



PORSCHE

Press Release

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World Endurance Championship WEC, round 3, 24 Hours of Le Mans/France – GT Qualifying

Fourth grid row for the best Porsche 911 RSR

Stuttgart. The anticipated hunt for pole position for the 24 Hours of Le Mans was a washout: Heavy rain during the second and third qualifying sessions on Thursday evening prevented faster lap times, compared to the previous day with a dry first qualifying session on the 13.629-kilometre Circuit des 24 Heures. Like most of the 60 cars, the two GT-class Porsche Motorsport works-entry 911 RSR racers were unable to improve on their grid positions for the 84th running of the long distance classic in France. In the 911 RSR with the starting number 92, overall Le Mans winner Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and his teammates Frédéric Makowiecki (France) and Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) take up the prestigious race on Saturday at 15.00 hrs from the fourth GT grid row. Lining up on the row behind them is the #91 sister car, driven by outright Le Mans winner Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Frenchmen Patrick Pilet and Kévin Estre.

One of the few drivers who went out on this rainy night at exactly the right time was Patrick Long (USA). The Porsche factory pilot, who contests the GTE-Am class in the 911 RSR of the Abu Dhabi Proton Racing customer team with Khaled Al Qubaisi (Abu Dhabi) and David Heinemeier Hansson (Denmark), turned a perfect qualifying lap despite the difficult conditions. This catapulted his team from seventh to third.

Qualifying quotes

Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser, Head of Porsche Motorsport: “The weather conditions today didn’t allow us faster lap times. We were able to fine-tune the setup on our 911 RSR for rainy conditions, but our drivers didn’t get much track time. The result is so-

bering, of course. The gap to the leaders is very large. Let's see whether the rule makers come to a final decision, after the promised analysis, concerning the BoP of the GT cars for tomorrow's race. Apart from this, we're totally focused and we'll tackle this fascinating classic with great enthusiasm. The race runs over 24 hours, it shouldn't make a difference what our grid positions are."

Patrick Pilet (911 RSR #91): "The track was dry when I drove my first laps. That was good because they're not actually expecting rain for the race. Our 911 RSR ran perfectly in the wet. If we encounter wet conditions in the race we'll undoubtedly be amongst the front-runners."

Nick Tandy (911 RSR #91): "We would have preferred another shot at a fast lap. But under these weather conditions it simply didn't make sense to take that risk. For this reason we decided to cut the session short. We're ready for the race."

Kévin Estre (911 RSR #91): "Patrick and Nick were able to turn a few laps on wets. I had my helmet on and was all set for my stint, but then the rain became so heavy that we didn't want to risk anything. My teammates gave only positive feedback on how the 911 RSR handled on the wet track. For Saturday I now hope for a little rain. We've worked perfectly up to this point and we're prepared for the race."

Earl Bamber (911 RSR #92): "During the qualifying we worked specifically on preparing for the race. Unfortunately the last session was literally a washout."

Frédéric Makowiecki (911 RSR #92): "Today was a day where we couldn't do much. The weather just wasn't settled enough. Still, we're well prepared for the race."

Jörg Bergmeister (911 RSR #92): "I didn't get much track time in qualifying today. But that's not a problem – this isn't the first time I've competed at Le Mans."

Customer team drivers

Richard Lietz (911 RSR #77 Dempsey Proton Racing): "We concentrated on getting the car ready to race. Under such difficult conditions it doesn't make sense to keep trying to grind out fast lap times. At a 24-hour race it doesn't matter whether you start from one place ahead or behind."

Michael Christensen (911 RSR #77 Dempsey Proton Racing): "With the race in mind we tried out various things on the car. I went out on fresh tyres and that worked

well. Everything is progressing as expected. I'm pleased."

Philipp Eng (911 RSR #77 Dempsey Proton Racing): "First the track was wet, then dry, then wet again at the end. But it was still a lot of fun and we know that we're also well prepared for the rain."

Wolf Henzler (911 RSR #78 KCMG): "It was really difficult today. We changed the vehicle setup, but it wasn't enough to turn significantly faster lap times."

Christian Ried (911 RSR #78 KCMG): "The 911 RSR also runs very well in the rain. With possible changeable weather conditions in the race, we're still feeling confident in spite of our starting position."

Joel Camathias (911 RSR #78 KCMG): "It proved very difficult today to accurately assess the circuit. But we opted for the right tyres and they worked very well. You have to be very careful not to aquaplane – particularly along the fast straights. But as drivers we're prepared for this."

Patrick Long (911 RSR #88 Abu Dhabi Proton Racing): "We took a bit of a gamble and fitted new slicks straight after the warm-up lap. When it started to rain, instead of trialling something on the car, we immediately attempted a fast lap. This was exactly the right tactic. I encountered very little traffic and turned a perfect lap. I'm very pleased about this."

Khaled Al Qubaisi (911 RSR #88 Abu Dhabi Proton Racing): "We are doing very well. That was precisely the weather for us. Rain during the race would be like Christmas to us."

Cooper MacNeil (911 RSR #89 Proton Competition): "The conditions were unbelievable, but this is Le Mans and you have to be prepared for anything."

Leh Keen (911 RSR #89 Proton Competition): "We worked on the car overnight and made some improvements. The car felt much better today and we were a second faster than yesterday. The team did a great job."

Marc Miller (911 RSR #89 Proton Competition): "Today was a change for the better. The balance of the car in the rain was perfect and, as history shows, it can sometimes rain in Le Mans when you least expect it. We perfectly prepared for that."

Qualifying result

GTE-Pro class

1. Hand/Müller/Bourdais (USA/D/F), Ford GT, 3:51.185 minutes
2. Briscoe/Westbrook/Dixon (AUS/GB/NZ), Ford GT, + 0.312 seconds
3. Bruni/Calado/Pier Guidi (I/GB/I), Ferrari 488 GTE, + 0.383
8. Bamber/Bergmeister/Makowiecki (NZ/D/F), Porsche 911 RSR, + 3.733
10. Pilet/Estre/Tandy (F/F/GB), Porsche 911 RSR, + 4.147
12. Christensen/Lietz/Eng (D/A/A), Porsche 911 RSR, + 4.241

GTE-Am class

1. Mok/Sawa/Bell (MAL/J/GB), Ferrari 458 Italia, 3:56.827 minutes
2. Lamy/Dalla Lana/Lauda (P/CAN/A), Aston Martin, + 0.371 seconds
3. Al Qubaisi/Long/Heinemeier Hansson (UAE/USA/DK), Porsche 911 RSR, + 0.686
8. Ried/Henzler/Camathias (D/D/CH), Porsche 911 RSR, + 2.207
10. MacNeil/Keen/Miller (USA/USA/USA), Porsche 911 RSR, + 3.280
11. Wainwright/Carroll/Barker (GB/GB/GB), Porsche 911 RSR, + 4.219

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Please note: Photo and video material from the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC is available for accredited journalists from the Porsche Press Database on <https://presse.porsche.de>. The Twitter channel **@PorscheRaces** provides live updates with the latest information and photos from race tracks around the world. Journalists also have access to the digital Porsche Motorsport Media Guide on <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport>. Porsche Communication provides a new service for journalists, bloggers and online multipliers under www.newsroom.porsche.com. Up-to-date video news can be downloaded from www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom.

Model range 911 (Type 991 II): Fuel consumption combined 9.3 – 7.4 l/100 km; CO₂ emissions 216 - 169 g/km; efficiency class (Germany): F – D

