



**PORSCHE**

Press Release

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GT Preview – World Endurance Championship WEC, Prologue in Le Castellet/France

## **Final shakedown for Porsche: the Prologue of the WEC Super Season**

**Stuttgart.** On April 6, Porsche heads into the new season of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) with the two-day Prologue on the Circuit Paul Ricard. On the racetrack in the south of France, which opened in 1970, the Porsche GT Team will simulate an entire race weekend with the two 911 RSR in order to tackle the 15-month Super Season perfectly prepared. Porsche's factory driver Gianmaria Bruni celebrates his comeback to the world's most important race series for sports cars.

### **The Prologue**

Teams and drivers come face-to-face for the first time this year in Le Castellet, France, close to the port city of Marseille. On the 5.861-kilometre Circuit Paul Ricard, teams will run through the procedures of the WEC race weekends. The Porsche GT Team has opted not to participate in the first ever 30-hour nonstop test, which runs through the night, as the squad has collected extensive data and experience with the Porsche 911 RSR in 2017. A total of 35 vehicles take part in the Prologue tests.

### **The Super Season**

The 15-month-long Super Season serves as a transition to a new FIA WEC format. This means that competitors will contest the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the challenging Spa-Francorchamps race twice. The calendar also includes Silverstone, Fuji, Shanghai and Sebring. With Porsche, Ferrari, Ford, BMW and Aston Martin, five manufacturers compete for victories and points in the drivers' and manufacturer's classifications of the GTE-Pro class. From 2019, the season begins after the 24 Hours of Le Mans and concludes a year later with the long distance classic in the

Sarthe region.

### **The Porsche drivers**

Like last year, the Porsche GT Team fields two Porsche 911 RSR. A new driver pairing, Richard Lietz (A), last season's vice-champion, and Gianmaria Bruni (I), shares driving duties in the cockpit of the GT racer with the starting number 91. Although this is the Rome-born racer's first WEC season as a Porsche works driver, Bruni has already clinched two titles in the prestigious series. In 2015, Lietz took home the championship in the GTE-Pro category. In the #92 car, the regular crew of Kévin Estre (F) and Michael Christensen (DK) man the cockpit. Porsche will run four works cars at the Le Mans 24-hour race.

### **The Porsche 911 RSR**

After its 2017 debut season, Porsche will again fight for the drivers' and manufacturer's world championship titles with the 911 RSR during the Super Season. Depending on the restrictor, the sports car's water-cooled flat-six engine positioned in front of the rear axle produces 510 hp. Three customer teams, Dempsey Proton Racing, Gulf Racing and Project 1, field a total of four other Porsche 911 RSR in the GTE-Am class.

### **Comments prior to the Prologue**

**Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser**, Vice President Motorsport and GT Cars: "The Super Season is a very special challenge for our GT squad. We have to maintain focus over 15 months and we have to master the task of contesting Le Mans twice in one season. With the shift in our motor racing activities, many eyes are now turned towards the Porsche GT Team and we're aware of this responsibility. What's more, another three strong squads will field the new RSR for the first time in the WEC. We have only the Prologue in Le Castellet and a race at Spa-Francorchamps before we line up with ten 911 RSR at Le Mans. That'll be a real treat and I'm very much looking forward to it."

**Pascal Zurlinden**, Director GT Factory Motorsports: “The Prologue is the best way to prepare for the first race at Spa-Francorchamps. There’s a change in the driver line-up in one vehicle with Gianmaria Bruni, who makes his WEC comeback this season. Obviously we’re hoping to get confirmation that we’re ready for the season. We’ll be simulating an entire race weekend and practice the procedures.”

### The Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC

Sports prototypes and GT vehicles contest the 2012-launched Sports Car World Endurance Championship (WEC) in four classes: LMP1, LMP2, GTE-Pro and GTE-Am. They all compete together in one race but are classified separately. The Porsche GT Team contests the GTE-Pro class, with customer teams fighting for honours in the GTE-Am class.

### The race calendar

6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps: 3-5 May 2018

24 Hours of Le Mans: 13-17 June 2018

6 Hours of Silverstone: 17-19 August 2018

6 Hours of Fuji: 12-14 October 2018

6 Hours of Shanghai: 16-18 November 2018

1500 Miles of Sebring: 14-16 March 2019

6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps: 2-4 May 2019

24 Hours of Le Mans: 12-16 June 2019

Please note: Press releases, photos and the media guide 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).

