



**PORSCHE**

Press Release

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FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC), Round 2, Spa-Francorchamps (BE): LMP1, Qualifying

### **Three Porsche 919 Hybrids dominate qualifying in Spa**

**Stuttgart.** Coming first, second and third, Porsche dominated today's qualifying for the second round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) in Spa-Francorchamps (BE). Brendon Hartley (New Zealand) and Timo Bernhard (Germany) achieved the sixth pole position for the Le Mans Prototype since Porsche's return to the WEC top class last year. It is also the second consecutive pole position for the number 17 car this season. The performance of the sister cars underlined how strong the 919's second generation is: LMP1 newcomers Nico Hülkenberg (Germany) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) qualified second with car number 19 for tomorrow's six-hour race. Neel Jani (Switzerland) and Marc Lieb (Germany) put the icing on the cake for the German sports car manufacturer when they came third in their number 18 car.

In the WEC the average of the best laps of two drivers counts for the grid and Bernhard/Hartley achieved an average time of 1:54.767 minutes. This fairy tale time is almost six-and-a-half seconds faster than the pole time of Jani/Lieb from 2014 (2:01.198 mins), and is a new record for LMP1 in Spa. For the race Australia's Mark Webber completes the driver line-up in their car.

For Hülkenberg/Tandy the clock stopped at 1:55.025 mins. Their third man in the race is Earl Bamber (New Zealand). The qualifying time of Jani/Lieb was 1:55.284 mins, and they share their car on Saturday, as usual, with Romain Dumas (France).

After a wet Thursday, free practice three on Friday was the only opportunity for all nine drivers to do a few laps in dry conditions. Car number 19 was second on the time sheets (1:57.379 min), car number 18 came third (1:57.861 min) and car number 17 fourth (1:57.899 min).

The Spa race is the second of eight WEC rounds in 2015. The six-hour race will start on Saturday at 14:30 hrs local time and be broadcast by TV channel Eurosport from 18:30 to 20:45 hrs CEST.

### Quotes after qualifying:

**Fritz Enzinger, Vice President LMP1:** “This result is almost unbelievable and we have achieved it on what probably is the most demanding race track of the entire season. Congratulations and a big thank you to the team here in Spa and back home in Weissach for the fifth pole position in a row. We had huge respect for the challenge of entering a third car, but from the word go in free practice it went well. Now it is important to have a good race tomorrow and bring home all three cars. For the new car especially everyone involved needs to gain mileage and experience. We have to watch how the weather develops. However, after we saw the progress in the wet on Thursday, rain doesn't scare us. The podium is the target.”

**Andreas Seidl, Team Principal:** “One, two, three – you just cannot top this. The entire team did a sensational job. We now know what it means to operate three Porsche 919 Hybrids at the same time. The crew and the drivers of the third car especially settled in very well. But it is also clear that tomorrow is what counts. Because of the rainy Thursday, we still have lots of unknowns to deal with. There is a good chance for all sorts of excitement in the race, but for today we are simply happy.”

**Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 17**

**Timo Bernhard (34, Germany):** “This result is just a dream for the team. I’m over the moon. Personally I’d like to dedicate my lap to Stefan Bellof. This weekend I’m racing his well-known helmet design to remember this great racing driver. Due to the weather conditions, we didn’t have much time for set up work and had to learn quickly. The team just handled it superbly.”

**Brendon Hartley (25, New Zealand):** “I am very, very proud. It was a fantastic job by everyone in the team and a great achievement by Timo. For me my lap was the best I have ever done in the 919. The car was just excellent and every session has gone smoothly for us so far.”

**Mark Webber (38, Australian):** “For me it was short and sweet. After not driving at all yesterday, I was in the car for a short time in free practice three today to get a feeling for it. But the target of the session was to do some housekeeping and get the car ready for Brendon and Timo for qualifying.”

**Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 18**

**Romain Dumas (37, France):** “I did only a short run in free practice. Compared to last year’s car, we have a lot more grip and the pace looks good for the race.”

**Neel Jani (31, Switzerland):** “This is a wonderful result for Porsche. We also would have been pleased with the one point for the pole position. In the third free practice session we had some problems with the brakes, but these were solved for qualifying. Nevertheless, I lost some time in one corner while being too hard on the brakes. But the result is okay and tomorrow will be a new day.”

**Marc Lieb (34, Germany):** “Of course the team is very happy with the qualifying result. I lost four tenths in the first corner of my fast lap because of a slight mistake. That’s why I’m a little bit upset. But the number 17 Porsche 919 Hybrid was unbeatable today. Now we are looking to see how to do better in the race.”

**Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 19**

**Earl Bamber (24, New Zealand):** “Driving the 919 on a dry track was a great experience for me in free practice. Basically everything is new to us and the team is doing a great job in supporting us.”

**Nico Hülkenberg (27, Germany):** “I’m learning all the time and enjoying a lot getting more experience with the car and in traffic. Qualifying was very exciting. My lap was not perfect, but I’m very happy. I didn’t want to risk too much in my first LMP1 qualifying. The whole team has done an excellent job this weekend. Now we are well prepared for the race.”

**Nick Tandy (30, Great Britain):** “The result speaks for itself, you cannot ask for more. However, there is only one championship point for pole position and it is the race what really counts. I’m very pleased we are on the same level as the sister cars. I lost some time in the sector one, but the rest of the lap was fine.”

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