



**PORSCHE**

Press Release

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Sports Car World Championship WEC, race 3, Le Mans 24 Hours/France – Pre-test GT

### **Porsche teams well prepared for the 24-hour classic**

**Stuttgart.** The countdown is on. The official pre-test on Sunday marks the start of the final stage of preparations for the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The Porsche Motorsport factory team campaigns two 911 RSR at the 84<sup>th</sup> running of the prestigious long distance classic with the overall Le Mans winners Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) in the GTE Pro class. The squad used this test to setup the 470 hp winning racer from Weissach for the most important race of the year. In testing, the tyres also played a vital role. At the season highlight of the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC, 60 cars and 180 drivers will line up on the 13.620-kilometre Circuit des 24 Heures on 18/19 June.

With an overcast sky and at first rather cool temperatures of around 15 degrees Celsius, more than 22,000 spectators came to witness the tests. In the two sessions, each scheduled over four hours (the second was stopped 30 minutes before the end due to an accident), all works drivers competing for the Porsche Motorsport team had a chance at the wheel. The 911 RSR with the starting number 91, in which Nick Tandy and the Frenchmen Patrick Pilet and Kévin Estre topped the time sheets in the GTE Pro class for a long time before ultimately being clocked as the second fastest, covered a total distance of 823 kilometres. In the second 911 RSR with the number 92, Earl Bamber, Frédéric Makowiecki (France) and Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) also completed 944 test kilometres without incident. They too held the top test time to eventually rank third. At a round of the IMSA SportsCar Championship in Detroit last Saturday, Jörg Bergmeister scored second in the GTD class with the Porsche 911 GT3 R and after an overnight flight landed at the airfield next to the track just in time

for the practice session. With 14 starts under his belt, Bergmeister is the Porsche GT pilot with the greatest Le Mans experience.

For the four Porsche customer teams who will also contest the race with the seventh generation of the iconic 911 sports car based on the 911 RSR, the main priority at the test day was on setting up the vehicles. In particular focus was the #77 nine-eleven fielded by Dempsey Proton Racing, with driving duties shared by Austrian Richard Lietz, the WEC winner of the FIA World Endurance Trophy in 2015 as the best GT pilot, and his works driver colleague Michael Christensen (Denmark). Supporting them as the third driver is Le Mans newcomer Philipp Eng (Austria), the 2015 winner of both the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup and the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland. They will also tackle the GTE-Pro class and covered 810 test kilometres. In the GTE-Am class, four other customer teams and two Porsche works drivers took part in tests for the race with the 911 RSR: Abu Dhabi Proton Racing with Patrick Long (USA) and KCMG with Wolf Henzler (Germany), as well as Gulf Racing and Proton Competition. With its unusual combination of racetrack and normal roads, the Circuit des 24 Heures places special demands on the drivers and their cars.

The Le Mans 24-hour race takes off on Saturday, 18 June, at 15.00 hours CEST. Eurosport 1 and Eurosport 2 broadcast the entire race live. The free practice and the three qualifying sessions will also be aired live. Moreover, the “24 Minutes of Le Mans” magazine televises the latest news and interviews over the entire week.

### Comments on the pre-test

**Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser**, Head of Porsche Motorsport: “The test day proved very productive for us. We started the session this morning as scheduled and the processes within the team worked well. This was important to me because this crew hasn’t yet worked together during the WEC season. Our 911 RSR were immediately fast. Over the course of the tests we looked closely at the tyres and the fine-tuning of the setup in terms of the extremely high demands of the race. All in all we’re making

good progress.”

**Marco Ujhasi**, Overall Project Manager GT Works Motorsport: “The test day was the end of always very intensive preparations for Le Mans for the time being. We used the limited time optimally to get down to the crux of the matter in all respects of the 911 RSR, to sort out the tyres in advance and to take another step forward in the setup. It was also important that our drivers could psych themselves up for this extraordinary race. We are well on schedule. We’ll spend the time up until the race week analysing the data we’ve gathered today to sort out a good start setup for when things get serious.”

### **Drivers 911 RSR #91**

**Patrick Pilet**: “It’s an art to set up the car perfectly for Le Mans. Either it’s good in the corners but then too slow on the straight. If you rely too much on top speed you’re missing downforce in the fast corners. The key to success is finding the best compromise. And in this respect, this test has provided us with important reference points.”

**Nick Tandy**: “Le Mans is unique. What fascinates me is not just the immense challenge but also the special atmosphere. When you drive through the gate to the paddock in the morning it’s always a very emotional moment, and not just for me as the title defender. Even though today was just a test, it felt amazing to be back.”

**Kévin Estre**: “I’ve only contested the race once, so this test was a good chance for me to get used to the 911 RSR on this challenging circuit and to get better acquainted with all its peculiarities.”

### **Drivers 911 RSR #92**

**Earl Bamber**: “It was a great feeling to come back to Le Mans a year after our win. I’ve never driven a GT car here and hence I felt a little bit like a rookie at first. The test went well and I’m confident that we’ve laid the foundations for a successful race.”

**Frédéric Makowiecki**: “It always astonishing to see how popular this race is. We only went testing today, but there were still as many fans as there would be at an ac-

tual race elsewhere. I get goosebumps even now thinking about the 250,000 spectators who will come to the race to support the team and drivers.”

**Jörg Bergmeister:** “Although I’ve contested Le Mans 14 times now, nothing is routine. You always have to be on guard. Especially after driving the 911 GT3 R recently, for instance at the Detroit race on Saturday, this test was very welcome for me to adapt back to the 911 RSR – despite all the strains of travel.

### **Customer team drivers**

**Richard Lietz (911 RSR #77 Dempsey Proton Racing):** “Le Mans is one of the last great adventures that you can experience as a racing driver. The test today really got me in the mood for this unique challenge. The competition was relatively close, but I’m sure that they haven’t shown all their cards yet. We’ve certainly progressed another step.”

**Michael Christensen (911 RSR #77 Dempsey Proton Racing):** “The test was a good chance to get a feel for the track. But since part of the race runs over normal roads on which daily traffic will drive tomorrow, it’s certain to look very different again at the first practice session. And the search for grip will start from the beginning.”

**Wolf Henzler (911 RSR #78 KCMG):** “Every test kilometre is enormously important, especially for a customer team like KCMG who are competing for the first time with the 911 RSR at Le Mans. We gained a few insights today which we hope will continue to bring us forward and which we can then successfully implement in the race.”

**Patrick Long (911 RSR #88 Abu Dhabi Proton Racing):** “Optimal preparation is always the key to success in Le Mans. And this test is part of that. I’m certain that we’ve used it well to give our 911 RSR its finishing touches for the race.”

## **GO**

Please note: Photo and video material from the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC is available for accredited journalists from the Porsche Press Database on <https://presse.porsche.de>. The Twitter channel [@PorscheRaces](https://twitter.com/PorscheRaces) provides live updates with the latest information and photos from race tracks around the world. Journalists also have access to the digital Porsche Motorsport Media Guide on <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport>. Porsche Communication provides a new service for journalists, bloggers and online multipliers under [www.newsroom.porsche.com](http://www.newsroom.porsche.com). Up-to-date video news can be downloaded from [www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom](http://www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom).

Model range 911 (Type 991 II): Fuel consumption combined 9.3 – 7.4 l/100 km; CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 216 - 169 g/km; efficiency class (Germany): F – D



