



Race report: Diriyah E-Prix, Races 1 & 2 of the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship

Porsche scores points and gains important insights at season opener

Stuttgart. Porsche kicked off its second Formula E season with two night races in the desert of Saudi Arabia. The world's first fully-electric racing series celebrated its premiere as an official world championship on the demanding street circuit in Diriyah – and the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team harvested points from both races: Pascal Wehrlein (GER) achieved a strong fifth place on Friday at his debut race with the Porsche 99X Electric. In race two on Saturday, he finished 10th. His teammate André Lotterer (GER) concluded today's race on the Arabian Peninsula in 11th place.

Race 2

Claiming second in the Super Pole Qualifying, Pascal Wehrlein laid the foundation for his top-five finish in race one. The positive result meant that he took up race two on Saturday among the first qualifying group and therefore had less than favourable grip on the track. At the wheel of his Porsche 99X Electric, he headed into the race from P16. The fact that the narrow and twisty track near the capital Riyadh offers very few chances to overtake and the competition among the strong Formula E line-up is very well balanced made it impossible for him to finish further up the field. Due to subsequent time penalties given to competitors who finished in front of him, he ultimately inherited tenth place, which is worth one point.

A puncture in race one hampered his teammate André Lotterer, and bad luck plagued him again in race two: An accident on a fast stretch of the track during free practice resulted in his Porsche 99X Electric having to undergo an overhaul. It proved

impossible to get the car back on its wheels in time for the qualifying, hence he had to start the race over 45 minutes (plus one lap) from the pit lane. Lotterer managed to gain five positions – and also benefited retrospectively from the time penalties imposed by the race director. With debris lying on the track from accidents, the race was red-flagged shortly before the end.

Comments on the Diriyah E-Prix

Amiel Lindesay, Head of Operations Formula E: “We took a bit of a risk when we let André start from the pit lane so that we could save some energy. Unfortunately, it didn’t quite work. Two full course yellows and the premature termination of the race didn’t help either. Still, there are many positives that we can take from this season-opening round, and some important insights that can help us progress. After a fantastic qualifying performance, Pascal started Friday’s race from the first grid row, and André Lotterer from the fourth grid row – that was a great team effort. Today didn’t go smoothly. The team did an outstanding job, and they rebuilt André’s car in time for the race. Such a race is like a puzzle, and for us today some of the pieces didn’t quite fit. Still, that doesn’t faze us. We know what we can do and we remain confident.”

Pascal Wehrlein, Porsche works driver (#99): “All in all, that was a good start to the season for us. Above all, Friday’s great qualifying, a top-five placing in the race and the top-ten result today make me optimistic. Today was more difficult. When you drive among a bunch of cars that were strong in the first race, it’s not easy to get ahead. I tried everything and was a little too optimistic at one point – I was handed a drive-through penalty for the manoeuvre, and a better result wasn’t possible. Now we have to see how we can improve for the next race in Rome. I’m confident that we’ll return stronger.”

André Lotterer, Porsche works driver (#36): “It’s a pity that we couldn’t demonstrate how much progress we’ve made compared to the previous season. Unfortunately, this was a weekend to forget for me. Yesterday a screw in the tyre, today an accident during

free practice, so that I missed out on qualifying. A huge thank you to my crew for repairing my car in time for the race. Things can only get better in Rome.”

Coming up

The next race for the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team is round 3 of the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship: the Rome E-Prix on 10 April.

Porsche in Formula E

The TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team contests its second Formula E season in 2021 with the Porsche 99X Electric. André Lotterer celebrated a successful racing debut in November 2019, finishing second at the season-opening race in Diriyah after meticulous preparation: a dream start and proof that Porsche had a competitive vehicle right from the outset with the Porsche 99X Electric. This was impressively underlined by the first pole position in Mexico City and another second place on home turf in Berlin. Formula E is the world’s first fully-electric street racing series and, as an accelerator for innovative and sustainable mobility technologies, it has brought thrilling motorsport to people living in major cities since 2014. This season, in which a driver and team world champion will be crowned for the first time, more automobile manufacturers compete than in any other racing series. As such, the races are fascinating and fiercely contested.

More information, film and photo material is available in the Porsche Newsroom: newsroom.porsche.com

