

WTRAndretti's Two-Car Acura GTP Team Makes Its Official Debut

Prototype Teams Kick Off IMSA-Sanctioned Test at DIS

By Jeff Olson

Story & photos courtesy of IMSA.com

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – The first few hours of testing in preparation for a new season can be a bit unnerving.

#40: Wayne Taylor Racing with Andretti, Acura ARX-06, GTP: Jenson Button “It messes with your brain a little bit,” Jenson Button said. “Every time we come in, we sit down and look at all the data and look at what happened and what we want to happen. It takes time.”

Button, the 2009 Formula One world champion, helped Wayne Taylor Racing with Andretti kick off its expansion to a two-car team as a four-day test for the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship began Wednesday at Daytona International Speedway.

Sixteen cars and 50 drivers in the two prototype classes – Grand Touring Prototype (GTP) and Le Mans Prototype 2 (LMP2) – participated in Wednesday’s opening day. All four classes, including Grand Touring Daytona (GTD) and GTD PRO, will test Thursday, with Friday and Saturday reserved for the GT classes.

The event is the only IMSA-sanctioned test until teams return to Daytona Jan. 19-21 for the Roar Before the Rolex 24, the prelude to the season-opening Rolex 24 At Daytona, Jan. 27-28.

For WTRAndretti, the test was a wel-

come necessity. The team is adding a second GTP car and a new GTD entry to its stable, making for a busy first day on DIS’s 12-turn, 3.56-mile circuit.

“It’s like a new team,” said Filipe Albuquerque, who returns for his fourth season with the team. “There are so many more people with two (GTP) cars. I don’t recognize most of them. It’s kind of crazy. Now we have like eight drivers on the team. It’s interesting because we have such a good bonding already on the first day.”

Albuquerque and Ricky Taylor return to the No. 10 Acura ARX-06 as the full-season drivers for 2024, joined in the five IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup races by Brendon Hartley and in the Rolex 24 by 2022 Indy 500 winner Marcus Ericsson. The team’s new sister GTP car – the No. 40 ARX-06 – features Jordan Taylor and Louis Deletraz, with IndyCar driver Colton Herta joining for endurance races and Button for the twice-around-the-clock challenge.

Jordan Taylor is returning to his father’s team for the first time since 2019 when the top prototype was the Daytona Prototype international (DPi). The changes, he says, are astonishing.

“Last time I was here, we had one car and maybe 20 people,” said Jordan Taylor, who drove for Corvette during his hiatus from the family team. “Now it’s two cars in prototypes and one car in GTD. A million new faces, new people to work with and a lot of drivers on the team. A lot of people to get to know and learn from. It’s been a great transition back to prototypes.”

In GTD, WTRAndretti will field the No.

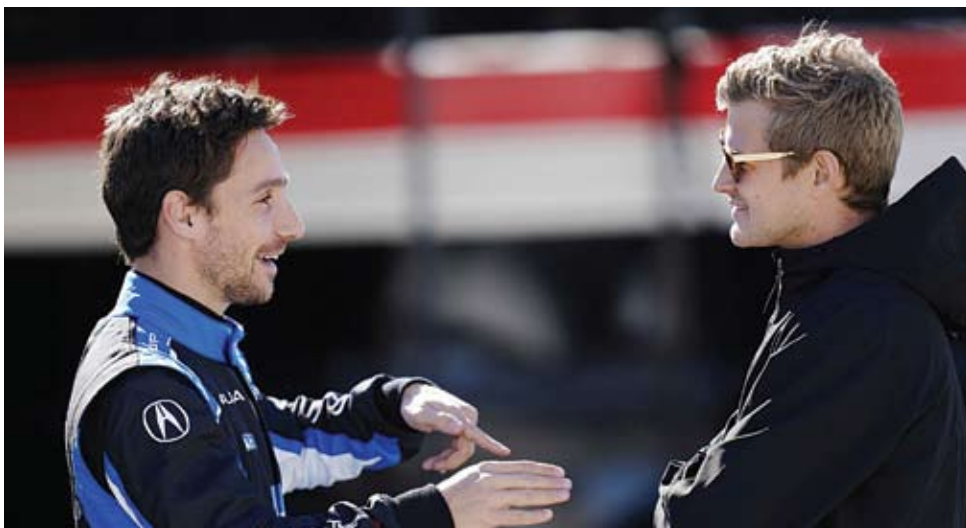


45 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO2 with Kyle Marcelli and Danny Forman as the full-season drivers. They will be joined by Graham Doyle for the Michelin Endurance Cup races and Ashton Harrison at DIS. “It’s a dream come true for me,” said Forman, a two-time champion in Lamborghini Super Trofeo North America. “I’ve been wanting this since I was a little boy... I love (GTDs).”

Two 3.5-hour sessions opened the test Wednesday, with two more daytime sessions and a three-hour night session scheduled Thursday. For all participants,

the track time is an important step toward the 2024 sports car season – especially for drivers just entering their second season with the hybrid-based GTP cars.

“It’s very complex, as every driver says,” Button said. “It’s understanding what’s happening when – from when you hit the brakes to when you are at full throat at the exit and there’s so much happening. It’s understanding that and reading that and balancing the car. I worked to a point where I was balancing the car well, and I loved it.”



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