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Racing to End Alzheimer's on track to beat the disease

By MARC VALERO Staff Writer Mar 15, 2019



From left: Racing to End Alzheimer's founder Phil Frengs and drive Nick Galante at Sebring International Raceway on Thursday.
MARC VALERO/STAFF/

SEBRING — Drivers Nick Galante and James Vance are racing to win on the track and for a win to beat Alzheimer's with the non-profit team Racing to End Alzheimer's.

The organization's banner can be found on the No. 23 Fast MD Racing Audi RS3 LMS in the TCR Class.

Racing to End Alzheimer's was founded in 2017 by Phil Frengs after his wife Mimi was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Galante said what sets them apart from most charities — 100 percent of the money raised goes toward helping others through funding for the cure and funding for the caretaking for the people who are suffering from Alzheimer's.

Vance, the younger of the two drivers, said he enjoys working with Galante and Frengs and racing for a great cause to try to put an end to a horrible disease.

In its inaugural year, Racing to End Alzheimer's raised \$43,500, which was donated to The Cognitive Health Clinic at the UCLA Medical Center and the Nantz National Alzheimer Center at Houston Methodist Hospital.

Many supporters fund Racing to End Alzheimer's through a "Take the Ride" sponsorship. For a donation of \$250, the name of a loved one affected by Alzheimer's will be included on the No. 23 Audi from the time of the donation until the end of the racing season. The goal is to have the car covered with names as a moving tribute.

Feng said this is the first year the names will be on the car over a course of multiple races. After the Sebring race the names will go on the car for eight races.

This allows families to actually honor somebody in their life who is suffering from Alzheimer's or maybe passed on from Alzheimer's so it gives a lot of people some closure and a feeling of support by being able to put their loved one's name on the car.

Galante said Sebring International Raceway is one of his favorite tracks.

"The one thing that separates this track from the others, is when you are out here racing it is like stepping back in time," he said. "The history here, it is one of the oldest racetracks. It is almost like a nostalgic feeling out there."

Even though it is a flat track, it is one of the most exciting with the bumps and nuances of the pavement changes, Galante said.

Frengs added, the hall of famers have raced here; everyone who is important in racing has raced here in Sebring. Now these young professional drivers are racing the same track as all the hall of famers.

The Racing for Alzheimer's No. 23 Audi will be racing 12:05-2:05 p.m. today in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge

For more information go to the Racing to End Alzheimer's website at r2endalz.org.