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2010 Le Mans 24: Highcroft Racing Team Up With High Performance Eyewear Expert

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ALMS News

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On the eve of the team's debut in the biggest sportscar race in the world, Highcroft Racing have kicked off a new partnership with PILLA High Performance Eyewear which will target enhanced vision as a new factor in driver and crew performance.

While the team leaves no stone unturned to find performance advantages in areas such as engineering, aerodynamics and horsepower, Highcroft have enlisted the help of PILLA to help both the drivers and the crew with enhanced clarity and reduced eye fatigue.

As the full company name says, the performance part of PILLA High Performance Eyewear is a key aspect.

Providing unparalleled clarity and a host of other qualities designed to optimize the performance of athletes in shooting, golf, equestrian sports and aviation, PILLA is the eyewear of choice for PILLA is the eyewear of choice for the world's top shooters and a growing circle of pro golfers.

Pilla's eyewear features state-of-the-art lens technology to provide the highest level of protection and performance.

The ballistic lens material utilized by PILLA, controls light filtration achieved by the addition of proprietary coatings to enhance the effectiveness of Pilla's trademark high-resolution color technology.

The key to Pilla's proprietary lens technology is based on the regulation of the amount of light that enters the eye. This, coupled with the application of Pilla's high definition color enhancement relieves stress from the eyes ultimately maximizing the athlete's visual acuity and performance.

"Obviously vision is a pretty critical aspect for a racing driver," Highcroft President, Duncan Dayton said.

"We are working in conjunction with PILLA to develop coatings for the driver's visors to provide them with the same advantages used in their eyeglasses. PILLA's lens technology filters out parts of the light spectrum, enabling the drivers to focus on hitting their marks and also reducing eye fatigue.

"Around the track your eyes are subjected to massive difference of light and shade - all at 175mph. When you walk out of the shadows into bright sunlight your eyes take a second to adjust, when you do it at speed, over a double or triple stint at Le Mans, it all adds to the overall physical challenge facing the drivers.

"Improved vision at night is also a key target as well as those transition periods during dawn and dusk.

"This is a entirely new area of development for our sport. The technology has proven to be a huge advantage in a sport like competitive shooting - if you're not wearing lenses for improved vision, you're not going to win a medal.

"Motorsport requires the same pin point precision - it is even more important to be inch perfect when you are traveling at 175mph in the dark."

The Highcroft Racing crew will also enjoy the advantages of Pilla technology during the pit stops. Since Sebring, the team have been wearing Pilla protective goggles in the pit stops. Crew members will be using two types of Pilla goggles at Le Mans, one for daytime and one for night.

"For the guys, it is a safety and vision consideration. The product is extremely safe and it can also make a big difference in critical situations. If you drop a wheel nut in the dark, any delay in finding it and getting the stop completed is critical," Dayton said.

Even the Highcroft Racing engineers wear the glasses while reading monitors analyzing telemetry - the color enhancement from the lenses reducing eye strain.

The patented Ballistx urethane technology using by Pilla was originally developed for military applications as ballistic armor.

Ballistx is a revolutionary material lighter in weight but more powerful in strength than polycarbonate lenses as well as any other transparent high impact lens material.

Ballistx's anti-scratch, dust-resistant and high definition lenses provide superior impact resistance and amplify visual accuracy without compromising comfort.

The Highcroft crew will also be fitted with PILLA High Performance Eyewear for regular daytime use.

But these are not your regular sunglasses. More than 24 hours needed to make a single PILLA lens - each lens hand-crafted in Italy.

In the time taken to produce one Pilla lens, regular sunglasses manufacturers can produce 40,000 polycarbonate lenses in same time frame.

"PILLA High Performance Eyewear is proud to partner with Highcroft Racing, reigning American Le Mans Series champions," said Philip Pilla, Chief Executive Officer of PILLA High Performance Eyewear.

"We are athletes who create high performance eyewear to enhance athletic performance through improved hand-eye coordination. Racing, which requires split-second responses to visual cues, is a critical platform for hand-eye coordination and is one of the most visually demanding sports.

"We are honored to be a part of the Highcroft team's strategy for continued success by incorporating our state-of-the-art, meticulously hand-crafted eyewear into the racers' and crews' performance equipment."