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SMITH, CARLISLE WEIGH IN ON GOLF, RULES AND RACING

Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin (August 20, 2010) -- As Road America prepares for the Time Warner Road Race Showcase, just a few miles up the road sits Whistling Straits, still in recovery mode following a PGA Championship whose bizarre ending has garnered more than a bit of attention. For two drivers - both avid golfers - in the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama (one of whom is the proud holder of a Monday morning tee time at the famed course), it is still a topic of conversation.

To refresh the memory: Dustin Johnson, attempting to tie for the lead in the fourth and final major of the PGA Tour season, hit his tee shot into a bunker outside of the ropes on the 18th hole. Not realizing he was in a bunker, he grounded his club – which is against the rules. Johnson was assessed a two-shot penalty and finished tied for fifth, two shots back. But the rules are the rules, whether you're a golfer or a race car driver.

That said, Kendall Smith, driver of the #4 Maxwell Paper Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car in the Gold Cup class and a 10 handicap golfer, still thinks it was a bad call.

"It really was ridiculous," said Smith. "I was surprised at the crowd control. It was unbelievable that they would let people stand in a bunker, allowing him to see only his ball, with no way of really knowing he was in a sand trap. It looked like grass with some sand that had been knocked in. The fact that he laid his club down – that is a rule, but no advantage was gained. The official was beside him and no one told him it was a bunker, they waited until he finished. What a terrible way to go from first to fifth – the guy's had some terrible luck."

Smith can relate to Johnson's woes, having run afoul of the rules at an event in New Jersey earlier this season.

"I was leading the race with two laps left and got hit from behind. I was pretty heated and I did not know you were not allowed to stand with your car, so I got bit. I'll tell you, I will never forget that rule and I'm guessing Dustin Johnson won't forget, either."

Having recently set a personal low score (82), Smith does his best to fit in a few rounds during the racing season near his home in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, including playing Colonial, home of the Byron Nelson Championship. But one of his golfing highlights remains his first round at TPC Sawgrass, home of the Players Championship and the notorious island green 17th hole.

"My handicap is around 10, I shoot low 80's mostly. My wife's a golfer, too; she played in college. Her family lives on TPC Sawgrass so we go there to play, which is beautiful. And I can say – I pared 17 the first time I played! It was unbelievably lucky - the horns were sounding, since there was some weather in the area, but we stuck it out and had the course just about to ourselves. It was one of the best experiences of my life."

cont



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If you're looking for Darrell Carlisle at 8:10am on Monday morning, go to the first tee at Whistling Straits.

Carlisle, currently second in the Platinum Cup point standings and driver of the #92 Kelly-Moss Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car, will join a good friend for the prized round of golf.

"I was impressed, watching it on television – it looks so beautiful," said Carlisle, who holds a nine handicap. "The course is spectacular, with the cliffs, all those bunkers, it looks like it's going to be fun! I'm sure I'm going to be intimidated out there and get all crossed up. But all those things that intimidate you, they shouldn't come into play anyway. You have to focus on where you want to land the ball, on the course that you want to play, and don't get involved in all the other stuff that's all over the place."

Carlisle draws more than a few parallels between golf and auto racing – which may be why so many athletes list golf as their favorite off-time sport.

"It's like here – turn one is kind of narrow, but they could put all kinds of width in the corner and you wouldn't use that anyway. There's only this narrow area that you use, so it's like golf – there's a bunch of stuff that you don't want to come into play and you shouldn't focus on; you need to focus on where you want to be, where you want to land the ball or, on the track, where you want to drive. You have to have a rhythm, you have to just keep the tension out and maintain your focus. You can't overthink it.

"But it was a shame, what happened to Dustin Johnson. It's one of those things, it's in the rules. Like us – if you're .1 over on camber, if you have 3.9 and the max is 3.8, they disqualify you. But Monday, yea, I'm going to try to stay out of the bunkers - but you can't avoid them, what are there, a thousand of them?" (According to a recent Golf Digest article, there are actually 967.)

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 2005 ½ - 2009 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars.

The Speed TV production of Rounds 11 and 12 of the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama is scheduled to air on Sunday, September 19 1:00 am EDT. The 2010 season comes to a close at the legendary Petit Le Mans, September 29 – October 2 at Road America. Follow along on the race weekend at www.gt3timing.com and visit www.imsachallenge.com for the latest track schedule, television information and updates.

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