



## Flying Lizard Motorsports Reveals Changeup for 2018 Manufacturer and Drivers



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Flying Lizard Motorsports will return to the Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) in 2018 for its second season of competition in the GTS class. For the first time since 2014, the team will field two full season Audi R8 LMS GT4 entries, driven by Mike Hedlund and Adam Merzon. Ryan Eversley will join Merzon in the Case-it Racing by Flying Lizard Motorsports entry for the five SprintX race weekends.

"I'm looking forward to the potential that racing with Audi Sport customer racing will provide for us," said Program Manager Darren Law. "With so many new cars coming in to GT4 this year, we had to take a hard look at everyone and evaluate the performance and program each of them to provide our team the best opportunity for success. Audi always delivers an extremely competitive car and they are focused on the performance. We were very impressed after a review of the new R8 LMS GT4 and having previously had a relationship with Audi Sport customer Racing, this was an obvious choice."

Flying Lizard Motorsports first raced the Audi R8 LMS in the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship, finishing second at the team's first race of the season, the Rolex 24 at Daytona. The California squad has a winning history with the Audi R8 LMS, clinching overall victory at the 25 Hours of Thunderhill in 2015, 2016, and 2017. The team will retain the same crew from 2017, bringing with them existing knowledge of and experience with the Audi R8 LMS.

"Our relationship with Flying Lizard Motorsports was launched in 2014 and they have been extremely successful with Audi since the beginning," said Tristan Herbert, Audi, Senior Manager, Motorsport & Customer Racing. "Most recently, they won the 25 Hours of Thunderhill for the third year in a row. This team knows the Audi brand and how to win. We are delighted to have them represent Audi Sport customer racing with a two-car Audi R8 LMS GT4 program."

Mike Hedlund first joined Flying Lizard at Sonoma Raceway in 2016, where he earned back-to-back third place finishes at the team's home track. He has since been a reoccurring driver with the program, taking part in the 2016 overall win at the 25 Hours of Thunderhill, and again the following year with the 2017 Toyo Tires GT Challenge class win. Hedlund will race the 45 Flying Lizard Motorsports liveried Audi R8 LMS GT4 for the entirety of the season. As a bronze rated driver, Hedlund will be eligible to run the two-driver formatted SprintX Races without a co-driver.

"It's fantastic to be reunited with all my friends at Flying Lizard for the 2018 Pirelli World Challenge GTS season," said Hedlund. "While I have plenty of experience in PWC over the last few seasons, both the GTS class and the Audi R8 LMS GT4 will be new to me. The grid is shaping up to be ultra-competitive with an impressive variety of new GT4 spec machines piloted by top level drivers, so it'll be a great show. The last time I drove an Audi we won the 25 Hours of Thunderhill together and if all goes well, we should be just as competitive in the new Audi R8 LMS GT4 car."

Adam Merzon joins Flying Lizard Motorsports fresh off winning the 2017 Pirelli Challenge SprintX GTS Pro/AM Driver Championship. Merzon brings vast experience to Flying Lizard, having competed in the GRAND-AM Road Racing Association, American Le Mans Series, and IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar championship, where he earned a second place finish at the 2017 Rolex 24 At Daytona with BAR1 Motorsports. Merzon's No. 23 Case-it by Flying Lizard Motorsports Audi R8 LMS GT4 will run the season in a Case-it livery with shared Flying Lizard branding.

"I'm very happy to be joining Flying Lizard Motorsports for the 2018 Pirelli World Challenge series," said Merzon. "This team has won many races and championships, and I'm looking forward to racing the Case-It Audi R8 LMS GT4 with them. I've enjoyed racing in Pirelli World Challenge series and feel that it's a perfect avenue for the Case-It brand. Ryan Eversley has been my coach and teammate for years, so I'm glad he and I will be able to race together in the SprintX events and go after the championship."

Introduced to the Pirelli World Challenge in 2016, the SprintX championship will take place at five of the nine GTS race events, substituting the traditional one driver format in a 50 minute race for a two driver, 60 minute race format. With a vast resume of his own, IMSA and Pirelli World Challenge driver Ryan Eversley is slated to join Merzon for the SprintX events. Eversley won his debut PWC race in 2010, and most recently earned a second place finish during the SprintX Round 8 at Utah Motorsports Campus with co-driver Tom Dyer.

"I'm excited to be joining my friend Adam Merzon and the Flying Lizard team," said Eversley. "Adam and I have been working together for years and the Lizards are one of the best teams in the business, so I can't wait to get the season started. The SprintX races are really exciting and I think our Case-it machine is going to be a strong contender for the championship."

In their Pirelli World Challenge debut season in 2017, Flying Lizard Motorsports celebrated four wins, ten podiums, and 17 top-five finishes. The 2018 GTS season will be comprised of nine double-race weekends, four of which will run the traditional one-driver Sprint format, five with the two-driver SprintX format. With the influx of GT4 competitors in the Pirelli World Challenge paddock, the GTS class is aiming to be one of the most competitive arenas for the 2018 North American sports car racing season.

"We're looking forward to a successful season," concluded Law. "Mike Hedlund is a great driver, he has driven and won with us for several years now and we are happy to have him back. Adam Merzon is a serious competitor, I have known him for several years and even raced against him, and we are happy to welcome him into the Flying Lizard family. We have a strong package and are looking forward to getting started."

The team will take delivery of the new cars in February and will immediately get to work to make them race-ready in anticipation of the season opener in March. The 2018 Pirelli World Challenge championship battles begin March 9-11 at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg on the streets of St. Petersburg, Florida. For more information, visit [world-challenge.com](http://world-challenge.com).