



Interim report, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, 24 Hours of Daytona/USA

Perfect start for Porsche customer teams at the 24 Hours of Daytona

Stuttgart. Porsche customer teams have dominated the first two-and-a-half hours of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season-opener. In the early stage of the 24 Hours of Daytona, the three Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by WeatherTech Racing, KCMG and Pfaff Motorsports took turns at the top of the GTD-Pro class. In the GTD category, Wright Motorsports made up around ten positions and is now running with the leading group after the first two stints.

In bright sunshine and cool temperatures of around seven degrees Celsius, the 61-strong field took off on their long journey at 1:40 pm local time. Watched by thousands of spectators, works driver Mathieu Jaminet headed into the race on the Daytona International Speedway from position two in the GTD-Pro class. At the wheel of Pfaff Motorsports' No. 9 car, the Frenchman immediately launched his attack and swept into the lead after just a few minutes. Meanwhile, his compatriot Julian Andlauer steadily worked his way up the order in the No. 79 entry from WeatherTech Racing. After the first two scheduled pit stops during a caution phase, Andlauer had reached P2. After the restart, he overtook Jaminet and took the lead for a while. Thanks to KCMG's strong lap times and a perfect pit stop, Patrick Pilet also spent time at the front in his Porsche 911 GT3 R. In the GTD class, Ryan Hardwick (USA) and the Canadian Zacharie Robichon drove impressive stints. The blue No. 16 vehicle of the team from the US state of Ohio advanced up the field to second place.

“What a great start to the race,” said a delighted Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. “The initial phase was a nail-biter. You can already see that there

are many tough battles out there. We're currently setting the pace in the GTD-Pro class. All three teams are consistently running in the top five. Things are also going well in the GTD class. The aim here is to get the amateur drivers safely to the finish and stay in the lead lap." After the first hours, the Porsche 911 GT3 R racers campaigned by the customer squads TGM and Hardpoint hold steady midfield positions in the GTD class. GMG Racing had to retire early after an accident just before the three-hour mark.

Live streaming of the race

The 24-hour race of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship on the Daytona International Speedway ends on Sunday, 30 January, at 1:40 pm local time (7:40 pm CET). The entire race can be viewed live outside the USA and Canada on www.imsa.com. Live timing of all sessions is available at scoring.imsa.com.

Drivers' comments on the initial stage

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 911 GT3 R #79): "My first two stints were excellent. We ploughed through the field from P16. The low air temperatures aren't pleasant, but the sun warmed the asphalt nicely in the early stages. That made it much easier for us to warm the tyres. It's a great feeling to be at the front. Still, there are no trophies or points for this. It's only the last two hours of racing that count. Until then, there's only one goal: stay in the lead lap."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "Our car ran beautifully in the early stages. I managed to stay out of trouble during my first two stints and at times even pulled away at the front. Unfortunately, a yellow flag quickly closed that gap. The lead keeps changing. Everyone is trying to be very careful and not take any risks in the heavy traffic. After all, it doesn't matter if you're first, second or third in the early stages. I'm thrilled with the handling of our 911 GT3 R. It can continue like this until the big finale."

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #2): "We had to start from far behind, but our Porsche 911 GT3 R is well-balanced and enabled us to catch up. The team did a

perfect job during the pit stops. Things are going really well. It was great fun in the car. We're now heading into the night. Temperatures will continue to drop – it's even expected to dip to around freezing point. I'm curious to see whether everyone manages to keep their tyres in the ideal operating window. I think we'll be okay in this regard."

Ryan Hardwick (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16): "We got a clean start but it was tough. I struggled to get the tyre temperature up because it's really cold in Daytona this year. The first laps on fresh rubber are tricky because there's very little grip. All in all, I found a good rhythm and managed to maintain my position. Then Zacharie put his foot down and charged through the field. The 911 GT3 R runs perfectly!"

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