



PORSCHE

Press Release

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24 Hours of Spa 2017

Porsche 911 GT3 R narrowly misses out on podium

Stuttgart. The phenomenal charge of the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by KÜS Team75 Bernhard on Sunday was almost rewarded with a podium result. At the long-distance marathon in Spa-Francorchamps, the 500 hp 911 with the starting number 117 narrowly missed out on claiming a podium spot and secured a commendable fourth place in a strong field of 63 vehicles from eleven manufacturers.

Until then, Michael Christensen (Denmark) and his teammates Kévin Estre (France) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) fought their way back to the top from an almost hopeless situation. After receiving a time penalty, the Porsche 911 GT3 R lost two-and-a-half laps on Saturday but, with a perfect race strategy and fast stints, it was able to plough through the field. At one point, KÜS Team75 Bernhard's 911 even took the lead. After being handed another penalty, the team was unable to make up for the time that was lost.

The two Porsche 911 GT3 R campaigned by Herberth Motorsport on the storied 7.004-kilometre racetrack were also hampered by drive-through penalties and other competitor's accidents. At the wheel of the #912 vehicle, Porsche Young Professional Mathieu Jaminet (France), Sven Müller and Ralf Bohn (both Germany) as well as Daniel Allemann (Switzerland) took up the race from second in the Pro-Am category, but after many long stops in the pits for repairs, were not able to progress beyond seventh place.

Herberth Motorsport's second vehicle did not survive the night. The #911 Porsche 911 GT3 R encountered debris on the track and was so badly damaged that repairs were no longer possible. After 138 laps, the race for the all-German driver quartet Marc Lieb, Alfred and Robert Renauer as well as Jürgen Häring was over. This means position 17 in the Pro-Am category.

Comments after the race

Timo Bernhard, team owner KÜS Team75 Bernhard: "I'm incredibly proud of my squad and I want to thank Porsche and the works drivers for their great support. We had the speed, we started from second on the grid, but we lost a lot of time with the two penalties. In the night we made good strategic decisions and fought our way to the front. Unfortunately it wasn't quite enough for a podium result, 14 seconds at a 24-hour race are not a lot. Everyone did a fantastic job here. We'll be back next year."

Laurens Vanthoor (911 GT3 R #117): "Had we not been handed a penalty we would certainly have finished on the podium. But such things happen in racing, no one does it on purpose. Afterwards, the team and drivers did a perfect job but it just wasn't enough. It's always a special experience for me to drive on home turf here."

Michael Christensen (911 GT3 R #117): "The entire race was a rollercoaster of emotions. This is normal at a 24-hour race. Everything is different here at Spa. You first have to get used to several things. I'm very proud of our team. We had a lot of new crew members who worked really well together right from the start."

Kévin Estre (911 GT3 R #117): "That was a cool event, but it was very tough for the teams, drivers and cars. You have to push hard on this circuit and that results in mistakes. We all worked very well, our car was fast over a qualifying lap and over the race distance. Fourth is a great result, especially after we'd fallen so far back. We can all be totally proud of our efforts."

Max Mayer, team manager Herberth Motorsport: “Both cars had the speed to reach the podium in the Pro-Am class. Unfortunately we were constantly hampered by unfortunate collisions and penalties. We had to park the #911 car in the pits, but we managed to finish the tough 24-hour race with the #912 vehicle. It was a great but very demanding race and our newly-formed team worked very well together.”

Marc Lieb (911 GT3 R #911): “It’s a shame that we retired after finally finding our rhythm. Still, it was a great race weekend. Our squad worked brilliantly and we’ll return to Spa.”

Mathieu Jaminet (911 GT3 R #912): “The race didn’t quite go as we’d imagined. We had a bad start when we were shunted from the track and lost a bit of speed after the accident. The car ran very well, but we couldn’t make up the ground we’d lost. It was a fantastic experience to drive in Spa.”

Sven Müller (911 GT3 R #912): “This was my first time at the 24 Hours of Spa and it was simply great fun. I was impressed with the unbelievably high standard of drivers and the entire event. It’s a pity that we were involved in an accident early on, otherwise we could have done a lot better in the Pro-Am class. But we’ve learned a great deal. For me, it was a fantastic race weekend.”

Race result

Pro category

1. Haase/Gounon/Winkelhock (DEU/FRA/DEU), Audi R8 LMS, 546 laps
2. Soulet/Abril/Soucek (BEL/MCO/ESP), Bentley Continental GT3, 546
3. Mortara/Meadows/Marciello (CHE/GBR/ITA) Mercedes-AMG GT3, 546
4. Estre/Christensen/Vanthoor (FRA/DNK/BEL), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 546
5. de Philippi/Mies/Vervisch (USA/DEU/BEL), Audi R8 LMS, 546

Pro-Am category

1. Morley/Toril/Kirchhöfer/Götz (GBR/ESP/DEU/DEU), Mercedes-AMG GT3, 540 laps
2. Al Harthy/Yoluc/Adam/Hankey (OMA/GBR/GBR/GBR), Aston Martin V12 GT3, 539
3. Demerdjian/Minassian/Rizzo/Vilander (LIB/GBR/HKG/FIN), Ferrari 488 GT3, 538
7. Allemann/Bohn/Müller/Jaminet (CHE/DEU/DEU/FRAU), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 517
17. Häring/Renauer/Renauer/Lieb (DEU/DEU/DEU/DEU), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 139

Please note: Photos are available for 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 2017 digital Porsche Motorsport Media Guide on <https://presskit.porsche.de/motorsport/mediaguide>. Porsche Communication provides a service for journalists, bloggers and online multipliers under www.newsroom.porsche.com.

