



PORSCHE

Press Release

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FIA World Endurance Championship WEC, LMP1, Round 5, Mexico, Practice

Porsche sets the fastest lap of the day in Mexico City

Stuttgart. Porsche enjoyed a busy and trouble free beginning to the Mexico race weekend with the two 919 Hybrids. The first day of the fifth round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) saw a 90-minute test session and two free practice sessions of the same duration each. The extra test was to help the teams and drivers familiarise themselves with the special track conditions ahead of the WEC's debut on the short 4.304 kilometre Formula One circuit. It has a very long straight (1.2 km) and many tight corners. Also it lies 2,250 metres above sea level – the thin air because of this influences aerodynamics and cooling.

In warm and almost constantly dry weather conditions the championship leaders Romain Dumas (FR), Neel Jani (CH) and Marc Lieb (DE) came fourth in the first free practice session (1:27.205 minutes), and were fastest in the second session with Jani's 1:25.810 minute lap being the fastest overall of the day. The reigning world champions, Timo Bernhard (DE), Brendon Hartley (NZ) and Mark Webber (AU), finished the two sessions in third (1:26.948 minutes) and second (1:26.058 minutes) respectively. In total the six drivers in the two Porsche 919 Hybrids completed 276 laps on Thursday.

Team Principal Andreas Seidl said: "A big compliment to the team at home and at the track for the job they did in preparing for the race here in Mexico. The circuit was new to all of us and, on top of that, there is the challenge coming from the high altitude and its impact with low air density. Thanks to the decisions made beforehand for the

cooling configuration and the car set-up, we were able to start our programme immediately. With both our 919s we did a lot of laps, had no technical issues and were constantly improving. So far we are very pleased with the performance of our cars. The competition is once again very tight, so we can look forward to an exciting qualifying and race. The weather forecast for the race on Saturday predicts a high chance of rain, which would mean an extra challenge.”

LMP1 qualifying will be held on Friday from 14:40-15:00 hrs local time (21:40-22:00 CEST). The six-hour race starts on Saturday at 13:30 hrs (20:30 CEST).

Quotes after Free Practice:

Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 1

Timo Bernhard (35, Germany): “I have not often done such a huge mileage on a WEC practice day. Everything here was new to us, so we were able to try many things and learnt a lot. We’ve got some quite good ideas in many areas of how to proceed over the weekend. To me the track is something between a city circuit and a permanent race track. It has some tricky parts. Especially in traffic, a lot of patience is required. We are still improving the aerodynamic balance, as the low air density at this high altitude influences the entire car. However, hats off to the team – the engineers used the time for preparation in a perfect way. It was a very positive first day here in Mexico, and overall I have a good feeling.”

Brendon Hartley (26, New Zealand): “The circuit provides a few challenges. It feels a lot like a street track with everything so enclosed. It has some technical interconnecting corners and is a tricky one with traffic. Being at high altitude has changed the downforce and drag a lot, as it is a lot less compared to what we are used to. I also felt myself breathing a little bit harder in the car because of the lack of oxygen. The lap times are very close and for sure we will see a good race.”

Mark Webber (40, Australia): “It’s a tricky place to get everything together. I don’t find the first sector – turns one, two, three – that easy. Turns ten and 11 – the fast ones in the middle sector – are difficult as well. But traffic is the biggest problem. The track is so small that you come cross traffic very often. It does have a street circuit feel, especially the last sector with the baseball stadium. Overall it was a good day, but we still have work to do to improve traction.”

Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 2

Romain Dumas (38, France): “For us day one was okay. It looks like it will be very close competition between Audi and ourselves, which will make a good show. The track is not easy for an LMP1 car, as it is quite narrow. It is easy to crash here. In the initial test session in the morning we were very good and then used the day to try different things.”

Neel Jani (32, Switzerland): “We’ve had a huge test programme with a great variety of set-up topics for the car and for the engine. So far it is going well. The team had done a very good job in preparing for this race and that’s why we started so well here. The track has a good flair, but is really small and will be challenging in the race with all the traffic on Saturday.”

Marc Lieb (36, Ludwigsburg): “Set-up work for this circuit is demanding. The car behaves differently because of the high altitude. It is set-up to maximum downforce, but doesn’t feel like that. For the second session we managed to improve the aero balance significantly and got rid of the oversteer in fast corners. Fast corners are what I love most, but it doesn’t have a lot of them here. Slow sectors like corners one to three are very technical, and during the many right-left direction changes you never really know whether the guy you want to lap has seen you or not.”

All points standings: <http://www.fiawec.com/courses/classification.html>

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

Note: Text, photo and video material for the LMP1 programme is free to access at the Porsche Press Database on <https://presse.porsche.de>. The link <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport> takes you straight to the Motorsport Media Guide. The LMP1 Twitter channel @Porsche_Team provides the latest information, photos and video clips live from the race tracks. Further live features are available at www.porsche.com/fiawec. Further journalistic content can be found in the Newsroom at www.newsroom.porsche.com. Video News can be viewed on www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom.

