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SEVENTH STRAIGHT POLE FOR ROSS SMITH, FIRST CAREER GOLD POLE FOR KENDALL SMITH

TOOELE, UTAH (JULY 10, 2010) – It was a good morning for the Smith family, with Ross Smith taking his seventh consecutive pole position in the Platinum Class and brother Kendall earning his first career pole in the Gold Cup Class in the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama, part of the Larry H. Miller Dealerships Utah Grand Prix at Miller Motorsports Park.

Ross Smith, driving the #5 Maxwell Paper Racing Porsche GT3 Cup car, was especially happy to come to Utah and put behind him two difficult races in New Jersey two weeks ago, which saw him involved in early incidents in both races that forced him to come back through the field. A third and a sixth place finish would probably be a good weekend for other drivers, but not for Smith.

“Coming from New Jersey, I couldn’t wait for Utah to come up,” said Smith. “Third is good, but I’m here to win races. I wanted to make up ground, so to bounce back and win the pole by half a second is a big accomplishment.”

A spin on his second lap on new tires caused some consternation for Smith, but he recovered quickly and took the pole halfway through the 30 minute qualifying session.

“On our quickest lap, I made a mistake in a corner, which cost us some time, but I got back on track and put a good number down. The guys did a great job on the car, I’m really happy.”

Brother Kendall was happy as well. Behind the wheel of the #4 Maxwell Paper Racing Porsche 911 in the Gold Cup class, Smith was ready to celebrate his first pole position in the series.

“The first pole feels incredible, to be the fastest guy in your class really means something, especially with everyone around us,” said Smith. “It’s a strong field, so it really feels special to take pole. The fact that I’m getting faster and more consistent means everything. That’s what this series is for; it’s a developmental series, and the fact that I’m actually developing means a lot to me.”

Round 7 will take place this afternoon, with the green flag dropping at 4:15pm MDT. Live timing is available at www.gt3timing.com,

The Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama features semi-professional drivers racing head to head in one of the world’s most successful race cars, the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car. As a developmental series designed to prepare drivers and teams for professional careers in sports car racing, the multi-class structure of the series teaches drivers essential skills for an eventual career in the American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patrón.

The series is broken into two classes, with the Platinum Cup Class featuring the more powerful 2010 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup Car. The Gold Cup Class includes 2005½ - 2009 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars. Please visit www.imsachallenge.com for the latest track schedule, television information and updates – and join us on Facebook and Twitter.

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