

A close-up photograph of a wet, dark-colored Porsche car. The image shows a portion of the front left side, including a headlight, a chrome grille with horizontal slats, and the body panel. The surface is covered in numerous water droplets, creating a textured, shimmering effect. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours and the wet texture of the car's exterior.

PORSCHE PANORAMA

APRIL 2009

Wolf Henzler (front) and Richard Campolo (rear) with the Children's Tumor Foundation's NF Heroes.

BOB BECK



The Farnbacher Loles #85 Porsche finished the race with no clutch and a fading transmission, finishing 16th in the GT class but completing 604 laps for the Children's Tumor Foundation.



RICH CHENET

Driving for a charity was more of an afterthought than a motivation. They came to test themselves and their machine. Little did they know it would test their hearts as well.

24 HOURS for HOPE

BY BOB AND JILL BECK

As the PCA motto goes, "It's not just the cars, it's the people." Who are we kidding? Not to be anti-social but we love these cars. We love everything Porsche—the sights, sounds, smell and especially the racing. For many, the pinnacle of the Porsche racing experience is the Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona. There is nothing better than Daytona, especially at night. The cars blurring by with their headlights glimmering on the track. The ferris wheel lit up like a Christmas tree spinning next to the PCA

Paddock filled with nearly 200 of Dr. Porsche's finest along with their loyal PCA owners. The sounds of flat sixes reaching red line and braking at their limit right before lock-up, with a little Lynard Skynard thrown in the mix, wafting up from the camping area. Competition and automotive bliss is in the air. It is the Woodstock of motorsports. Even the aroma is amazing. A curious mix of campfire smoke blended with the distant smell of race fuel being burnt the best way possible.

At this year's Rolex 24, one Porsche team proved

BOB BECK



No. 85 CTF team drivers (l to r): Wolf Henzler, Ron Yarab, Daniel Graeff, Richard Campolo and Michael Gomez.



BOB BECK

Lilly Ann Brooks and Kevin Martin next to their names on the CTF 911 GT3.

JILL BECK



Richard Campolo carries four-year-old NF Hero Jesse Markland onto the grid at Daytona.

that it is indeed about the people. Farnbacher Loles Racing joined with the Children's Tumor Foundation (CTF) to help "Fuel the Cure" for neurofibromatosis (NF). NF is a genetic disorder affecting one in every 3,000 births causing tumors to grow on nerves anywhere in the body. It is more common than cystic fibrosis, inherited muscular dystrophy, Tay Sachs, and Huntington's disease combined. The goal was to not only finish the race but to raise both awareness and money to fund NF research.

The drivers of the #85 CTF car came together to fulfill a Porscheophile's ultimate dream—to race in the Daytona 24. To drive one of the most historic races in America with one of the best Porsche GT teams around today. The Steve McQueen in all of us understands where they are coming from. To cover and share the same hollowed ground as Hurley Haywood, Mario Andretti, Mark Donohue—to simply be a part of racing history. Driving for a charity was more of an afterthought than a motivation. They came to test



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themselves and their machine. Little did they know it would test their hearts as well.

The team consisted of drivers Ron Yarab, Daniel Graeff, Michael Gomez, and Richard Campollo. Ron and Michael are long time PCA members from the Eastern Buckeye and Mid South Regions respectively, and Michael is a certified PCA DE instructor. Team owner Greg Loles generously added Wolf Henzler, 2008 ALMS GT2 champion and Porsche works driver, to the #85 driver line-up giving the team a real competitive edge. Wolf would qualify and start in the CTF car and then resume duties as co-driver of the #87 Farnbacher Loles entry.

Rounding out the CTF team was crew chief Frank Resciniti. Frank's humble claim to fame is that he served as the Rolex 24 crew chief for some NASCAR father-son team by the name of Earnhardt. The team set the fastest time in qualifying and finished fourth overall driving the Corvette C5-R back in 2001. Frank knows how to set up a racecar and he proved his ability again with Wolf Henzler qualifying the car in fifth.

After qualifying Wolf described the effort, "I left the pits and then I had a big vibration in the car. It was too risky, so I pitted immediately. The crew couldn't find anything, so I said I would go out again and I would do only one timed lap. I did 1:50.1; then I heard on the

radio that Andy Lally [in another Porsche] was doing 49.5 and I knew I could go quicker. So I decided to do another lap. Even with the vibration, it was better and the more laps I did, the quicker I went. The crew did a good job and prepared the car very well."

The #85 team was unique at Daytona because the team included an extended family of sorts—24 "NF Heroes." The NF Heroes program was developed by CTF as a way to create a unique experience for individuals and their families who are affected by NF. The families fundraised for CTF and as a reward they were invited to attend the race, have their child's name appear on the #85 GT3, and receive VIP treatment for the race weekend. The families came out to support the cause but to also put a name and face to this thing called NF. Among those joining the team were five-year old Lilly Ann Brooks, four-year old Jesse Markland, and ten-year old Kevin Martin, each of whom live with the devastating affects of NF. These kids have little chance of driving a car at all much less racing.

Before a big race the team normally has its game face on. Chilly and icy cool, the drivers begin to focus. The teams review their checklists and give the car and equipment a final once-over prior to the monumental 24-hour race. It's typically all business, all about the car and team. However something unusual happened



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when the #85 team invited the NF Heroes and their families to mingle in the garage with the car and drivers the morning of the race. The cool demeanor of the team visibly thawed as they met the children for the first time. They took pictures, signed autographs, and read the children's names on the car together.

Someone on the team had the brilliant idea for the kids to sign the car where their name was located. It was a stroke of genius and it gave the kids an amazing sense of ownership, a feeling that they truly were a part of this great effort. The whole event offered the

children and families something outside the painful world of NF, a vehicle of hope if you will. We watched as the drivers and team underwent a transformation—it became clear that this was not about them or the car or the race. It was about these families and the hope they were building together. For the first time we witnessed racecar drivers get misty-eyed. They came to race and they found a cause.

The #85 car started well from fifth position. The team was able to stay in the top ten for most of the first 12 hours. Around hour 14 the front driver's side tire, flat-spotted in the bus stop, blew. The resulting damage took the team about an hour to repair in the garage and put the car back in 18th place. But everyone still felt like we had a top ten car. Unfortunately the racing gods were not on our side. A strong vibration around 4:30 in morning turned out to be the lug nut studs sheering off the left rear. By the time Ron brought the car to the pits the wheel was held on by only one stud. After stopping in the garage for a 20-minute repair it became obvious that we were not going to win or podium this race. Victory would be in finishing the race.

Richard pulled a double stint to finish the race with
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24 Hours of Hope *(continued from page 36)*

no clutch and a fading transmission—a Herculean effort. He radioed that his transmission sounded like a “coffee grinder” and he was losing gears. When Richard limped the #85 home, he crossed the finish line in 16th place and announced over the radio, “I would like to thank the German guy who made fourth gear in my [Porsche] because it is all we had left.”

Exhausted and emotionally spent, Frank and the crew were reunited with the car and drivers on the way to the garage. The car did not quite make it back as it was swamped by the CTF kids and families so excited about a finish that symbolized their hope. It's impossible to put into words yet you could see the emotion in everyone's eyes. The stress, exhaustion, and emotion of the race put them in a place where they could understand and live in the moment.

Teary-eyed, Frank looked up as he let the kids play in the racecar and said, “I kept telling myself during the race that it didn't matter how tired I was, I can recover in a couple days. These kids have to deal with the pain of NF for the rest of their lives. No matter how bad I felt, I knew I'd feel better soon. These kids don't have that hope.” Without any words spoken, both racers and families understood that to finish is to win. To race is to

live. And life is their most precious commodity.

After the race Michael, exhausted but thrilled to finish, described the experience. “I would like to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart for such a moving and rewarding experience with the Children's Tumor Foundation. From the NF Heroes to the parents to the family and friends, all were such wonderfully genuine people that I raced with a completely different purpose and focus. As my time in the race car progressed, a bigger and bigger smile developed inside my helmet as I realized each completed lap was assisting those I had met over the magical weekend.”

An unspoken bond was formed between the families and the team that weekend. The Daytona 24 was over in a day's time but the race to find a cure for NF has just begun. The team owners, drivers, crew, CTF families and PCA supporters will carry the momentum from the finish line to the research lab. The 2009 Racing4Research effort raised over \$200,000 for research and priceless hope for the over 100,000 Americans and their families devastated by NF. Endurance racing is about never giving up and so is living with NF. Together, we can make a difference. For more information about this amazing program, please visit www.racing4research.org. ☘