

## ***“Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday”***

### **Or, Why the Advanced Biofuel Industry Needs to Embrace “Real” Green Racing: The American Le Mans Series**

*By Robert Kozak, Advanced Biofuels USA  
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Back in the glory days of car racing (the 1960s), “Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday,” was the mantra of all car manufacturers. From NASCAR, where the Plymouth Richard Petty drove to victory in the Daytona 500 was powered by a “426 hemihead” much like the one you could buy in a Fury hardtop, to the 24 Hours of Le Mans, France where “budget be damned” Ford GT 40s powered by engines based on the ones in Mustangs or Galaxies not only beat the best Ferrari could come up with but more impressively completely rewrote the book on aerodynamics (210+ mph on the two lane country roads used for the “Circuit de Sarthe”). Cutting edge performance equaled profits.



**The 1967 24 Hours of Le Mans winning Ford GT-40. Can this car really be 43 years old? We're still using the lessons learned at 210+ mph. Photo: J.Ivancic**

You wonder where the legendary brand loyalty that car manufacturers used to have came from?

It was on the high banks of Daytona, at Turn One at Indianapolis, and late at night on a French country road called the “Mulsanne Straight.”

### ***So What Does This Have to Do With The Advanced Biofuel Industry?***



**Brazilian sugar cane ethanol fuels Indy cars, except for the Iowa race. Photo: J.Ivancic**

Why not ask the Brazilian sugar cane ethanol industry or corn-ethanol producers.

### **Indy 500 = Brazilian Sugar Cane Ethanol**

As part of Brazil’s well-coordinated marketing and diplomatic efforts to export sugar cane ethanol to the United States, they have become the sole-supplier of E-85 for the Indianapolis 500 and the rest of the IZOD Indy car circuit (except for the Iowa Indy race). When hundreds of thousands of people come to see the race in Rep. Mike Pence’s Congressional District on the west side of Indianapolis or when millions of people watch it on television they will be sold the benefits of sugar cane ethanol.

*“Look how fast Danica Patrick goes with  
Brazilian E-85! So could you!”*

***“Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday.”***

## Corn E-15 for NASCAR in 2011

Even though NASCAR doesn't use production cars or engines anymore (the only difference between a "Chevy" and a "Ford" are the front grill and headlight decals put on identical spec bodies), their focus groups have told them NASCAR needed to go "Green." So, even though the engine technology is 1970 era carburetors and push rod valves, they will be using E-15 beginning with their showcase event, the Daytona 500 in February. And where is this ethanol coming from? **Home grown American corn.**

Just this week [Growth Energy](#), [NASCAR](#), the [National Corn Growers Association](#), and a cast of hundreds, formed [American Ethanol](#) to supply 43 cars with ethanol for all of their 34 Nextel Cup races in 2011. NASCAR marketers, among the best, are shrewdly playing up the energy security and hometown jobs aspects of biofuels while playing down Climate Change. Soon you'll be hearing a sales pitch like this:

*"Five-time NASCAR Champion Jimmy Johnson knows that American security starts with not importing oil from people who don't like us. So should you!"*

***"Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday."***

Where does that leave the advanced biofuels industry? Not Winning on Sunday or Selling on Monday?

Actually there is a place. In this place they're using advanced biofuels and putting on some the best racing you'll ever see. Oh, and did I say they have a very devoted fan base that is more than holding its own financially even in these rough times.

It's called the **American Le Mans Series.**

Ferraris, BMWs, Porsches, Corvettes, Lamborghinis, and Ford GTs race in the production class, all on E-85. Ford and Toyota production based E-85 fueled



IMSA=International Motor Sports Association; RC=Racing Cellulosic

engines power sleek prototypes that race against extremely fast and extremely quiet advanced technology Audi and Peugeot diesels.

It gets even better. Every GT car in the series 10 hour long Petit Le Mans finale at Road Atlanta in October was fueled by 2<sup>nd</sup> generation cellulosic ethanol. And, in August at Mid-Ohio, the Dyson Mazda/Lola won the race fueled with bio-butanol.

Doesn't this sound like something the industry might want to **"Sell on Monday!"**

## The American Le Mans Series: Some People You Should Get to Know

As readers of Green Racing have probably noticed we're big fans of ALMS. Why? The great racing? That's part of it. But it's really the people. The people driving the cars, the people who own the racing teams, the

engineers and mechanics who make the cars work, the behind the scene rule-makers, and the fans. All together they make ALMS races not only exciting but also very friendly for fans of all ages.



Fans swarm ALMS competitors' cars before the 2010 Petit Le Mans race at Road Atlanta Photo: J.Ivancic

Take a look at these pictures. Before every race, the drivers line up their cars on the track and the crowd is invited to come out and have a look. No special credentials are needed to get up close to the cars and talk to the drivers.

Thousands of people get the same access that only high end sponsors, media, and hangers-on with the right connections get at Formula One, Indy Car or NASCAR races.



Pretty in Pink--fans and cars. Photo: J.Ivancic



But Mom said I could have a Ferrari!



Guys, I know it's a turbocharged, E85-fueled, Lola prototype, but, guys! Photo: J.Ivancic

For the whole rest of the race, fans are yelling above the roar of the engines into each other's ears while pointing to the track, "That the one with (fill in the blank) we saw before the start!"

As you can see, these are dedicated fans, especially considering that the Sebring race is twelve hours long and Petit Le Mans is ten.

But, other than being ALMS enthusiasts, what are these fans like? At the 10 Hour Petit Le Mans season finale in October ALMS CEO Scott Atherton presented some results from a 2010 Nielsen telephone survey. Here are the findings that pleasantly surprised me.

- Average household income held from 2008 to 2010 at \$120,000/year, and
- Fans in the 25-34 age group and 18-34 age group, the “Money Demographics” doubled from 2008 to 2010.



Corvette and cycling fans Photo: J.Ivancic



Yes, it's a Ferrari with its other Ferrari friends. Photo: J.Ivancic

The survey also found that ALMS fans wanted car manufacturers to be innovative and were willing to be early adopters.

- 90% said it was important/very important for car manufacturers to develop technology through racing, and
- A majority (52%) were willing to pay premium for that technology.



Fans greet the new Hybrid Porsche. Photo: J.Ivancic



The Hybrid flywheel is under the hoses. Photo: J.Ivancic

These knowledgeable enthusiasts could be the core of a popular movement that wants high performance engines in their cars and trucks that get the same mileage no matter how much ethanol or other biofuel is mixed in. They could be supporters of “true” flex-fuel technology, willing to put their money where their beliefs are. Porsche understands these enthusiasts. The entire media blitz for the Porsche 911 GT3 R hybrid was based on the ALMS racing

experience. Not only was the car introduced to America at Petit Le Mans, the television ads were filmed there as well.

ALMS understands this as well. Innovation and Green Racing are the centerpieces of their marketing. Besides working with industry partners to get innovative technologies in front of early adopters, in 2008, the series began the MICHELIN Green X Challenge®. The Challenge trophy is awarded at each race, and for the series overall using a formula developed in conjunction with EPA, DOE, and SAE.

One of the key individuals behind the Green X Challenge is Paul Lord Drayson. Not only is Paul the owner of the logen supplied cellulosic ethanol powered #88 Lola/Judd prototype and one of its drivers, but he is also the former Cabinet Minister of Science and Innovation in the United Kingdom.



**1**Paul Drayson explaining energy policy at ALMS Petit Le Mans seminar. Photo: J.Ivancic



Paul Drayson preparing for his next turn behind the wheel. Photo: J.Ivancic

I think Paul, his great team manager Dale White, and others like Duncan Dayton, the owner and leader of the twice champion Highcroft team, are the type of leaders the Advanced Biofuels industry would really benefit from partnering with. They know finance, public policy, and they want Green automotive technologies in the mainstream.

### **Marketing Reach of ALMS**

ALMS has a worldwide marketing presence. Not only do they have a long term contract with SpeedTV (owned by Fox) and a Sirius Radio presence, but beginning this year, the ALMS series is part of a new international championship – The Intercontinental Le Mans Cup Series. This premier seven race series included the Sebring 12 Hours in March, the Petit Le Mans in October as well as the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans in June. Being part of this series will provide ALMS sponsors with exposure in Europe, North America, and China where the final race of the series will be held.

## What Could Advanced Biofuel Companies Do?

Hopefully, I've gotten you to think about potential mutual partnerships with ALMS. Fortunately for our industry, you won't need the big bucks of NASCAR (\$11 million/year for lead sponsorship). Furthermore, the people of ALMS really want to encourage innovative joint marketing ideas and are willing to work with companies just getting into the sport.

For instance, Advanced Biofuels companies could jointly sponsor a "***We're Half-Way There***" (symbolizing where we are) prize for the leading car in the Green X Challenge at the half-way point of races. At each ALM race, including those aired in Europe and Asia, announcers would get the names of the sponsoring companies out no matter which team was leading.

Finally, could a partnership help the industry's greatest immediate need -- expanding the motor fuel market for cellulosic ethanol?

I think so. Why not work with ALMS to use the new Prototype class to develop "True" Flex-Fuel performance engine technology that would produce comparable mileage for E-10 and E-85 fueled vehicles. Getting these engines into the mainstream would push US demand for cellulosic ethanol faster than the RFS.

Already Honda and Ford have committed to providing production based engines as required by the new rules. Ford is using a V-6 Eco-Boost engine which has the technology; variable valve timing, sequential turbocharging, and a wide range of computer controlled combustion parameters

needed to produce a "True" Flex-Fuel engine.

A partnership between Advanced Biofuel companies, innovative ALMS teams, racing team engineers and mechanics, and the ALMS association could get these engines developed, tested, and sold by vehicle manufacturers faster than EPA could draft regulations.

## A New Year's Resolution

As 2010, not a great year by any measure, ends and a new Congress gets ready to take office, the advanced biofuel industry should be charting a new course for 2011 and beyond. The international indirect land use regulations, the Obama Administration's move away from biofuels to electric cars, and the lack of action on carbon pricing should tell us that the industry needs some new friends.



Ford/Roush/Lola Eco-Boost Prototype Concept

Brazilian sugar cane ethanol producers have realized for several years that the car racing audience can be a substantial help to their international marketing efforts. Growth Energy's new partnership with NASCAR quickly and very visibly unites corn ethanol with a major demographic and voting force that should pay big dividends for corn ethanol in 2011 and 2012. Some people will argue that Advanced Biofuels will derive enough collateral benefits from these

efforts, and therefore no additional coalition or market building efforts are needed.

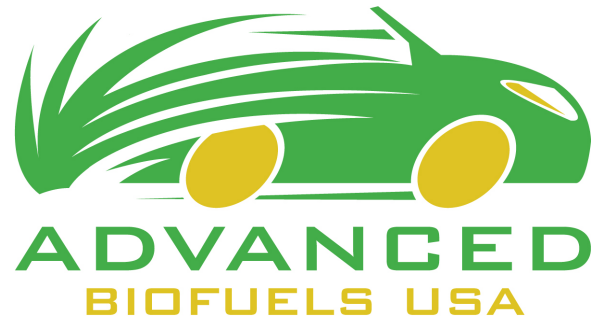
I think the leaders in the Advanced Biofuels industry will see it differently. They see the need to create a new 2<sup>nd</sup> generation ethanol market, especially since the NASCAR/Growth Energy/NCGA coalition shows quite clearly that their 15 billion gallons/year of corn ethanol are here to stay. The leaders also see the need to build new coalitions of users and producers to make sure the industry gets a level policy and funding playing field.

As Advanced Biofuel companies make their 2011 marketing plans, I think ALMS should be part of them. Right now, partnerships with the American Le Mans Series are probably the most cost-effective approach to growing transportation fuel markets for Advanced Biofuels.

“Racers, start your engines!”

And remember: **“Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday”**

*Senior Green Racing Editor Bob Kozak is not connected with ALMS. These are his personal thoughts.*



Advanced Biofuels USA, a nonprofit educational organization, advocates for the adoption of advanced biofuels as an energy security, economic development, military flexibility and climate change solution.

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