



## Press Release

**October 1, 2019**

Preview, World Endurance Championship WEC, round 2 at Fuji/Japan

### **World champion Porsche aims to defend series lead in Japan**

**Stuttgart.** Porsche heads to round two of the FIA World Endurance Championship at Fuji (Japan) as the leader of all GTE-Pro classifications. After claiming a one-two result at the season-opener from Silverstone (Great Britain), the successful works squad is aiming to again finish on the podium with the two Porsche 911 RSR racers. In the GTE-Am category, the customer teams Project 1, Gulf Racing and Dempsey Proton Racing field a total of five Porsche 911 RSR in last year's spec.

#### **The race**

The 4.563-kilometre-long Fuji Raceway presents engineers and drivers with special challenges. The racetrack, which was opened in 1965, features a combination of many tight passages and a long 1.475-kilometre start-finish straight. Working out a suitable setup requires a compromise between high speed and a great deal of downforce in the corners. During the Japanese typhoon season, the races contested at the foot of the famous Mount Fuji are often plagued by changeable weather conditions. In 2013, the race had to be red-flagged after 16 laps due to torrential rain. In the 2018/2019 Super Season, the reigning world drivers' champions Kévin Estre (France) and Michael Christensen (Denmark) celebrated a decisive victory at Fuji with their Porsche 911 RSR on the way to winning the title.

#### **The Porsche GT Team drivers**

Silverstone winners Richard Lietz (Austria) and Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) tackle round two of the 2019/2020 FIA WEC season in the No. 91 Porsche 911 RSR. The second ca. 515 hp vehicle (No. 92) is shared by the reigning champions Kévin Estre (France)

and Michael Christensen (Denmark). After the one-two result at the season-opening round with the two new Porsche 911 RSR, the driver crews currently rank first and second in the world championship standings. Porsche heads to the second race of the season as the leader of the manufacturer's classification.

### **The customer teams**

The number 56 Porsche 911 RSR in last year's spec fielded by the customer team Project 1 is shared by Porsche Young Professional Matteo Cairoli (Italy), the reigning GTE-Am champion and Le Mans class winner Egidio Perfetti from Norway as well as David Heinemeier Hansson (Denmark). Sharing driving duties in the No. 57 sister car is the American Ben Keating, Felipe Fraga from Brazil and the former Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup champion Jeroen Bleekemolen from the Netherlands.

The all-British driver line-up of Ben Barker, Andrew Watson and Michael Wainwright will helm the No. 86 racer run by Gulf Racing. In the No. 77 Porsche 911 RSR fielded by Dempsey-Proton Racing, the Porsche Young Professional Matt Campbell (Australia) joins forces with team owner Christian Ried (Germany) and the Italian Riccardo Pera. In the No. 88 sister car, Porsche Young Professional Thomas Preining (Austria) will be joined by Adrien de Leener (Belgium) and Satoshi Hoshino (Japan). With five vehicles on the grid, Porsche is represented by the largest contingent in the fiercely contested GTE-Am class.

### **The Porsche 911 RSR**

The new Porsche 911 RSR (2019 model year) contests its maiden race in the FIA WEC. The vehicle from Weissach, which produces around 515 hp depending on the air restrictor, is based on the high-performance 911 GT3 RS\* road-going sports car. Compared to its extremely successful predecessor model, the car for the GTE-Pro class of the FIA WEC received improvements to areas such as driveability, efficiency, ergonomics and serviceability. About 95 percent of the car is new. The 911 RSR is powered by a 4.2-litre, six-cylinder boxer engine.

## The schedule

The six-hour FIA WEC race at Fuji gets underway on Sunday, 6 October at 11am local time (4am CEST).

## The race on TV and the Internet

Round two of the FIA WEC season will be shown in full length on [www.sport1.de](http://www.sport1.de). The free-to-air station Sport 1 will televise live from Japan on 6 October from 3:55am to 8:00am. The pay-TV station Sport 1+ broadcasts the entire race live from 3:30am to 10:30am. Eurosport televises the final phase live from 8.30am. Motorsport.TV televises the race in Japan in full length. For a fee, the FIA WEC app offers live streaming and live timing.

## Comments before the race

**Fritz Enzinger (Vice President Motorsport):** "After the incredible success at Silverstone the mood in the team and in the development department at Weissach is at an all-time high. We're leading all categories after the first race. This not only makes us confident for the tasks ahead but also gives us a bit of a breather to better acquaint ourselves with the new Porsche 911 RSR. There's still a lot of potential in the vehicle. That's what we want to demonstrate at Fuji."

**Pascal Zurlinden (Director Factory Motorsport):** "We mustn't allow the one-two success of Silverstone to distract us from investing more effort into optimising the setup of the new Porsche 911 RSR. I'm sure that our experienced team and the drivers will manage to make more progress. At Fuji, we are keen to perform better, particularly in qualifying, and to achieve a good starting position for the six-hour race."

**Alexander Stehlík (Head of Operations FIA WEC):** "The great success at Silverstone was thanks to our drivers' impeccable efforts, a very good strategy and the flawless job from the entire team of mechanics and engineers. Nonetheless, we didn't have the fastest car in the field. Now we want to keep working on the setup and make further

progress. No matter what weather is thrown at us in Japan, we'll use every minute of track time to gain as much information as we can and then use this to improve the car."

**Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91):** "The new season began perfectly with the one-two success. We can't do better than this in Japan. Despite our Silverstone victory, we have some work ahead of us. We need to use the Fuji event to further improve the driveability of our new Porsche 911 RSR. We still have room for improvement, especially in the car's balance. If we manage to take these steps during qualifying in Japan, then we can hope for another top result in the competitive GTE-Pro class."

**Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 911 RSR #91):** "I really enjoy Japan because of the mentality of the people there. And the Fuji racetrack is also fascinating. Unfortunately the autumn weather is often not so great for motor racing. I hope it stays dry this year. We'd like stable conditions at the second race outing of the new Porsche 911 RSR so that we can gain as many insights as possible. In the world championship, we want to consolidate our position."

**Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 RSR #92):** "I always feel inspired by the Japanese fans. They're incredibly enthusiastic, and they treat the teams and drivers with immense respect. This is simply incredible. We travelling there as last year's winners, so we have great memories of Fuji. In Japan we'll be back to the standard WEC race format of six hours. I'm sure that we'll encounter some tough competition."

**Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #92):** "The major success at the first round in Great Britain was great, but it is no guarantee of further victories. We have to keep working hard and make the most of our opportunities. We expect the tasks in Fuji will be very different to what we faced recently at Silverstone. The racetrack has a very special character and the weather can quickly turn everything upside down. What happens in the race is unpredictable. But one thing is certain: once again, the fans will make the Fuji race a real spectacle."

**Matteo Cairoli (Porsche 911 RSR #56):** "Our main goal at Fuji has to be to do several things a lot better than at the Silverstone season-opener. We weren't sorted there, and we also had bad luck in the safety car phases. I'm positive that as a team we're able to learn very quickly and immediately implement those findings. Project 1 won the Fuji race last year with the Porsche 911 RSR. That's a good omen for the upcoming race."

**Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 RSR #77):** "Our pace was good at the opening round of the season at Silverstone, but it didn't translate into a good result. We aim to change this at Fuji and again finish on the podium. We were well prepared there in 2018. The racetrack is one of my favourites on the FIA WEC calendar. The long straight leads onto a partly very narrow passage, but it always flows nicely. That's what I love."

### The Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC

In the Sports Car World Endurance Championship (WEC), which was first contested in 2012, sports prototypes and GT vehicles compete in four classes: LMP1, LMP2, GTE-Pro and GTE-Am. They all compete together in one race but are classified separately. The Porsche factory squad contests the GTE-Pro class as the reigning world manufacturers' champions, while the customer teams Dempsey Proton Racing, Project 1 and Gulf Racing fight for honours in the GTE-Am class.

\* 911 GT3 RS: *combined fuel consumption 12.8 l/100 km; CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 291 g/km*

*Further information, film and photo material in the Porsche Newsroom: newsroom.porsche.de. The Twitter channel @PorscheRaces provides live updates from Porsche Motorsport with the latest information and photos from racetracks around the world.*

