



PORSCHE

Press Release

19 September 2020

Interim report 1, FIA World Endurance Championship WEC, Round 7, Le Mans (France)

Spirited performance in the early phase keeps Porsche within striking distance

Stuttgart. The Porsche GT Team has just one iron left in the fire in the intensive GTE-Pro-class fight at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. After the first six hours of racing, the ca. 515 hp Porsche 911 RSR (No. 91) driven by works drivers Gianmaria Bruni from Italy, Richard Lietz from Austria and Frenchman Frédéric Makowiecki is running in sixth place. A defect in the power steering cost the No. 92 sister car shared by Michael Christensen from Denmark, Kévin Estre from France and Belgium's Laurens Vanthoor over half an hour.

Bruni had taken up the 88th edition of the famous French endurance classic from pole position in the number 91 car. After just a few laps, however, it became clear that the rivals had not fully shown the potential of their cars in the practice sessions and qualifying. The Porsche 911 RSR lacked top speed to match the pace of the competition on the long straights. Moreover, the heavy traffic often prevented the Porsche drivers from taking full advantage of the better speed in the fast corners. After around 40 minutes, the pole-setting car served a five-second penalty at its first pit stop. Unfazed, Lietz managed to remain within striking distance of the frontrunner during his stints. After six hours, the gap to the leading GTE-Pro car is around one lap.

Bad luck plagued the No. 92 sister car. An early puncture forced Estre to pit early. Christensen then underlined the strengths of the 911 RSR and stayed within reach of the leading group at all times. In the fifth hour of racing, his teammate reported a

problem with the power steering. Two pit stops for repairs cost the crew 40 minutes and they lost contact to all other GTE-Pro cars.

In the GTE-Am category, the number 56 car fielded by the Project 1 customer squad set the pace at the top over long stretches. The young Dutchman Larry ten Voorde put in a particularly spirited drive at the wheel of the 510 hp 911 RSR in last year's spec. The newly crowned champion of the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup, who had won the Porsche Carrera Cup race that morning on the 13.6-kilometre racetrack, eked out a considerable gap, which was eventually lost due to two penalties. After the first quarter of the race, the best-placed 911 in the amateur class ranks sixth.

The Dempsey-Proton Racing crew, Porsche Young Professional Thomas Preining from Austria and his teammates Adrien de Leener from Belgium and Dominique Bastien from the USA, experienced bad luck. In the early phase, the No. 88 ca. 510 hp Porsche 911 RSR spent about two hours standing at the side of the track after an incident and subsequently remained in the pits for lengthy repairs. Although the vehicle is running far behind, it is still in the public eye. Since starting his first racing stint at the age of 74, the French-born Bastien is the oldest driver ever to contest the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Comments on the first quarter of the race

Alexander Stehlig (Head of Operations FIA WEC): "The first six hours of the race were very difficult for us. We weren't quite able to maintain the pace of our rivals. The number 92 car also had a problem with the power steering. Since this component is important for safety, we would never compromise on it so we replaced the entire system. Hence, we lost a lot of time. Everything is running normally with our number 91. We're doing our utmost to get through the remaining 18 hours cleanly and consistently. Let's see what's still possible for us. We're definitely not giving up."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "The balance of our Porsche 911 RSR is not at all bad, we have slight understeer but that's because there is less rubber on the track after the rain last night and this morning. We're still having a tough time with the

competition. We're faster in the corners, but we just can't get past. We're unable to do anything against the higher top speed of the other cars on the straights. Still, it's a 24-hour race and anything can happen at any time. We'll continue to do our best."

Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "I took the wheel of our car earlier than planned. We had to pit early with a puncture. I spent two stints in the car. It was difficult. Compared to the competition, we're too slow, especially under acceleration. Under these circumstances, we can't fight for class victory on our own, especially after losing a lot of time due to a technical problem. We'll continue to fight for every position!"

Larry ten Voorde (Porsche 911 RSR #56): "Our car is fast and it's running like a clockwork. My two stints at the top of our class were clean and uneventful. I had a great time. Now I'm looking forward to my next stint in the night. During practice, I was even faster in the dark than in the daytime. That'll be fun."

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