



PORSCHE

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FIA World Endurance Championship WEC, LMP1, Round 7, Fuji (Japan), Preview

Race for World Championship begins to hot up at the foot of Mount Fuji

Stuttgart. On October 14-16 it's time for the seventh out of nine rounds of the FIA World Endurance Championship. For Porsche the six-hour event at the Fuji International Speedway kicks off as the race for its mission to defend its title hots up. After five race wins for the 919 Hybrid – including the Le Mans 24 Hours – Porsche leads the manufacturers' world championship with 238 points ahead of Audi (185) and Toyota (137). In the drivers' world championship, the trio of Romain Dumas (FR), Neel Jani (CH) and Marc Lieb (DE) top the standings with 130 points. They have an advantage of 37.5 points over the best Audi trio and half a point more to the best placed Toyota drivers. Mathematically, but only if there were special circumstances, a title decision in Japan would be possible. A race win is rewarded with 25 points, and this is the jackpot the crew of the sister Porsche took three times in a row: this way Timo Bernhard (DE), Brendon Hartley (NZ) and Mark Webber (AU) propelled themselves to fourth place (78.5 points) in the championship.

The Speedway at the foot of the picturesque stratovolcano is very demanding when it comes to set-up work. On the 1.5-kilometre long straight minimum drag is required. But through the 16 corners, that are partly very tight, of the 4.549 kilometre short track downforce is needed. Aerodynamic amendments are limited in the WEC. Fine tuning for the track can be difficult and the competition in the top category of the class one Le Mans prototypes is extremely tight. The smallest advantage or disadvantage may decide the overall victory.

The Weissach developed Porsche 919 Hybrid produces a system power of over 900 HP (662 kW). Its combustion engine is a ground breaking downsizing motor: the very compact two-litre V4 turbocharged petrol engine drives the rear axle with almost 500 PS (368 kW). Two different energy recovery systems – brake energy from the front and exhaust energy – feed a lithium ion battery that, on command, passes on the energy to an E machine to power the front axle with an extra boost of over 400 PS (294 kW).

“The competition in LMP1 is breath taking,” said Fritz Enzinger, Vice President LMP1. “At our most recent race in Austin, again all three manufacturers involved made it onto the podium. The general framework, such as changing track temperatures, lead to decisive performance differences. We also face an ever present risk in traffic, when the fast prototypes lap the GT cars. Looking at the points standings, we are on target to defend both our world championship titles. But in a total of 18 hours of racing that remain just everything can happen.”

Team Principal Andreas Seidl added: “Generally speaking, we can expect cooler temperatures in Fuji than we had recently in Austin and this should help. Also the 919 with its relatively high downforce should be strong in the corners that are the challenging parts of the circuit. In 2015 we had some heavy rain in Japan. At this time of the year this can easily happen again, but our team has proved that we are able to handle difficult situations as well.”

Quotes before the race:

Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 1

Timo Bernhard (35, Germany): “For the car’s set-up you have to balance what is needed on the long straight, the speedy first sector and the winding final part of the lap. Also the surface is rather slippery. At turn 13 you cannot see the point where you have to turn in. This one and the next two corners you take by feeling, constantly trying to improve your racing line there. Given how tight competition is in our champion-

ship, the question is always who manages to get everything perfectly right. It is small things that swing the pendulum towards one or the other manufacturers. For me it is a great joy to be part of our forceful crew.”

Brendon Hartley (26, New Zealand): “We go to Japan with good momentum after three wins on the trot for car number 1. Fuji is a track I enjoy and it's a track that has produced great racing over the last years in the WEC. I expect another tough fight, and our goal and focus is to continue our winning streak.”

Mark Webber (40, Australia): “I've always enjoyed racing there with Mount Fuji providing such a spectacular backdrop. In the last two years we received a very warm welcome from the fans. Fuji is a unique circuit. It's a short lap and technical with a mix of slow and quick corners, and a very long straight. It's a challenge and not easy to get everything together. The last sector is tight and twisty, which I actually really like and it suits our 919 very well with the four-wheel drive. We want to keep the run going with car number 1.”

Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 2

Romain Dumas (38, France): “We have a good car, it's going well for Porsche and I hope it continues like this. Our car crew would love to have a luckier race next time, but we can't complain as we are leading the championship by quite a good margin. I'm looking forward to seeing the Japanese fans again. They love motorsport and that is good fun.”

Neel Jani (32, Switzerland): “Now the final spurt of the world championship kicks off, and in Japan we want to stabilise our leading position. That's the most important thing for me. In the recent three races the luck wasn't really on our side, but no such runs last forever. In 2015 we were very strong with our 919 Hybrid in Fuji and in the end we allowed the sister car to win the race. It would be nice to make up for this and win the race this year.”

Marc Lieb (36, Germany): “I like going to Fuji. The atmosphere is always great and the competition is super exciting. This season all the different LMP1 cars have revealed individual strengths and weaknesses on different circuits. The Fuji Speedway is neither a classic high downforce track nor a typical low downforce circuit. I think our 919 definitely should be good through the twisty parts. For the long straight we have to slim the aero a little bit, as far as this is possible within the rules.”

Facts and figures:

- The six-hour race on the Fuji International Speedway is the seventh out of nine rounds of the 2016 FIA WEC and starts on October 16 at 11:00 hrs local time (04:00 hrs in Central Europe).
- The official WEC App can be downloaded free of charge in its basic version and can be extended (not free of charge) by a live stream. Several live features, such as on-board cameras, timing and GPS tracking, are implemented in the Porsche Motorsport App (free of charge) and at porsche.com/fiawec.
- In 2015 Bernhard/Webber (1:22.763 minutes) and Dumas/Lieb (1:23.071 minutes) locked out the front row of the grid. (In the WEC the average of the respective best laps of two drivers counts for the grid position.)
- Bernhard/Hartley/Webber won last year's race ahead of Dumas/Jani/Lieb.
- The WEC efficiency regulations limit the amount of energy that can be used per lap. In Fuji the Porsche 919 Hybrid can use 4.15 megajoule of electrical power from energy recovery systems and 1.169 kg or 1.559 litres of petrol.
- At normal race speed (no safety car) the Porsche 919 Hybrid is due for refuelling after every 38 laps at the latest.
- Refuelling and changing tyres may only be done sequentially, not at the same time. Only four mechanics may work simultaneously when changing tyres and may use only one wheel gun. That takes a lot longer than in F1, for example.
- The drivers are normally only changed when new tyres are needed.
- A set of Michelin slick tyres should ideally last two fuel tank fills.
- These different types of tyres can be used: three different compounds of slick tyres for dry conditions, a hybrid tyre (no profile either but softer cover) for

mixed conditions and wet weather tyres. 6.5 sets of dry weather tyres are available per car for qualifying and the race.

- A lap on the Fuji International Speedway is 4.549 kilometres and has 16 corners – 10 right-handers and six left-handers.
- In 2005 the circuit was rebuilt for safety reasons and became, once again, the venue for the Japanese Formula One Grand Prix in 2007 and 2008.
- From 1982 to 1988 the Sports Car World Championship had a round in Fuji. In 1983 Stefan Bellof set the fastest ever recorded lap at the wheel of a Porsche 956 in 1:10.02 minutes. This was, however, on the old track layout when a lap was only 4.360 kilometres.
- In 2015 the WEC race was started behind the safety car because of heavy rain. In 2014 the track was dry on race day. But the weather in the Japanese Alps can be very changeable at this time of the year. In 2013 heavy rain made it impossible to run the WEC race. Not forgotten is the downpour back in 1976 which caused Niki Lauda to pull out of the race and gave the Formula One World Championship title to James Hunt.
- Mount Fuji is an active volcano that last erupted in 1707. It is the highest mountain in Japan at 3,776 metres and is regarded as a holy mountain.
- The circuit is located about 100 kilometres southwest of the capital of Tokyo on the Japanese main island of Honshu.

All points' standings: <http://www.fiawec.com/courses/classification.html>

All results: <http://fiawec.alkamelsystems.com>

Note: Text, photo and video material for the LMP1 programme is free to access at the Porsche Press Database on <https://presse.porsche.de>. The link <https://presse.porsche.de/motorsport> takes you straight to the Motorsport Media Guide. The LMP1 Twitter channel @Porsche_Team provides the latest information, photos and video clips live from the race tracks. Further live features are available at www.porsche.com/fiawec. Further journalistic content can be found in the Newsroom at www.newsroom.porsche.com. Video News can be viewed on www.vimeo.com/porschenewsroom.

