



PORSCHE

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### **World championship leaders set best time in their Porsche 919 Hybrid**

**Stuttgart.** Excitement increases in the lead up to the final round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) and the Porsche Team, with the two 919 Hybrids, had a very positive first day of practice in Bahrain. The championship leaders, Romain Dumas (FR), Neel Jani (CH) and Marc Lieb (DE), topped the time sheets in both of the two 90-minute free practice sessions. Jani set the fastest lap of the day with a time of 1:39.817 minutes. This is only 0.081 seconds slower than last year's pole position time, and this is despite the fact that, according to the regulations, the Porsche 919 Hybrid can use eight per cent less energy per lap in 2016. The reigning World Champions, Timo Bernhard (DE), Brendon Hartley (NZ) and Mark Webber (AU), came fifth and second in the two sessions on the 5.412 kilometre long Formula One circuit in the Persian Gulf region. In this trio Hartley did the fastest lap in 1:40.272 minutes.

For Dumas/Jani/Lieb the six-hour race is all about the drivers' world championship. They have an advantage of 17 points ahead of the best placed Toyota. Finishing fifth in the race would still be enough for them to win the title, even if the number 6 Toyota won and also took the one point for pole position. Reliability has the highest priority for the Porsche Team. Weather conditions are highly likely to be stable with ambient temperatures of around 30 degree Celsius during the day and around 25 degree at night. Qualifying as well as the majority of the race will be held in the dark. At the penultimate round in Shanghai Porsche secured the world championship title for manufacturers for the second consecutive year.

Team Principal Andreas Seidl summed up the first day: “A good start for an important race weekend here in Bahrain. It was of key importance to have two trouble free sessions for both our cars. We are satisfied that we were able to achieve this and could work on our programmes as planned. Today there were qualifying simulations as well as tyre evaluation on longer runs. We are obviously quick over a single lap, on the long-runs, however, the competition appeared to be very close. We will now analyse all the data. Both driver crews are reasonably happy with their 919 Hybrids. We will, however, try to find further set-up improvements tonight.”

LMP1 qualifying will be held on Friday from 17:30-17:50 hrs local time. The six-hour race starts on Saturday at 16:00 hrs (14:00 hrs in Central Europe).

#### **Quotes after Free Practice:**

##### **Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 1**

**Timo Bernhard (35, Germany):** “Right from the beginning the track was in remarkably good condition, and a lot less sandy than we had experienced it before. For us everything went according to plan. In the first free practice session we were focusing on set-up work. In FP2 Brendon and I started with a qualifying simulation. I’ve had a clear lap and this gave us useful information for tomorrow. Later we continued working on the race set-up.”

**Brendon Hartley (27, New Zealand):** “It was a nice start to the race weekend. In the first session we made a few corrections to the car and they all felt very positive. Later on Timo and I did our five mandatory night laps, and a bit of a qualifying simulation on new tyres before Mark took over for long runs.”

**Mark Webber (40, Australia):** “In the first session we used only one set of tyres, which is normal for FP1. Everything went very smoothly. We got a lot of information for the race, made some changes and improved the car for the second session. But we will keep working on it overnight and we have some more ideas.”

**Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 2**

**Romain Dumas (38, France):** “We had a clean first day, which was very good for us. At recent race weekends we were less lucky. The car is nice to drive, my long-run was quite okay and we are already working on details, which is very positive.”

**Neel Jani (32, Switzerland):** “During the first session I had a small issue with the door, but other than that everything went well. This time here the track is quite clean, and that’s why lap times were immediately pretty good. We did the qualifying simulation in the second session, because the fight for pole tomorrow will also be after sunset. I had an okay lap, but there certainly is room for improvement. Afterwards we built the car back up to race spec. We want to keep a high performance level over the race distance.”

**Marc Lieb (36, Ludwigsburg):** “We had a good kick-off here. Regarding temperatures, the first free practice session was what we can expect for the start, conditions in the second session were rather what we will have for most of the race. Generally, tyre wear is relatively high here. In the second session we did a qualifying simulation and got the five mandatory night laps out of the way. The car was quite good. My lap wasn’t perfect, but at least the first one here for me with no traffic.”

All points standings: <http://www.fiawec.com/courses/classification.html>

All results: <http://fiawec.alkamelsystems.com>

**Note:** Text, photo and video material for the LMP1 programme is free to access at the Porsche Press Database on <https://presse.porsche.de>. The link <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport> takes you straight to the Motorsport Media Guide. The LMP1 Twitter channel @Porsche\_Team provides the latest information, photos and video clips live from the race tracks. Further live features are available at [www.porsche.com/fiawec](http://www.porsche.com/fiawec). Further journalistic content can be found in the Newsroom at [www.newsroom.porsche.com](http://www.newsroom.porsche.com). Video News can be viewed on [www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom](http://www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom).

