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[ViperExchange.com](#) and Jeroen Bleekemolen Win Petit Le Mans Pole in Final Major International Race for the Dodge Viper

No. 33 [ViperExchange.com](#)/ Gas Monkey Garage Viper GT3-R Team Shooting for Petit Le Mans Victory With Ben Keating, Marc Miller and Bleekemolen in Viper's Swan Song



BRASELTON, Georgia (September 30, 2016) – [ViperExchange.com](#) and team driver Jeroen Bleekemolen won the pole Friday for tomorrow's Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta, topping GT Daytona (GTD) qualifying for the season-ending race that will be the last appearance of a Dodge Viper in major-league international endurance racing.

Petit Le Mans is scheduled to go green tomorrow, Saturday, October 1, at 11:10 a.m. EDT. Broadcast coverage begins on FOX Sports 1 (@FS1) at 11 a.m. EDT to kickoff continuous live coverage throughout the day on @FS1, FOX Sports 2 and IMSA.tv.

The team's usual closer, Bleekemolen will now both start and finish the 10-hour Petit Le Mans, which closes out the 2016 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season.

"It was great to give the Viper a farewell pole position in its last international sports car race, so I am really happy with that," Bleekemolen said. "It was actually not the toughest qualifying session I have ever done. The

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Bleekemolen first set the 15-minute qualifying session's fastest time on his fourth lap and then locked down the pole for good one lap later with an improved track-record time of 1:21.305 (112.4 mph). The No. 33 was just under a half-a-second faster than the second fastest qualifier.

Keating is a winning driver on the No. 33 ViperExchange.com/ Gas Monkey Garage Dodge Viper GT3-R team and the principal of ViperExchange.com, the largest Viper retailer in the world.

"It's a lot of fun to know we put the Viper on the pole in its last big endurance race," Keating said. "That's exciting. I am hoping the Viper Nation is excited about it, I am hoping it gets lots of extra attention, it's just exciting to go out on top."

With Viper street cars going out of production at the end of 2017, Viper race cars will no longer be eligible in IMSA and other premier international racing series and events starting next season. It will close the curtain on more than 20 years of Viper race and championship-winning success, including victories at Le Mans, Daytona, Sebring and right here at Road Atlanta in Petit Le Mans.

Riley Technologies built the Dodge Viper GT3-R and its Riley Motorsports subsidiary has operated the ViperExchange.com team since its inception prior to the 2014 season.



"We definitely decided to go for the pole, put Jeroen in and lay down a lap," said Riley Motorsports Team Director Bill Riley. "He just did a great job out there. We have had a good car since we showed up, we feel really good about the race tomorrow and putting it on pole makes us feel even better. Now we need to turn our focus a little bit more to the race, which won't be hard because we have a clear road in front of us."

Team plans call for Bleekemolen to hand the Viper off to Keating after his race-opening driving shift. Marc Miller has also rejoined ViperExchange.com as the all-important third driver, a key role he also filled at the Rolex 24 At Daytona and 12 Hours of Sebring.

"What we have to do is keep it on the lead lap, keep it in one piece, and hand the car over to Jeroen for the last three or four hours, and that's all we can do," Keating said. "Jeroen will obviously start, and after he does a stint we will go about the business of getting me my three hours done."

In addition to being one for the record books, a ViperExchange.com win on Saturday in the Viper's final race would almost certainly clinch GTD driver and team championship honors for Keating, Bleekemolen and the No. 33 squad.

The points-leading Ferrari team and drivers have the GTD championships all but wrapped up, but Keating, Bleekemolen and the No. 33 team are second with 267 points. ViperExchange.com leads a tight group of five

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points clear of the No. 48 Lamborghini squad in fourth. The No. 23 Porsche is fifth with 201 points, and the No. 44 Audi team and drivers have 257 points in sixth.

Race-day Saturday starts with a 20-minute warmup at 8:40 a.m. with Petit Le Mans scheduled to officially start later that morning at 11:10 a.m. EDT.

Noteworthy

- Although the weather is expected to continue to be sunny and clear, Petit Le Mans is always a game of rolling with the various temperature and track changes. "I think that the track will change a lot through 10 hours," Keating said. "I think it will start out pretty good during the day, get pretty difficult in the afternoon in the heat, and then when it cools down at night it will get really fast again."

- Keating, Bleekemolen and Miller will co-drive together for the fourth time tomorrow after debuting as a trio in the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2015. "It's great to have Marc back," Bleekemolen said. "He fits really well into the team, and for such a long race it's nice to have a third driver. It will help to keep me fresh for the last couple of hours of the race."

About ViperExchange.com: ViperExchange.com is the largest Dodge Viper and exotic cars licensed dealer located just Northwest of Houston, Texas. With over 100 Dodge Vipers typically for sale and more arriving daily for sale, ViperExchange.com has combined the largest inventory in the world of new and pre-owned Dodge Vipers. ViperExchange.com also offers the best prices and discounts. Special orders, specific model searches and financing options are also available. For more information, visit ViperExchange.com directly, Twitter [@ViperExchange](https://twitter.com/ViperExchange) and Facebook at [Facebook.com/Viper-Exchange](https://facebook.com/Viper-Exchange).

About Gas Monkey Garage: In 2002, Richard Rawlings launched Gas Monkey Garage. The Garage created and transported automobiles for customers worldwide. In September 2013, Rawlings started Gas Monkey Bar N' Grill in Northwest Dallas with a second location at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport that opened in March 2014. In October 2014, Gas Monkey Live, a venue dedicated predominantly to live music, was opened. In 2016, Gas Monkey Garage will partner in three motorsports efforts with the ViperExchange.com Riley Motorsports Dodge Viper GT3-R in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, the Dreyer & Reinbold Racing Gas Monkey Garage Special in the 100th Indy 500 and the Laughlin Motorsports Pro Stock in the NHRA Mello Yello Series.

About Cruisin' With The Monkey: Cruisin' With The Monkey, March 19 – 26, 2017, is a trip throughout the Western Caribbean with Richard Rawlings, and some of his Monkeys from Gas Monkey Garage, aboard Holland America's luxurious Nieuw Amsterdam. Setting sail from Fort Lauderdale the day after the 2017 running of the 12 Hours of Sebring, the high-seas adventure will also have winning ViperExchange.com Dodge Viper GT3-R competitors Ben Keating, Jeroen Bleekemolen, Team Director Bill Riley and a few of their racing teammates and colleagues onboard for the week-long party at sea. Check out the full list of professional motorsports personalities already booked for the cruise at www.CruisinWithTheMonkey.com/motorsports and learn more and reserve your spot now at www.CruisinWithTheMonkey.com.







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