



PORSCHE

Press Release

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IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, round 2, Sebring/USA

Porsche aims to repeat last season's Sebring victory

Stuttgart. Porsche would like to repeat last year's major success at the upcoming IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship race in Sebring (USA). The factory team will field two ca. 510 hp Porsche 911 RSR in the venerable twelve-hour race in Florida. Like at the season-opening round in Daytona (USA), the vehicles in the GTLM category will sport a modern interpretation of the legendary Brumos Racing design. In the GTD class, two customer squads will each run a Porsche 911 GT3 R.

The race

The Sebring International Raceway is both famous and infamous. The well-used term "respect the bumps" gives a very clear indication of what drivers and other responsible parties are up against on the 6.02-kilometre track with its 17 corners: the circuit, which was remodelled from a former military airfield, features brutal washboards. About a third of the circuit is not paved to modern standards, but instead consists of old concrete slabs. This requires intensive work to find the best vehicle setup in order to prepare man and machine for the demands of the 12-hour race. One of the most famous curves is "Sunset Bend", a tight and very bumpy right-hander onto the start-finish straight. In addition to the races at Daytona, Watkins Glen and Road Atlanta, the 12 Hours of Sebring counts towards the North American Endurance Cup (NAEC).

The Porsche drivers

Patrick Pilet (France), Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) will again share the No. 911 Porsche 911 RSR. In 2018, the trio won the long-distance races at Sebring and “Petit Le Mans” at Road Atlanta. Earl Bamber (New Zealand), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Mathieu Jaminet (France) drive the sister car. At the season-opening round in Daytona, the three scored a podium result with the No. 912 vehicle. Helming the No. 9 Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by the Pfaff Motorports customer team is the Porsche development driver Lars Kern (Germany) and the two Canadians Scott Hargrove and Zacharie Robichon. Porsche works driver Patrick Long (USA) and his compatriots Patrick Lindsey and Nicholas Boulle share the cockpit of the identical (No. 73) vehicle model run by Park Place Motorsports.

Porsche successes in Sebring

With 18 overall victories, Porsche is by far the most successful brand at the twelve-hour race in Florida. The sports car manufacturer dominated the storied event, which was contested for the first time in 1952, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. Between 1976 and 1988, Porsche netted 13 outright victories in a row. Racing legends Hans Herrmann and Olivier Gendebien scored the first win for Porsche at Sebring in 1960. The most recent overall win was in 2008 thanks to Timo Bernhard (Germany), Romain Dumas (France) and Emmanuel Collard (France) at the wheel of a Penske Racing Porsche RS Spyder.

The Porsche vehicles

For its third racing season, the Porsche 911 RSR has undergone further optimisation primarily in the setup. Depending on the size of the restrictor, the engine, which is positioned in front of the rear axle, puts out around 375 kW (510 hp). The large rear diffuser combined with a top-mounted rear wing provides aerodynamic efficiency and significant downforce. The 911 GT3 R was newly developed for the 2019 season. Improvements in the areas of aerodynamics and kinematics were systematically implemented from the insights garnered from the many race outings of its predecessor. The

six-cylinder engine in the rear of the GT3 customer racer produces over 368 kW (500 hp).

The schedule

The race takes off on Saturday, 16 March, at 10.40 hrs local time (16:40 hrs CEST) and can be viewed live outside the USA and Canada on www.imsa.com.

Comments before the race

Pascal Zurlinden (Director GT Factory Motorsport): “After the podium result at the season-opener at Daytona, we’d now like to follow up with win. And the conditions look favourable. We won at Sebring in 2018 and now we want to repeat that. The car is very well suited to this classic and famously bumpy circuit. Our drivers are very experienced and we’ve celebrated many successes here already. Because the WEC is also being held here at Sebring, we’re facing a huge race weekend, which requires an effort similar to what we had at Le Mans with our four works cars. We want to wrap up this extraordinary event with a great success.”

Steffen Höllwarth (Programme Manager IMSA SportsCar Championship): “I’m really looking forward to the Sebring race, it’s one of the biggest challenges in motor racing. The track demands absolutely everything from the drivers, teams and cars. It’s hard to win there. We’re coming to Sebring as last year’s winners, so essentially we know how to tackle this task. At a test with the two cars we were able to prepare well for the different conditions. It’s important that the cars run well in the heat and also perform strongly at the end in the cooler temperatures of the night.”

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager 911 GT3 R): “The 12 Hours of Sebring is a whole new challenge. At its first test kilometres, the new Porsche 911 GT3 R demonstrated very well that it can handle the special requirements of the track with its uneven road surface. We head to the second long-distance highlight of the 2019 season feeling confident and we’ll fight for the podium at Sebring with our teams.”

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “Our win last year showed just how important good teamwork is at such a race. Neither the team nor the drivers allowed ourselves to make a single mistake. We were careful at the right moments and we pulled out all stops when it came down to the wire. That was the key. Twelve hours on such a bumpy circuit is really exhausting. We’d like to reward ourselves for this ordeal again this year with a win.”

Nick Tandy (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “To be honest, for many years Sebring wasn’t one of my favourite racetracks, but our victory last year changed that. It’s not only the washboards that make this event special. It’s also the changing conditions driving into the night – and not least the masses of crazy motorsport fans at the track. I’m very much looking forward to the race. It’s a real endurance classic. Of course we want to do as well as last year.”

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “The 12 Hours of Sebring is definitely the most difficult race on the North America calendar – and this is precisely why I’m really excited about it. The circuit demands everything from man and machine. When it gets dark towards the end of the race, the visibility is anything but good because there’s not a lot of lighting there. Last year we mastered these difficulties well. We aim to repeat this achievement and climb to the top of the podium.”

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 RSR #912): “The Sebring circuit suits our Porsche 911 RSR. We came third last year and our sister car won. Therefore, I assume that we’ll again have the best chances. The racetrack with its bumps is more brutal than any other circuit in the world. If your car is not perfectly set up, then your life as a driver will be extremely difficult. That makes it all the more important to work on even the tiniest details in our set-up. We made good progress in this regard at our test in mid-February.”

Earl Bamber (Porsche 911 RSR #912): “After coming third last year we now want to do better. We’ve known that the Porsche 911 RSR is a powerful weapon in fierce

competition since winning here in 2018. We have to use our heads and carefully consider in which phases of the race we can push to the absolute limit. If we're tactically clever and stay out of trouble, then we have the best chances of scoring a top placing in the dark at the end."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "I contested the GTD class here in Sebring last year in a Porsche 911 GT3 R run by a customer team. Now I'm finally getting the chance to drive the 911 RSR. One thing that's certain though: Sebring is one of the world's toughest races. No other racetrack shakes you up like here. Porsche finished on the podium last year with both works car, and that's what we'd like to achieve again this year."

Lars Kern (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "After a difficult start to the season at Daytona, we're looking forward to the twelve-hour race in Sebring. We're well prepared and we hope to finally underline the full potential of our 2019 Porsche 911 GT3 R. For me personally, Sebring is another highlight. To contest such a historic race is always something very special for a racing driver."

Patrick Long (Porsche 911 GT3 R #73): "The racetrack pushes teams, drivers and cars to the absolute limit. It's truly brutal. You always have to stay focussed and be prudent at all times. Ultimately it's all about maintaining a good position over the last few hours in the dark. If you succeed in this, then anything is possible at the finish. Our season began really well at Daytona. Now we want to add as many points as possible."

This is the IMSA SportsCar Championship

The IMSA SportsCar Championship is a sports car race series that has been contested in the USA and Canada since 2014. The series originated from the merger of the American Le Mans Series and the Grand-Am Series. Sports prototypes and sports cars start in four different classes: GTLM (GT Le Mans), GTD (GT Daytona), Dpi (Daytona Prototype international) and LMP2 (Le Mans Prototype 2). The Porsche 911 RSR runs in the GTLM class, and the Porsche 911 GT3 R contests the GTD class.

*Please note: Press releases, photos and videos 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**.*