



Media Information

Subaru Of America, Inc.
One Subaru Drive
Camden, NJ 08103
Main Number: 856-488-8500

CONTACT: Dominick Infante
(856) 488-8615
dinfante@subaru.com

SUBARU MOTORSPORTS USA EARNS SEVENTH ARX SEASON PODIUM AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS

AUSTIN, TEX, Sep 30, 2019 - Subaru Motorsports USA driver Patrik Sandell earned a second-place finish at the fifth round of the Americas Rallycross (ARX) season at Circuit of the Americas (COTA), marking the team's seventh podium finish of the ARX season and the third for Sandell. With previous ARX driver's championship leader Scott Speed sidelined by a back injury, Sandell's finish moves the Swedish driver and former Junior World Rally Champion into second overall in the standings with teammate Chris Atkinson sitting third. FIA World Rallycross Championship driver Andreas Bakkerud, joining the four-car Subaru effort for the last two rounds of the season, also earned a semi-final heat win and became the fourth different Subaru driver to do so this year.

Following Speed's back injury sustained at August's Nitro Rallycross event, Subaru Motorsports USA rolled out a four-car strategy aimed at challenging de facto ARX championship leader Tanner Foust to try to capture the team's first rallycross title. World RX star Bakkerud and former U.S. champion Joni Wiman joined the team in Austin and immediately showed pace in the qualifying heats. Bakkerud sat second after the hard-fought qualifying rounds and would win his semi-final heat from pole position, earning a front-row grid position in the final. Atkinson and Sandell, third and fifth through qualifying, also went through to the final to put three Subaru WRX STI rallycross cars on the grid.

In the final race, Bakkerud took an early lead and held it for two laps, but was unable to defend against a hard-charging Foust on lap three. Sandell, after an early joker lap, ran quick and clean laps to catch up to Bakkerud and pass him into second when the Norwegian took his joker. Sandell pushed Foust for the lead through the final lap but could not complete a pass in the closing corners, settling for second. Bakkerud crossed the line in third before being penalized five seconds for early-race contact, dropping him to fourth overall, one slot ahead of Atkinson.

"I'm stoked to be on the podium!" said Sandell after the event. "Every podium is great, and I'm very glad for Subaru that we once again showed that we were up there fighting. It's been a long journey for Subaru but this year we've been up on the podium all the time. It's going to be very hard to close the gap to Tanner at this point, but Mid-Ohio is a little better for our cars, so hopefully we can put on a really good show for the end of the season."

Sandell, Atkinson, Bakkerud and Wiman will return to the ARX grid to close out the season at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, October 5-6.

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