



PORSCHE

Press Release

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Qualifying GTE, World Endurance Championship WEC, round 2 at Fuji/Japan

First pole position for the new Porsche 911 RSR

Stuttgart. The new Porsche 911 RSR will take up round two of the FIA World Endurance Championship at Fuji (Japan) from pole position. Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) and Richard Lietz (Austria), the winners of the season-opener at Silverstone (Great Britain), turned the fastest lap in the number 91 vehicle. The ca. 515 hp No. 92 sister car driven by Kévin Estre (France) and Michael Christensen (Denmark) will tackle the six-hour race from the sixth grid spot. In the GTE-Am class, Porsche's German customer team Project 1 achieved the first grid position.

Under blues skies and in temperatures of around 30 degrees Celsius at the foot of the famous Mount Fuji, the qualifying turned into a gripping shootout. Initially, the Porsche GT Team employed tactics and sent only the number 92 vehicle out with world sports car champion Estre at the wheel. In heavy traffic, the Frenchman made minor errors. Afterwards, his teammate Christensen nudged the barriers slightly in his first flying lap. As a result of the damage to the rear of the car, the Dane was unable to improve on his time.

The tactic of the No. 91 vehicle, however, worked perfectly. Bruni found a decent gap in the dense traffic and initially set the third fastest time. Lietz then managed to make full use of the immense potential of the new Porsche 911 RSR (2019 model year), which is based on the high-performance 911 GT3 RS road-going sports car. With an average time of 1:37.356 minutes, the WEC front-runners posted the first pole position for Stuttgart sports car manufacturer's new racer.

In the GTE-Am category, the Brazilian Felipe Fraga and the American Ben Keating set the fastest time at the wheel of the Porsche 911 RSR fielded by Project 1. The pair shares the cockpit of the No. 57 car with the experienced Dutchman Jeroen Bleekemolen. The No. 56 sister car of the German squad takes up the second race of the season from fifth place. The two identical ca. 510 hp vehicles campaigned by Dempsey-Proton Racing start from the positions six and eight. Gulf Racing qualified on ninth.

Qualifying quotes

Fritz Enzinger (Vice President Motorsport): “Richard and Gimmi turned immaculate laps, we can only congratulate them. The fact that we’re starting from pole after just the second qualifying of the season with our Porsche 911 RSR on the back of our victory from the season-opening round at Silverstone is a clear sign: our brand new car is the real deal. This makes me confident for the six-hour race.”

Pascal Zurlinden (Director Factory Motorsport): “We can all feel proud of the maiden pole position for the new Porsche 911 RSR. So far at Fuji we’ve were at the top in all sessions. That bodes well for a strong performance in the race. I have mixed feelings about the qualifying. Things didn’t go so well with our number 92 car. We have to take a good look at what happened there.”

Alexander Stehlig (Head of Operations FIA WEC): Pole position is the perfect reward for our entire team. In spite of our Silverstone victory, we had some homework to do. It was essential to get more speed over an entire lap out of the car. It seems we succeeded in this. It’s a shame that it didn’t go so well for the sister car, but even from sixth place everything is possible.

Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 911 RSR #91): “Everything ran like clockwork for us. Our team put a perfectly prepared Porsche 911 RSR on the track for us for this morning’s qualifying. We drivers then made the most of the car’s huge potential in the session. Our starting position for the race is perfect. I’m confident that we’ll be strong over the six-hour duration.”

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91): “We found a great qualifying setup during the free practice. Pole position is a huge success. Now we’ll set the car up for the race. I’m curious to see if our setup for the six-hour race is as good. To set pole position after our victory at Silverstone is the perfect way to start the season.”

Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 RSR #92): “The car’s balance wasn’t bad, it was just that we lacked a bit of speed. Now we have to see why. The strategy implemented by our sister car seemed to be better. We’re not really where we want to be, but I still expect our chances to be good for the race.”

Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #92): “I wanted to attempt another flying lap and I went all-out in turn three. Unfortunately I went too wide and I lost the rear of the car on the kerb and the bumps behind it and I hit the barriers. Unfortunately this means additional work for our mechanics. It’s a pity, but that’s how it goes in motor racing sometimes.”

Qualifying result**GTE-Pro class**

1. Lietz/Bruni (A/I), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:37.356 minutes
2. Calado/Pier Guidi (GB/I), Ferrari 488 GTE, 1:37.379 minutes
3. Thiim/Sörensen (DK/DK), Aston Martin Vantage, 1:37.466 minutes
6. Christensen/Estre (DK/F), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:37.980 minutes

GTE-Am class

1. Keating/Fraga/Bleekemolen (USA/BR/NL), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:38.733 minutes
2. Yoluc/Eastwood/Adam (TR/IRL/GB), Aston Martin Vantage, 1:38.821 minutes
3. Perrodo/Collard/Nielsen (F/F/DK), Ferrari 488 GTE, 1:38.850 minutes
5. Perfetti/Heinemeier Hansson/Cairolì (N/DK/I), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:39.022 minutes
6. Preining/de Leener/Hoshino (A/B/J), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:39.025 minutes
8. Campbell/Ried/Pera (AUS/D/I), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:39.549 minutes
9. Wainwright/Barker/Watson (GB/GB/GB), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:39.610 minutes

Full results: <http://fiawec.alkamelsystems.com>

* 911 GT3 RS: combined fuel consumption 12.8 l/100 km; CO₂ emissions 291 g/km

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