

ALMS Brings Sports-Car Racing's Best Cars and Drivers Together

Don Panoz had witnessed one of the world's great racing events, the famed 24 Hours of Le Mans, and wanted to bring that excitement and atmosphere to North America.

So, when the entrepreneur introduced the American Le Mans Series in 1999, Panoz established a new era in North American motorsports with the mystique, pageantry and tradition of a great sporting event.

In 2008, the American Le Mans Series is the luxury brand of North American racing, with many of the world's top manufacturers, mechanics and drivers competing from the legendary airport strip in Sebring, to picturesque Road America, to the streets of St. Petersburg and Long Beach, to the rolling hills of Mid-Ohio and Road Atlanta.

In addition, the Series features a unique format in which four classes of sports cars battle head-to-head. With two or three drivers per car, teamwork and precision are essential in every race.

Largely because of driver changes, Series pit stops are unique for spectators and television viewers and help contribute to the excitement of lead-swapping and overtaking on the track. Drivers assist each other jumping from the cockpits of the vehicles, and are responsible for safely securing their teammates in the race cars before they pull away from the pit area.

Each category of sports car sustains different top speeds and competes for its individual championship in the overall context of each race. This brings another dimension to the racing and increases difficulty as racers in each class must navigate the twisting, demanding circuits while competing with entrants from faster or slower divisions.

As a result, overtaking is sensational and sometimes dangerous.

The longer of these endurance events can span 24 hours, 12 hours or 1,000 miles. In addition, selected sprint events that last more than two hours make the series' Le Mans-style action one of the most intriguing and demanding forms of racing in the world.

Competing under similar rules as those of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the American Le Mans Series brings the pedigree of the famed French racing classic to this continent.

The Series delivers high-performance and technologically advanced racing competition via its four classes. There is cutting-edge technology in the prototypes and the showroom-floor link to the GT machines.

With this combination of high-speed, factory-supported teams and major-market races, American Le Mans Series events are televised with unique technologically-advanced equipment through the ABC and NBC networks and the expanding SPEED Channel. Additional coverage is sent to Europe via MotorsTV and worldwide major and regional broadcasters.

At all American Le Mans Series events, spectators have the ability to view the cars, drivers and teams "up close" in the paddock area, as opposed to from a far-away seat or behind a barrier fence. Each race also features a driver autograph session, and the open paddock offers fans the opportunity to meet their favorite drivers.

A rarity in today's professional sports world is the "open pre-race grid" for fans, along with other activities like Tech Talks, Fan Forums and Driver Chats. This type of interaction gives American Le Mans Series fans a tremendous ability to learn about the sport quickly, and in a fan-friendly atmosphere rarely seen at other sporting events.



The American Le Mans Series delivers an exciting style of racing you won't see at other American auto-racing events: competition among different classes of cars on the same track—at the same time.



With multiple drivers for every car, driver swaps are an interesting element of ALMS racing that makes even the pit stops fun to watch.



Autograph session with the Lowe's Fernandez drivers.



Fans and drivers alike mingle on the open pre-race grid at the 2007 Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring.A