



PORSCHE

Press Release

March 15, 2019

Qualifying GT, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, round 2, Sebring/USA

Porsche locks out first grid row for the twelve-hour race at Sebring

Stuttgart. The Porsche GT Team takes up the 12 Hours of Sebring from the first two grid spots. Patrick Pilet (France) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) posted the fastest lap times in qualifying for the second round of this year's IMSA Weathertech SportsCar Championship. This marks the first time that the two ca. 510 hp Porsche 911 RSR, which contest the long distance classic in Florida again decked out in the design of the legendary Brumos team, line up side-by-side on the first grid row in the North American sports car championship. So far in the "Super Sebring" race weekend, Porsche has a perfect record. On the previous day, the works driver colleagues Kévin Estre (France) and Michael Christensen (Denmark) had clinched pole position for the 1,000-mile race of the Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC.

Pilet made perfect use of the grip of the fresh tyres in his first fast lap. With top times in all three sectors of the 6.02 kilometre racetrack, the Frenchman clearly underlined the huge potential of the Porsche 911 RSR. Last year, Pilet won the twelve-hour race at Sebring in the No. 911 car with his works driver teammates Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France). During his first flying lap, Vanthoor missed out on topping the time sheets, but in his second fast lap he managed to push past all other cars from manufacturers contesting the GTLM class. The Belgian shares the cockpit of the No. 912 car with factory driver Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Porsche Young Professional Mathieu Jaminet (France). Early this year at the season-opener in Daytona, the trio had scored a podium result.

In the GTD class, Zacharie Robichon secured the third grid spot in the No. 9 Porsche 911 GT3 R run by the Pfaff Motorsports customer team. The Canadian shares driving duties in the ca. 500-hp racer with Porsche development driver Lars Kern (Germany) and Scott Hargrove (Canada). Nicholas Boule took up the qualifying in the identical No. 73 model of Park Place Motorsports. The North American driver will head into the twelve-hour race from position 14 with works driver Patrick Long (USA) and his fellow compatriot Patrick Lindsey. Round two of the IMSA Weathertech SportsCar Championship starts on Saturday, 16 March, at 10:30 hrs local time (15:40 hrs CET).

Qualifying quotes

Fritz Enzinger (Vice President Motorsport): “This is my first time at Sebring for Porsche and I’m seeing such great results: especially considering the huge logistical effort of managing two teams contesting two races within 48 hours. We now have the ideal starting positions with pole positions in both WEC GTE categories and in the IMSA. I’m very much looking forward to the race. The atmosphere in the team is fantastic and the cooperation is perfect.”

Pascal Zurlinden (Director GT Factory Motorsport): “This has been a dream weekend so far for Porsche. First pole position and then the double pole in the GTE-Pro and Am classes of the WEC, and now we’ve locked out the first grid row in the IMSA. We hope it continues like this. It’s important that we now prepare ourselves well for the race. At any rate, all the hard work in the lead-up has paid off. The predicted weather change on Saturday promises to make it even more excitement.”

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “The qualifying was over quickly – because I drove really fast. Jokes aside, I knew from the free practice how to get the best out of the tyres in the ideal operating window. I took enough time to get them warmed up, then I went all-out. In the first corner I was at the absolute limit and used every last millimetre of the track. We’re very well prepared for the race on Saturday. Conditions may change, and that makes the challenge of finding the best setup even trickier. But our goal is clear: we want to stay at the front to the flag and repeat last year’s win.”

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 RSR #912): “We changed our car again prior to the qualifying session. It felt good, but I didn’t immediately find the limit. It’s a pity, because I would’ve liked to stand on pole position, of course. The result for Porsche is ideal. Taking up the twelve-hour race from the first two grid spots is simply perfect. Our Porsche 911 RSR has always been particularly strong at Sebring.”

Qualifying result

GTLM class

1. Pilet*/Tandy/Makowiecki (F/GB/F), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:55.899 minutes
2. Bamber/Vanthoor*/Jaminet (NZ/B/F), Porsche 911 RSR, + 0.143 seconds
3. Garcia*/Magnussen/Rockenfeller (E/DK/D), Corvette C7.R, + 0.259

GTD class

1. Farnbacher/Hindman*/Marks (D/USA/USA), Acura NSX GT3, 1:59.917 minutes
2. Auberlen/Foley*/Machavern (USA/USA/USA), BMW M6 GT3, + 0.382 seconds
3. Kern/Robichon*/Hargrove (D/CDN/CDN), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 0.587
14. Long/Lindsey/Boulle* (USA/USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 2.233

*Qualifying driver

Full results: <http://imsa.alkamelsystems.com>

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