



**PORSCHE**

Press Release

March 28, 2015

No. M 17/15

Prologue to the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC in Le Castellet/France

### **Porsche 911 head into WEC season well prepared**

**Stuttgart.** The Porsche teams are well equipped to tackle the season-opening of the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC on 12 April in Silverstone. At the official prologue on the Paul Ricard Circuit on Friday and Saturday in Le Castellet, southern France, two Porsche 911 RSR of the Porsche Manthey team as well as both 911 RSR fielded by Dempsey Proton Racing and Abu Dhabi Proton Racing completed extensive tests without any problems. Turning 433 laps on the 5.971 kilometre circuit, the two nine-eleven of the Porsche Manthey squad covered the greatest distance of all GTE-Pro vehicles.

At the final test before the season kicks off on the storied British race track, on which Porsche clinched a double victory in the GTE-Pro class last year, all six factory pilots scheduled to tackle the WEC for Porsche Manthey took part. Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Richard Lietz (Austria) share driving duties in the #91 Porsche 911 RSR with Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) who will support them as the third driver at the Le Mans 24 Hours. Frenchmen Frédéric Makowiecki and Patrick Pilet contest the season in the 911 RSR with the starting number 92, with Wolf Henzler (Germany) as their third driver for Le Mans. Also at Le Castellet was Porsche Junior Sven Müller (Germany), who turned his first laps here with the 911 RSR. As last year's best newcomer in the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland, Müller will make his debut in the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC at round two of the season in Spa-Francorchamps on 2 May.

Following tradition, the Circuit Paul Ricard was open for spectators on Saturday. Over 10,000 fans visited the track in beautiful spring weather to watch the WEC field during testing. Again on day two, the Porsche 911 RSR clocked up consistently fast lap times. The 470 hp winning racer from Weissach, which is based on the seventh generation of the iconic 911 sports car and is characterised by a consequent lightweight design and sophisticated aerodynamics, underwent modifications over the winter months. The revamped aerodynamics at the front and the adapted chassis kinematics ensure enhanced balance and improved control at its handling limits. Thanks to minor tweaks, the reliability of the drivetrain was further improved. Single point refuelling proved effective in Le Castellet. The refuelling system utilises one hose for both filling and venting, leaving only one refueller to work on the car. This contributes significantly to additional safety in the pit lane.

For the Dempsey Racing customer team who campaign the number 77 Porsche 911 RSR in the GTE-Am class, the test days in southern France were helpful to establish their position. Only Patrick Dempsey (USA), who contests his first full WEC season with Porsche works driver Patrick Long (USA) and Marco Seefried (Germany), was missing from the test day line-up. Because of filming commitments for another episode of the hit series “Grey’s Anatomy”, the Hollywood star and race driver was unable to travel to Le Castellet. “It’s a shame. I would have liked to have taken part in the tests,” he said. “But I’m sure that Patrick and Marco worked hard with the team and did all they could so that we can tackle the season opener at Silverstone with a perfectly prepared car.”

Taking part in the Le Castellet tests at the wheel of the 911 RSR run by Abu Dhabi Proton Racing, which also contests the GTE-Am class, were Christian Ried (Germany), Khaled Al Qubaisi (Abu Dhabi) and the former Porsche Junior Klaus Bachler (Austria).

### **Comments on the prologue**

**Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser**, Porsche Head of Motorsport: “We completed all of our testing tasks. We could try out every configuration of our 911 RSR that we wanted to

test and verify on the track as well as the work procedures within the team which we had changed over the winter months. The team is in an excellent condition. We're ready for the season to start at Silverstone."

**Marco Ujhasi**, Overall Project Leader GT Works Motorsport: "These were two very good test days. We managed to tick off all the points on our list as planned. The team is already at a very high level. Our two 911 RSR have successfully concluded the planned endurance programme. In doing this, we have gained valuable experience with the new parts on the car."

**Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #91)**: "That was an important test for me and a good chance to get to know the team and especially my pit stop crew. To contest the WEC against the best GT pilots in the world, particularly as part of such a successful team, is a challenge that I'm very much looking forward to."

**Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91)**: "This test was a warm-up for Silverstone. Everything worked well. Thanks to the modifications, our 911 RSR has become more stable and hopefully consistently fast in the race over two stints. Our engineers have been working in the right direction."

**Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #92)**: "It was great getting together again after the winter break – drivers, mechanics, engineers. For the new season our 911 RSR has been modified in several areas and it was interesting to see the outcome of the changes on the track."

**Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 RSR #92)**: "We're heading into the new season better prepared than ever before. The improvements on the 911 RSR are positive. The car is consistently fast and handles well and the teamwork went smoothly. That's one of the keys to success."

**Jörg Bergmeister (Porsche 911 RSR #91)**: "That was an allround positive test. The season can begin. I'm looking forward to supporting Richard and Michael at Le Mans. Le Mans is the most important race of the year and it's always a very special experience."

**Wolf Henzler (Porsche 911 RSR #92)**: "The main thing for me is to get used to the team, the people and to familiarise myself with the procedures. That worked per-

fectly. Everyone was very motivated and I was well received. I'm looking forward to contesting Le Mans with this team."

**Sven Müller (Porsche 911 RSR #92):** "That was a great weekend. Everything was new for me – the car, the track and the series. The WEC is a totally different world. I especially had to get used to so much traffic on the track. Everything ran well and I'm really excited for Spa."

**Patrick Long (Porsche 911 RSR #77):** "These two days of testing proved very useful for us. We got closer as a team. Our 911 RSR proved very reliable. The whole package works and we're ready for the start of the season. I'm looking forward to competing on such great race tracks as Silverstone, Spa and Nürburgring."

### **The Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC**

Sports prototypes and GT vehicles contest the WEC (World Endurance Championship) in four classes: LMP1 (e.g. Porsche 919 Hybrid), LMP2, LMGTE-Pro (e.g. 911 RSR) and LMGTE-Am (e.g. 911 RSR in the 2014 homologation). They all compete together in one race but are classified separately.

## **GO**

Please note: Photos from the prologue in Le Castellet and of the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC are available for accredited journalists from the Porsche Press Database under the internet address <https://presse.porsche.de>. On this website you can also activate the **Porsche Motorsport SMS Info Service** to receive the latest news and information. The Twitter channel @PorscheRaces provides live updates with the latest information and photos from race tracks around the world. Journalists also have access to the Porsche Motorsport Media Guide on <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport>. Porsche Communication provides a new service for journalists, bloggers and online multipliers under [www.newsroom.porsche.com](http://www.newsroom.porsche.com).