



PORSCHE

Press Release

January 27, 2019

Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, round 1, Daytona/USA

Porsche on the podium at Daytona after strong team effort

Stuttgart. The Porsche GT Team was rewarded for a strong performance with a place on the podium at the 24 Hours of Daytona. Under difficult conditions on the Daytona International Speedway (USA), the two Porsche 911 RSR racers achieved positions three and five. The ca. 510 hp sports cars from Weissach had clearly dominated the first half of the long-distance classic. However, heavy rain, numerous caution phases, interruptions and incidents threw the two factory cars in the legendary Brumos design into a rainy game of chance in the final hours. The new Porsche 911 GT3 R achieved eighth place at its race debut.

Heading into the race on Saturday afternoon (local time) in dry conditions, Nick Tandy (Great Britain) made perfect use of his pole position, with the No. 911 Porsche 911 RSR holding the lead over many laps. His French teammates Patrick Pilet and Frédéric Makowiecki retained the top spot into the night. Torrential rain early on Sunday morning proved to be a watershed moment in a perfect race. With deep water on the track, the 911 of the polesitter fell back into fifth place.

The sister car shared by Earl Bamber (New Zealand), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Mathieu Jaminet (France) experienced bad luck early on in the race. The repairs to a defect in the front splitter mounting threw the trio in the No. 912 Porsche 911 RSR back by four laps. Thanks to a flawless drive and perfect strategy, the gap was quickly closed so that both factory cars were back amongst the frontrunners. The No. 912 vehicle was relegated to fourth place in arguably the worst conditions in the 57-year history of the

endurance classic, but was classified third when a penalty was handed to a competitor when the race was finally stopped after 24 hours and 50 minutes.

In the GTD class, the new Porsche 911 GT3 R run by the Park Place Motorsports customer team achieved eighth place. After several setbacks, works driver Patrick Long (USA), Porsche Young Professional Matt Campbell (Australia) as well as the two American racing drivers Patrick Lindsey and Nicholas Boulle repeatedly fought their way up the order. Over long stretches, the team from Texas and its experienced drivers underlined the immense potential of the new GT3 car from Weissach and led the race in the final stages. However, the interruption immediately after a pit stop foiled the tactics and thus the chance of a victory.

Bad luck also plagued the customer teams Black Swan Racing and Pfaff Motorsports, with accidents throwing their ca. 500 hp vehicles into retirement. The squads from the USA and Canada managed to match the pace of the frontrunners and were at times on course for a podium spot. A technical defect threw the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by NGT Motorsport out of contention early in the race.

Round two of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will also be held in Florida. On 16 March, the 12 Hours of Sebring (USA) will be contested as a double-header with the FIA WEC.

Comments on the race

Pascal Zurlinden (Director GT Factory Motorsport): “If you ignore the weather, then you have to admit that was a great race. We witnessed some top-class racing from all manufacturers. It was a great show for the fans. We were really strong in dry conditions, in the wet, however, things didn’t really go as we’d hoped. The result might look a little disappointing at first glance, but the potential shown and the perfect teamwork make me very optimistic.”

Steffen Höllwarth (Program Manager IMSA SportsCar Championship): “That was a gripping race, from which we’re very happy to take home a podium result. We led the field over long stretches, we coped impressively with a setback for our No. 912 car and we regained lost time. There were many highs and lows. We were very fast in the dry with a setup designed for high top speeds on the straights, but unfortunately not quite so in the wet. To achieve a podium result under such difficult conditions is a great effort. Now we’re looking ahead with optimism to the next race in Sebring. We are keen to repeat our victory there from last year.”

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “I’m very disappointed, because we were really strong in the practice sessions and the first half of the race. We couldn’t quite maintain the performance in the rain. A collision cost us two laps in the race, but that wasn’t the decisive factor. I’m focussing on the positive aspects. Our car was extremely fast on a dry track. Our team and the driver trio are strong. So I’m heading to the upcoming race in Sebring feeling optimistic.”

Nick Tandy (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “The first hours were great fun. Our car was fast and reliable, I enjoyed thrilling duels against drivers of other brands. But then torrential rain came. Having to drive at Daytona in such conditions is a very different experience. But we can’t complain. It could have been much worse.”

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #911): “I think we can be very proud of our performance this weekend. In the practice and qualifying sessions we were at the front, and in dry conditions we led the race over long periods. Unfortunately that changed completely once the rain set in. We experienced serious aquaplaning and therefore couldn’t quite maintain the pace. At the end of the day I’m left with many positive impressions.”

Earl Bamber (Porsche 911 RSR #912): “What a crazy race. We were extremely fast, we coped impressively with a bitter setback and we had a car to beat in dry conditions.”

The situation was different in the rain. We were no longer the fastest out there. All in all, we've started the season well with a podium result."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "Everything was going fine until late at night. We'd set up our car for a high top speed and this worked perfectly in the dry, but we lacked downforce in the wet. I enjoy big challenges and I'm a fan of old-school racing, but these conditions were just crazy. When you're driving at 290 km/h and you can only see two metres in front of you and you're flying blind with 30 other cars on your tail all going the same speed, well, that just goes too far. I don't ever want to experience something like this again."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "Had it stayed dry, we would definitely have been able to fight for victory. Unfortunately we lacked a bit of speed in the wet. Third place was certainly the most we could do under these conditions. We can be proud of our performance and result. We've earned many points to start the season and are on the podium."

Dennis Olsen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "It's such a shame. We never let ourselves become disheartened by the setbacks, instead we fought back time and again. We were on course for a podium finish, but then everything went wrong. First a minor problem with the electrics hampered us, then came the crash. At the restart, my teammate couldn't see a thing and was unable to avoid a collision with another car. Unfortunately the damage to the vehicle was too extensive. I'm certain that Pfaff Motorsports will soon earn the reward they deserve."

Patrick Long (Porsche 911 GT3 R #73): "Sometimes the right timing is everything in motorsport. Unfortunately this didn't work for us today. This wasn't because of the team's performance, the interruptions due to the heavy rain cost us a better result. Still, we've earned some decent points. The season is still very long, and every point counts. The new Porsche 911 GT3 R is fast. That makes me confident for the upcoming races."

Sven Müller (Porsche 911 GT3 R #99): “Well, we hadn’t really expected it to be like this. During the race week we worked together brilliantly and made constant improvements. It’s extremely disappointing, of course, when the car is out of the race after less than two hours. But that’s how it is sometimes in motor racing. I’ll now tick this off and hope that we’ll be back in this constellation this coming year to successfully complete our mission.”

Dirk Werner (Porsche 911 GT3 R #540): “Retiring from a race is always disappointing, but that’s racing sometimes. We didn’t just experience changeable weather, we also had many ups and downs as a team. We were one lap down several times, but again and again we fought our way back into the top group. When a rival hit the rear of our car in heavy rain this morning the car was beyond repair – it’s a great pity.”

Race result

GTLM class

1. Farfus/De Philippis/Eng/Herta (BMW #25), 571 laps
2. Rigon/Molina/Pier Guidi/Calado (Ferrari #62), 571 laps
3. Bamber/Vanthoor/Jaminet (Porsche #912), 570 laps
4. Briscoe/Westbrook/Dixon (Ford #67), 570 laps
5. Pilet/Tandy/Makowiecki (Porsche #911), 569 laps
6. Magnussen/Garcia/Rockenfeller (Corvette #3), 563 laps
7. Hand/Müller/Bourdais (Ford #66), 559 laps
8. Gavin/Milner/Fässler (Corvette #4), 555 laps
9. Krohn/Edwards/Mostert/Zanardi (BMW #24), 553 laps

GTD class

1. Ineichen/Bortolotti/Engelhart/Breukers (Lamborghini #11), 561 laps
2. Morad/Mies/Vanthoor (Audi #29), 561 laps
3. Montecalvo/Bell/Telitz/Segal (Lexus #12), 561 laps

- 8. Long/Campbell/Lindsey/Boulle (Porsche #73), 560 laps
- 16. Werner/Cairolì/Seefried/Pappas (Porsche #540) 545 laps
- 19. Kern/Olsen/Robichon/Hargrove (Porsche #9), 470 laps
- 23. Müller/Bachler/Renauer/Häring/Görig (Porsche #99), 47 laps

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.

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