



PORSCHE

Press Release

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Nürburgring 24 Hours – 1st Qualifying

Porsche team focuses on preparing the 911 GT3 R for the race

Stuttgart. The factory-supported Manthey Racing team has used the first qualifying session for the 24-hour race on the legendary Nürburgring-Nordschleife predominantly to set up the two 911 GT3 R racers. The new 500 hp customer racing cars from Weissach have already made it to the Top-30 Qualifying, which will determine the grid positions of the top teams on Friday. For this reason, the main priority for the qualifying session until shortly before midnight on Thursday on the storied racetrack in the Eifel was not to turn fast lap times, but to continue preparing for the race. The Eifel classic takes off on Saturday at 15.30 hrs.

Tackling initially dry and then wet conditions, the 911 GT3 R with the starting number 911, helmed by overall Le Mans winner Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) with Frenchmen Patrick Pilet and Kévin Estre, set the 13th quickest time. The fastest qualifying lap time of their teammates Richard Lietz (Austria), Jörg Bergmeister (Germany), Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) ranked them 34th.

Comments on the 1st qualifying

Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser, Head of Porsche Motorsport: “It was important to drive in the rain again to see if the set-up of the 911 GT3 R also works in the wet and to check the handling of the tyres. For our drivers this was a good simulation of a typical night on the Nürburgring, which is what we expect for the race with rain and lots of traffic. This session was also critical in that it gave the team more assurance. When you take all this into consideration, today was a successful day for us.”

Drivers 911 GT3 R #911

Earl Bamber: “I arrived relatively late from testing in the USA and I first had to familiarise myself again with the Nordschleife and to find my line on the lower part of the Grand Prix track on which I’ve never driven the 911 GT3 R before. This is the first time I’ve driven at night here. With so many cars on the track it was a very interesting experience.”

Kévin Estre: “That was a good qualifying. I’ve never driven on the Nordschleife in heavy rain before, and these were my first night laps on this circuit since 2014. In this respect, today was a good experience and a perfect preparation for the race.”

Patrick Pilet: “This wasn’t a real qualifying for us because we’ve already qualified for the top-30 session tomorrow. Our first priority was to find a good setup for the cars, plus we checked some other minor aspects. These things are very important for such a long race. The changes that we’ve made since the last VLN race have worked well. I kept my nose clean out there and tried to get a feel for the track. With rain setting in at different parts of the circuit, the conditions changed and proved very difficult so I didn’t want to risk anything.”

Nick Tandy: “The track conditions changed constantly. In the dark it was very hard to see where it was wet and how wet it was in individual places. It’s easier to go out on a completely wet track, at least then you know how much grip you have. But we have to expect such changing conditions in the race. So in this regard, it was really good to be able to adjust to it now.”

Drivers 911 GT3 R #912

Jörg Bergmeister: “In the beginning I just ran-in the brakes. Then I drove my two mandatory night laps, although it wasn’t yet completely dark. During these two laps there was a lot of traffic out there, and towards the end it started to rain. We’re qualified anyway, so there’s no need to take any chances.”

Michael Christensen: “To drive on the Nordschleife at night and in rain is always an interesting exercise. We’re qualified already so we didn’t need to do anything risky

under these difficult conditions. Instead we were able to concentrate on preparing for the race.”

Richard Lietz: “The Nordschleife presented itself today as we know it and fear it: Glorious sunshine in free practice and then, just in time for nightfall, heavy rain set in. Those are the toughest conditions that you can encounter here, and according to the weather forecast, those are the conditions that we’re expecting for the race. It was really good that we had the chance to prepare today. The race will definitely be a great adventure.”

Frédéric Makowiecki: “That was my first night session on the Nordschleife in rain. It wasn’t easy but we have to expect such conditions in the race. I think we’ll cope quite well.”

Latest video news

A brief wrap-up of day one of the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring can be viewed on the Porsche Video News, which is available on the press database under <https://vimeo.com/168264224>.

Result 1st Qualifying

1. Vanthoor/Mies/Müller/Kaffer (B/D/CH/D), Audi R8, 8:21.951 minutes
2. Farfus/Krohn/Müller/Wittmann (BRA/SF/D/D), BMW M6, + 1.215 seconds
3. Heyer/Asch/Ludwig/Keilwitz (D/D/D/D), Mercedes, + 1.349
13. Tandy/Estre/Bamber/Pilet (GB/F/NZ/F), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 4.238
22. Klohs/Schmidtman/Richter/Renauer (D/D/D/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R, +6.487
24. Abbelen/Schmitz/Huisman/Siedler (D/D/NL/A), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 27. 7.212
27. Dumbreck/Henzler/Ragginger/Imperatori (GB/D/A/CHN), Porsche 911 GT3 R, +10.621
34. Lietz/Bergmeister/Christensen/Makowiecki (A/D/DK/F), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 15.793
37. Weiss/Kainz/Krumbach/Stursberg (D/D/D/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 21.951

The 2nd qualifying session is held on Friday, 27 May, from 9.30 to 11.30 hrs. The grid line-up of the top teams will be determined in the Top-30 Qualifying, which is run on Friday from 19.50 to 20.30 hrs.

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Please note: Photo and video material from the 24-hour Nürburgring race is available for accredited journalists from the Porsche Press Database on <https://presse.porsche.de>. 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 digital 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. Up-to-date video news can be downloaded from www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom.

