



**PORSCHE**

Press Release

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Interim 1, 24 Hours of Spa, Spa-Francorchamps/Belgium

### **Faultless start for the Porsche 911 GT3 R**

**Stuttgart.** Don't take any unnecessary risks, keep the car on the track and steadily make up ground to the frontrunners – all four 911 GT3 R are following this motto at the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps. After a disciplined start phase, the 63-strong field are still running close together. The two-time outright Le Mans winner Earl Bamber (New Zealand) handed the 911 fielded by KÜS Team75 Bernhard to his factory driver teammate Timo Bernhard (Germany) unscathed. Dirk Werner (Germany) also swapped seats with Romain Dumas (France) in an unscratched yellow-and-green 911 GT3 R campaigned by Manthey-Racing.

Marc Lieb from Team Black Swan Racing also managed to make up several positions in the #540 Porsche 911 GT3 R and is on course for a podium spot in the Pro-Am class. The same applies to the 500 hp customer sport racer run by Herberth Motorsport (#991) in the Am-category, in which Jürgen Häring took over the wheel from Wolfgang Triller.

A total of 221 drivers and 63 vehicles tackle this year's 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps. Thirteen manufacturers are represented at the 70<sup>th</sup> edition of the Ardennes marathon, which is regarded as the largest and most important GT3 event in the world.

**Comments after the start**

**Dr. Frank-Steffen Walliser (Vice President Motorsport and GT Cars):** “Under good conditions we experienced a calm and disciplined start phase without accident, which speaks for the quality of the drivers. Everyone is still close together, we’re satisfied, particularly with the cars’ balance. We’re focusing on the whole distance and aim to make up more positions.”

**Sebastian Golz (Project Manager 911 GT3 R):** “We had a problem-free start, all of the cars made it through the first corners. We can match the pace at the front, but with such a competitive field it’s a tough fight. But as they say, we’re still in the game.”

**Dirk Werner (Porsche 911 GT3 R #911):** “That was a good start here in Spa. Everyone behaved themselves and didn’t take risks. That’s how it should be at a 24-hour race. I managed to overtake several cars, it can continue like this.”

**Earl Bamber (Porsche 911 GT3 R #117):** “We got away well at the start and I made up some positions during my stint. The car is fast. Everything’s running to plan at the moment.”

**Marc Lieb (Porsche 911 GT3 R #540):** “It’s quite a fight out there with so many vehicles. I passed several cars at first but then I got caught up in traffic. It’s important that we make it through without damages, because the race is still long.”

**Wolfgang Triller (Porsche 911 GT3 R #991):** “Starting such a long-distance classic is a dream for drivers, but it certainly wasn’t easy with over 60 cars. Our vehicle is incredibly fast, I wanted to make it through my stint without incidents or damages, and not even risk a scratch. That was my game plan and it worked brilliantly.”

## This is the Intercontinental GT Challenge

The Intercontinental GT Challenge is the first global racing series with GT3 vehicles as the top class. It was founded in 2016 by the SRO Motorsports Group led by Stéphane Ratel. Rather than compete with a factory squad, Porsche supports international customer teams in their campaign with the 911 GT3 R by providing works drivers and engineers from Weissach. For each race, a maximum of four vehicles selected by the manufacturer are entitled to earn points. Of these, the two best-placed vehicles at the end of the race are awarded points for the manufacturer's overall classification. In the driver's category, however, the drivers of all cars nominated by manufacturers are eligible for points.

## The Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup

The Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup, also run by the SRO Motorsports Group, is reserved for race cars that comply with FIA GT3 regulations. Storied racetracks, cost-effective conditions of participation and equality in terms of technology thanks to the Balance of Performance form the framework of this customer-oriented championship. The season highlight of the championship, the 24 Hours of Spa, is run alongside the Intercontinental GT Challenge. In the series contested all over Europe, there are overall classifications for teams and drivers.

*Please note: Press releases, photos and videos are available to download on <http://presse.porsche.de>. The Twitter channel @PorscheRaces provides live updates with the latest information and photos from race tracks around the world. Porsche Communication provides more content with an innovative service for journalists, bloggers and online multipliers under [www.newsroom.porsche.com](http://www.newsroom.porsche.com).*

