable, since Pirelli is the series' new tire supplier.

Gleason brings years of endurance racing experience to Alegra Motorsports. He has driven in the Rolex 24, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Mobile 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring and the Petit Le Mans many times. He had three victories in the tough GS class in KONI Challenge competition last year, including that series' six-hour season finale at VIRginia International Raceway last October. He's been on the podium 10 times in his last 22 races.

Gleason's years of experience will certainly be beneficial to Rosenzweig, a karting star who will be running his first endurance sports car race ever after successfully completing his rookie test earlier this month.

The race, held on Daytona's 3.56-mile, 12-turn road course, will be shown on FOX (1 p.m. Eastern on Saturday) and SPEED (2:30 p.m. Eastern on Saturday and 6 a.m. Eastern on Sunday). Live timing and scoring and webcast commentary are planned for the series' Web site at grand-am.com. The team's Web site is at alegramotorsports.com. Additional information and photos will be posted at restartcommunications.com.