



Porsche customer teams look beyond the surface at Monterey Peninsula

25/04/2022 WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, GTD Pro/GTD: Round 4

On the surface, WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca looks like a Porsche performance paradise with its technical nature and high-commitment layout. As the leading manufacturer in race wins here with 29 major sports car victories since 1957, history would support the conclusion that the venue offers high probabilities for success. However, it *is* the surface the customer teams of the brand will need to face head-on to maximize the championship points at the annual pilgrimage to the popular track on California's Monterey Peninsula. The Monterey Sports Car Championship, April 28 – May 1, will host the first two-hour, 40-minute race of the season for the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GTD and GTD Pro classes, the two-hour WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca 120 Michelin Pilot Challenge race – utilizing the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport in the GS class – and a pair of 40-minute Porsche Carrera Cup North America Presented by the Cayman Islands events for the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car one-make series.

The 11-turns of the 2.238-mile track laid out in the hills of the Monterey Peninsula are well-associated with the German marque. However, the combination of the Porsche 911's rear-engine layout and the well-worn surface of the track can cause unique challenges to the engineers and drivers of the 510+ hp GT3 machine. The asphalt is older and low grip. The surface will force teams to make the most of the Michelin tires to maximize the rubber's performance over the course of a driving stint. Pushing early in a driving stint will wear the tires out more quickly making the car vulnerable once the peak performance is worn away. Long green flag runs will reward the driver who most wisely cares for their tires early on.

WeatherTech, GTD Pro Class.

The Monterey weekend will be the last time the GTD Pro class cars will be raced until the Six Hours of The Glen at Watkins Glen International, June 24 – 26. This unique scheduling forces Pfaff Motorsports, the only full-time Porsche 911 GT3 R race car in the class, to make the most of this key west coast race. A true fluke out of the team's control at the most recent round at the Grand Prix of Long Beach dropped the Canadian team from a likely podium finish when a wheel nut from a competitor damaged the radiator in the "Plaid Porsche" when the car was making a pit stop. The driving pair of Porsche factory aces Matt Campbell (Australia) and Mathieu Jaminet (France) now sit in second-place in the standings, 30 points back from the leading Corvette. Pfaff is the 2021 winner of the event – then in GTD class – with factory driver Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Zacharie Robichon (Canada). Neither driver is entered in this year's race.

WeatherTech, GTD Class.

Three Porsche 911 GT3 R race cars are entered in the Pro-Am style GTD class. The No. 16 Wright Motorsports Porsche driven by Ryan Hardwick (Atlanta, Georgia) and Jan Heylen (Belgium now living in Florida) are the leading customer entry in the class. The Rolex 24 At Daytona winners enter Round Four of the championship in third-place of the driver and team standings. Porsche is third in the Manufacturer ranks, -34 to Ferrari and -33 to Mercedes-AMG.

Katherine Legge (Great Britain) is the 2018 GTD class winner in Monterey. For the second season she will be teamed in the No. 99 Hardpoint Porsche with team principal Rob Ferriol (Fayetteville, North Carolina). Legge knows the track well having not only won four years ago but claiming the pole position that season.

James Sofronas (Villa Park, California) and Kyle Washington (Indio, California) bring the No. 34 GMG Racing Porsche 911 GT3 R to the track for the third-time this season. The California-based operation will race a triple-header at Laguna Seca with Washington entered alongside Sofronas in WeatherTech and Michelin Pilot Challenge events and racing solo in the Porsche Carrera Cup North America Presented by the Cayman Islands in a Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car.

Michelin Pilot Challenge, GS Class.

The Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport appeared on the GT4-spec scene at Daytona International Speedway in January scoring a pole position (No. 8 McCann Racing) and a one-two finish (RS1 winning and Team TGM in second-place) in the four-hour endurance event. Now entering Round 3 of the championship, the mid-engine Porsche will be represented by a season-high ten customer entries. The No. 64 Team TGM entry of Ted Giovanis (Highland, Maryland) and Owen Trinkler (Nashville, Tennessee) leads the championship for road car-based racers as we come to the two-hour Laguna Seca 120 at 7:00 p.m. ET/4:00 p.m. PT on Saturday, April 30.

Timing (times local to track - PT)

IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

Friday, April 29 – Practice 1 – 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 30 – Practice 2 – 8:55 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.

Saturday, April 30 – Qualifying – GTD/GTD Pro – 12:50 p.m. – 1:05 p.m.

Sunday, May 1 – Warm-Up – 8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.

Sunday, May 1 – Monterey Sports Car Championship – 12:10 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Michelin Pilot Challenge.

Friday, April 29 – Practice 1 – 10:25 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.

Friday, April 29 – Practice 2 – 2:20 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.

Saturday, April 30 – Qualifying – GS – 11:20 a.m. – 11:35 a.m.

Saturday, April 30 – Laguna Seca 120 – 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Porsche Carrera Cup North America Presented by the Cayman Islands.

Friday, April 29 – Practice 1 – 8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.

Friday, April 29 – Practice 2 – 12:25 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.

Friday, April 29 – Qualifying – 3:40 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.

Saturday, April 30 – Round 5 – 11:50 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 1 – Round 6 – 8:40 a.m. – 9:20 a.m.

All Porsche Carrera Cup North America sessions can be viewed live at www.PorscheCarreraCup.us and on the Peacock Streaming App.

Viewing

The Monterey SportsCar Championship will air live, coast-to-coast on the NBC Network, Sunday, May 1 beginning at 3:00 p.m. ET/Noon PT. For those unable to watch over the air, the Peacock Streaming App will broadcast flag-to-flag at the same time. Additionally, IMSA Radio will have live play-by-play on SiriusXM (XM 207, Internet/App 992) and IMSA.TV.

Comments before the race

Matt Campbell, Driver, No. 9 Pfaff Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"I'm looking forward to Laguna Seca. Two races in California, back-to-back, is always nice, so hoping for some more good weather too. But I think it'll be really tough – it's a high degradation track and really tough on tires, so I think it'll be a really hard race fighting the car quite a lot. Obviously, we want to try and get back some points that we lost in Long Beach with the unfortunate situation, so hopefully we can try to get another good result."

Mathieu Jaminet, Driver, No. 9 Pfaff Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"I've never raced in Laguna Seca in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. I only raced once in another series a few years ago with this car actually, which was also competitive, and we got a podium. I'm looking forward to it. At the moment, it seems Corvette is the car to beat after Sebring and Long Beach, but from our side we are pretty confident that the Porsche will be up there. For me, it's great to get back to Laguna Seca and I think it's a cool place and a nice surrounding also. I'm happy to be back."

Ryan Hardwick, Driver, No. 16 Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"Laguna Seca has always been one of my favorite race tracks to visit. The atmosphere and weather are always great, and I've personally had a lot of fun racing there over the years. The lack of grip makes it

especially challenging for all the drivers, but that's what also makes it a fun race! Our team had a solid test day there right after the Long Beach race, so we are looking to be very competitive, and aiming to get back on the GTD podium at this race. Looking forward to it!"

Link Collection

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