



PORSCHE

Press Release

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FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC), round 4, Austin (Texas, USA), LMP1 preview

Driving into the night in Austin with the Porsche 919 Hybrid

Stuttgart. The Circuit of the Americas (COTA) in Austin, Texas, will be the venue for the fourth round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) on 20th September. The six-hour race will start at 5pm with the sun setting at 7.43pm. This schedule makes it the maiden night race for COTA, while the six Porsche 919 Hybrid works drivers have all the experience from Le Mans in how to deal with twilight and darkness. The circuit in the US poses quite a variety of challenges: The start-finish-straight leads steeply up the hill and into a left-hand hairpin. Other exciting sections of the circuit are borrowed from famous racetracks of all over the world. They are reminiscent, for example, of the Esses at Suzuka, Maggots-Beckets at Silverstone and the Hockenheim Motodrom. The back straight is an impressive 1.2 kilometre stretch.

With its hybrid powered Le Mans Prototype (LMP1), the Porsche Team enters the most innovative race car in the entire field and has set itself high targets for the remaining five rounds of the World Championship. To recall what has happened so far: At the Porsche 919 Hybrid's race debut in Silverstone (Great Britain), the team was instantly rewarded with a podium finish. It was the trio in car number 20 who came third – Timo Bernhard (Germany), Brendon Hartley (New Zealand) and Mark Webber (Australia). At the second WEC round in Spa-Francorchamps (Belgium), again a six-hour race, the crew of the sister number 14 car got into the limelight by taking the first pole position. Number 14 is driven by Romain Dumas (France), Neel Jani (Switzerland) and Marc Lieb (Germany).

At the third and most famous WEC race, the Le Mans 24-Hours, the team put in a strong performance, but only car number 14 finished the race – in 11th place overall after time consuming gearbox repairs in the final hours. For Bernhard/Hartley/Webber it was even harder: car number 20 had been leading for 37 laps and was well on track for a second place finish when Mark Webber had to retire the car two hours before the end, because of an engine failure.

Since that day, 15th of June, the Porsche Team has used the break well for development work at the headquarters in Weissach and for testing in Paul Ricard (France), at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz in Germany and, again in France, at Magny-Cours. A new aero package has been introduced to provide a higher downforce level for the remaining rounds in Austin, Fuji, Shanghai, Sakhir and Sao Paulo. Furthermore a lot of details have been improved, which wasn't possible before Le Mans as the team had to focus on reliability and had to freeze the car's specification.

Quotes before the race:

Fritz Enzinger, Vice President LMP1: “We are highly motivated going into Austin and want to benefit from everything we have learnt so far. It is almost like the kick off of a second season, but under new conditions. Testing in summer went extremely well – very analytic, systematic and in a great atmosphere. For a long time the Le Mans preparations dominated everything. Then we had a strong performance there and emerged together from what was the harsh end of it. It was very emotional and very good for team building. In Weissach we have been targeting reliability issues and ticked off a long job list for the coming five races. The Porsche 919 Hybrid's new aero package was working straight out of the box. Now we have to transfer everything to racing. If we get that right, I have no doubts we will be competitive and achieve the appropriate results.”

Drivers car no. 14:**Romain Dumas – 36, France.**

“So far I only know COTA from our simulator and I always enjoy discovering new circuits. When I was racing the Porsche RS Spyder I really liked motorsport in the US. So I’m very pleased to be heading to Austin and I also believe our car will be very good there, in particular on the high speed parts of the Circuit of the Americas.”

Neel Jani – 30, Switzerland.

“I haven’t been to Austin yet, but did some simulator training. The first part of the lap is really fast, so you’ll need a lot of downforce there, which our new aero package should provide. I think the kerbs are less brutal than in Le Mans. We don’t have much experience in the heat yet and will have to watch tyre wear and system temperatures very carefully, especially for the first two hours. Then we will be driving in the night for the longer part of the race. I always liked racing in the States and had a great time in ChampCar in 2007. In any case I can’t wait to race the 919 again. When the power of the electric machine picks up on the front axle, the car turns into an extremely powerful four-wheel beast – I feel like a jet pilot. This is future technology to maximise the pure fun of sports cars.”

Marc Lieb – 34, Germany.

“Last year when I raced the 911 RSR in Austin I found the circuit very interesting and technically demanding. I’m very much looking forward to taking the 919 Hybrid out on the track there. Especially in the fast corners, the downforce provided by the LMP1 car will make it a new driving experience. Having said that, for the long back straight you would rather want the car’s low drag Le Mans specification back. Sector three is another entirely different thing. There isn’t necessarily a harmonic flow between these corners, as you can actually choose between driving lines. But the lap time will tell you immediately what was the better and what was the worse solution. In 2013 the heat was extreme. Now the race starts later but, because of the high humidity, it doesn’t get cooler quickly in the night.”

Drivers car no. 20:**Timo Bernhard – 33, Germany.**

“Well, I’m the only driver of car number 20 who hasn’t raced in Austin yet. But I know the track from the simulator in Weissach and, of course, I spoke with Mark and Brendon. It is a varied and demanding circuit. I can’t wait to take the car with a decent downforce level through the fast corners. Driving at night puts extra excitement into the race. I love racing in the dark and I hope to get the opportunity to do so again in Austin. The tricky time is before sunset when the sun is really low. You have got to be extra careful in the twilight before darkness, and your windscreen should be clean. Since Le Mans we are even more of a team than before, we are very close now – and highly motivated.”

Brendon Hartley – 24, New Zealand.

“I love this circuit. Last year I drove there in a Daytona prototype. In terms of the new style circuits with a lot of huge run off areas, COTA is the best I have ever driven on. It throws up a lot of challenges – quick flowing corners, very technical tight and twisty corners and long straights for passing. It is a good layout. Turn one stands out I would say as it is the first impression you get and is quite unique. I also like Austin as a city with all its live music, and I hope I get to see a bit more of it this year.”

Mark Webber – 38, Australia.

“It is good to go back racing again, as it was quite a bit of a break. I know Austin from Formula One and I like it – COTA is an interesting track with good facilities and Austin is a lively city. The fans have been great there. It will be our first real sprint race in terms of endurance racing dimensions, because earlier in the season we always had Le Mans in mind. But now we are focusing on doing a good job for the last five races. Driving into the night will be interesting as well. COTA has everything in the lap. It has quite high top speed, the straights are quite long, it has a lot of elevation changes and a lot of quick and very slow corners too. It will also be very hot and, therefore, challenging for the engines, the cars and the drivers. That’s a new component for us as well, and I’m looking forward to it.”

Facts and Figures:

- The length of the Circuit of the Americas is 5.513 kilometres. One lap features nine right-handers and 11 left-handers. The circuit, designed by German architect Hermann Tilke, has 40 metres difference in altitude and is run anti-clockwise. The longest straight is 1.2 kilometres.
- The ambient temperatures are expected to be around 30 degrees Celsius.
- In 2013, the race winner completed 187 laps (1,030.93 kilometres) in six hours. Over this distance each of the two Porsche 919 Hybrid cars would generate and utilise 195 kilowatt hours (kWh) – an amount of electrical power that would light a 60-Watt incandescent light bulb for almost 20 weeks.
- In normal racing mode (without any safety car periods), the Porsche 919 Hybrid must refuel every 31 laps. This would mean five pit stops for refuelling per car.
- Two fuel tank fills (62 laps) with one set of the Michelin race tyres is the Porsche Team's target for COTA.
- The population of the fast growing city of Austin is around 800,000 people. The town was founded in 1835 and later named after colonist Stephen F. Austin.
- Nearly 50,000 students enjoy the city life. Austin is also home for great rock bands, a popular headquarters for computer companies and the sets of famous movies have been there. Remarkably, Austin is also home for a population of 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats.
- Twenty nine cars in total are on the entry list for the fourth round of the FIA World Endurance Championship. Nine of them compete in the LMP1 category alongside the Porsche 919 Hybrid cars. Their car numbers, 20 and 14, stand for the year of Porsche's return to top-level motorsport.
- During the short qualifying – 25 minutes shared by LMP1 and LMP2 cars – two drivers per car must drive. The official qualifying time is the average of the two fastest laps of both drivers (i.e. the average time of four laps).

- The Porsche Team has sent 35 tons of airfreight on the world tour. The majority of the freight travels from Austin straight to Fuji, to Shanghai, to Sakhir and then to the final race in Sao Paulo. The equipment includes the two race cars, one spare chassis, four engines, four gearboxes, three suspension sets, 100 rims, 120 radios and headsets, about 400 metres of electric and IT cables, four tool cabinets as well as 30 fireproof overalls and helmets for the team.
- In the WEC standings after three out of eight races, the Porsche Team with 60 points is currently third behind Toyota (115) and Audi (114). In Le Mans double points were awarded.
- With these two LMP1 cars, the Porsche 911 RSRs from the GT categories of the WEC and the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship (USCC), there are a total of seven works race cars from Porsche running in Austin.

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Please note: Photo and video material from the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC is available for accredited journalists from the Porsche Press Database under the internet address <https://presse.porsche.de>. On this website you can also activate the **Porsche Motorsport SMS Info Service** to receive the latest news and information. 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 2014 digital Porsche Motorsport Media Guide on the internet address <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport>.

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