



Fifth and seventh place for Porsche Penske Motorsport in Monza

09/07/2023 The Porsche Penske Motorsport works team has finished the 6 Hours of Monza in fifth and seventh. The Porsche 963 fielded by the Hertz Team Jota customer outfit crossed the finish line on the Italian Grand Prix circuit in ninth place. At their debut outing in the Hypercar class, Proton Competition delivered a strong performance but had to retire early. Thanks to different pit stop strategies, all four hybrid prototypes from Weissach had at times led the field at round five of the FIA World Endurance Championship season. In the GTE Am category, the Porsche 911 RSR locked out the first three spots, with class victory going to Dempsey-Proton Racing.

The Race

In midsummer temperatures of around 34 degrees Celsius, Porsche Penske Motorsport's two works cars lined up on the grid for the six-hour race in eighth and tenth position. The Porsche 963 campaigned by the customer team Hertz Team Jota had started from ninth position, with Proton Competition's hybrid prototype on P12. By the first corner, all four had gained one position due to a

collision in front of them. When a first safety car period ended after just under 30 minutes of racing, Porsche Penske Motorsport opted for different strategies for both race cars: The No. 6 car driven by Laurens Vanthoor pitted early only to refuel, while the No. 5 sister car completed its first stint as scheduled. Jota also called António Félix da Costa in early.

From that point on, the positions in the overall standings swapped constantly depending on the pit stop rhythm. The 506 kW (688 PS) Porsche 963 cars at times managed to maintain the pace of the leading pack and repeatedly appeared among the frontrunners. The No. 5 car shared by the works driver trio Frédéric Makowiecki (France), Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Dane Cameron (USA) battled to the end for fourth place on the 5.793-kilometre Grand Prix circuit but missed out by almost 14 seconds.

Luck was not on the side of Frenchman Kévin Estre, André Lotterer (Germany) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium). When Estré attempted to pit for a routine stop after a good two hours of racing, the lights at the entrance to the pit lane switched to red a few seconds earlier due to a full course yellow – caused by the accident with an LMP2 car. In order not to run out of fuel, the Frenchman had to make a so-called emergency stop. However, only a small amount of fuel is allowed as a bridging measure and tyre changes are prohibited. This made a second stop necessary, costing valuable time, one lap and the contact to the top. The No. 6 ultimately took the flag in seventh place.

“Fifth and seventh place reflect what we can currently achieve with our performance,” emphasises Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. “We delivered a flawless race, and we were also very good from a technical and strategic standpoint. However, the yellow phases had their snags for us. Our customer team Jota had to deal with some difficulties during the race. Congratulations to Proton Competition: they were even able to lead for a short period at their maiden start in the big class. Then, they encountered technical hiccups, which we now need to analyse in greater detail.”

The Porsche fielded by Hertz Team Jota also spent stints among the leaders of the top Hypercar class, with the No. 38 prototype even briefly in the lead. After two hours, however, the steering wheel had to be changed during an additional stop and the hybrid system had to be reset. As a result, William Stevens from the UK, works driver António Félix da Costa from Portugal and the Porsche Motorsport Asia-Pacific selected driver Yifei Ye from China lost touch with the leaders. The trio crossed the finish line in ninth position.

Proton Competition gave a strong debut with the Porsche 963 in the Hypercar category. At their maiden outing with the hybrid prototype, works driver Gianmaria Bruni from Italy, Neel Jani from Switzerland and Englishman Harry Tincknell managed to stick with the leading group for quite some time. At the beginning of the fifth hour of racing, however, a defect that had not been analysed in detail led to an early retirement. The German customer squad had only taken delivery of the Porsche 963 shortly before the start of the weekend and used the race in Monza as a chance to test the car.

One-two-three in the GTE Am class for the Porsche 911 RSR

In the GTE Am class, Porsche customer teams locked out the first three positions with the ca. 378 kW (515 PS) 911 RSR. Class victory went to Dempsey-Proton Racing with drivers Mikkel Pedersen from

Denmark, team owner Christian Ried from Germany and the former Porsche Junior Julien Andlauer from France. Iron Lynx clinched second place with Belgian Alessio Picariello and the two Italians Matteo Cressoni and Claudio Schiavoni, followed by GR Racing in third with UK drivers Ben Barker and Michael Wainwright as well as Italy's Riccardo Pera.

Drivers' comments on the race

Dane Cameron (Porsche 963 #5): "Fifth place for our number five Porsche here in Monza – in the end, it was a good day. We made smart tactical decisions during the race and executed them well. We were pretty much at the limit of our current capabilities. It's a pity that towards the end, our chances of a podium finish slipped through our fingers like they did at Spa. Nevertheless, we made good progress with the Porsche 963 and with the development of the team."

André Lotterer (Porsche 963 #6): "The race actually went smoothly for us. I'm pleased with my double stint. It was similar for my teammates. Unfortunately, we had some really bad luck with the yellow phases at the beginning. The field had split into two groups and our group was ahead. When there was an accident, the pit lane closed two seconds before we could get in – we were supposed to pit at exactly that moment. That threw us completely out of the race."

António Félix da Costa (Porsche 963 #38): "We started the race on a strong note with clever strategic decisions, and even held the lead for a while. But then, we encountered software problems and had to make an extra stop to change the steering wheel and reboot everything. That cost us a lap and an additional drive-through penalty because the speed limiter wasn't working properly. Still, we took the opportunity to turn a lot of laps and get to know the Porsche 963 and the race tyres a bit better."

Neel Jani (Porsche 963 #99): "We all saw the Porsche 963 for the first time here in Monza. We started with the baseline setup in the free practice sessions and then tried something out for the race. That seemed to work well because after two or three hours we were in second place and even held the lead at times! We even managed to match the pace of the leading Toyota at one point – so it was a very positive race for us. It's just a shame that a defect occurred. We could've been in the running for fifth or sixth place. That would've been a mega debut for us!"

Mikkel Pedersen (Porsche 911 RSR #77): "Everything simply fell into place today. I'm absolutely thrilled that we're on the top of the podium. My teammates Christian Ried and Julien Andlauer did a fantastic job and the team ran a successful strategy. We're having a fantastic day at Monza!"

Alessio Picariello (Porsche 911 RSR #60): "In all honesty, this success was a bit unexpected – at the beginning, we had some bad luck with our strategy. But then, fortune turned in our favour because we managed to make our pit stop just in time before the safety car period. That put us back in a good position. We were firing on all cylinders and managed to stand our ground in the leading group afterwards. I'm elated to achieve this result at the Iron Lynx team's home race."

Race results

Hypercar class:

1. Conway/Kobayashi/Lopez (UK/J/ARG), Toyota #7, 200 laps
2. Fuoco/Molina/Nielsen (I/E/DK), Ferrari #50, 200 laps
3. Di Resta/Jensen/Vergne (UK/DK/F), Peugeot #93, 200 laps
5. Cameron/Christensen/Makowiecki (USA/DK/F), Porsche 963 #5, 199 laps
7. Estre/Lotterer/Vanthoor (F/D/B), Porsche 963 #6, 199 laps
9. Félix da Costa/Stevens/Ye (P/UK/CHN), Porsche 963 #38, 198 laps
- DNF: Bruni/Jani/Tincknell (I/CH/UK), Porsche 963 #99

GTE Am class:

1. Andlauer/Pedersen/Ried (F/DK/D), Porsche 911 RSR #77, 185 laps
2. Picariello/Cressoni/Schiavoni (B/I/I), Porsche 911 RSR #60, 185 laps
3. Barker/Pera/Wainwright (UK/I/UK), Porsche 911 RSR #86, 184 laps
5. Bovy/Frey/Gatting (B/CH/DK), Porsche 911 RSR #85, 184 laps
8. Cairoli/Castro/Moura de Oliveira (I/DOM/P), Porsche 911 RSR #56, 183 laps

Full results

Qualifying

Porsche Penske Motorsport will tackle round five of the FIA World Endurance Championship WEC from grid positions eight and ten. Porsche's customer team Hertz Team Jota will start Sunday's six-hour race at the Autodromo Nazionale di Monza from P9.

Proton Competition concluded its first qualifying session with the Porsche 963 in twelfth position. In the GTE Am category, the Porsche 911 RSR fielded by the Iron Dames squad clinched pole position in the WEC for the second time this season.

The Porsche Penske Motorsport works team faced difficult conditions during the qualifying for the six-hour race of the FIA World Endurance Championship WEC in Monza. In the 15-minute session, Frédéric Makowiecki clocked a lap time of 1:35.973 minutes at the wheel of the Porsche 963. For the race in Monza, the vehicle forfeited 10 kW of engine power after the most recent adjustment of the so-called Balance of Performance (BoP). At 12:30 pm CEST on Sunday, the Frenchman and his works driver teammates Dane Cameron (USA) and Michael Christensen from Denmark will head into round five of the season from eighth position. Kévin Estre had to accept a lap time of 1:36.497 minutes. The hybrid prototype shared by the Frenchman and his fellow teammates Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and André Lotterer from Germany will line up on the grid in tenth place. The final session on the 5.793-kilometre high-speed circuit in the Royal Park of Monza took place in midsummer conditions with air temperatures of almost 32 degrees Celsius, with the asphalt of the Grand Prix circuit reaching almost

50 degrees Celsius.

As the best customer team with the Porsche 963, Hertz Team Jota starts the race from ninth place. Yifei Ye, the selected driver from Porsche Motorsport Asia-Pacific, set a lap time of 1:36.188 minutes. The racing driver from China shares the cockpit with Englishman William Stevens and Portuguese works driver António Félix da Costa. At its debut in the Hypercar category, Proton Competition will tackle the race on Sunday from P12. The German customer team had only taken delivery of its Porsche 963 before the start of the race weekend. Qualifying driver Harry Tincknell from the UK posted a lap time of 1:36.668 minutes. He joins forces in the cockpit of the No. 99 hybrid race car with 2016 outright Le Mans winner Neel Jani from Switzerland and Italian works driver Gianmaria Bruni.

"This is not the qualifying result we'd hoped for however, our number 5 car has shown us where we're placed at the moment," outlines Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. "The sister car wasn't able to achieve the performance we need. Although the qualifying result is not the most important thing in a six-hour endurance race, it would be nice, of course, if we were further up the field with our cars. We focused on our race setup in today's third free practice. Congratulations to the Hertz Team Jota, whose car is the second-best Porsche 963. Now I'm curious to see how our colleagues get on at the IMSA race in Mosport, Canada."

Pole position for the 911 RSR of Iron Dames

In the GTE Am class, the Iron Dames squad notched up another top result: Sarah Bovy set the fastest time with the Porsche 911 RSR in 1:47.632 minutes. Joining forces with her teammates Michelle Gatting from Denmark and Rahel Frey from Switzerland, the Belgian will take up the race from pole position for the second time so far this WEC season. The last time the trio had achieved this was at the 12 Hours of Sebring in the USA. Proton team owner Christian Ried planted the No. 77 Porsche 911 RSR on the third grid spot in the GTE Am class with a time of 1:48.116 minutes. The German shares the GTE racer with former Porsche Junior Julien Andlauer from France and Mikkel Pedersen from Denmark. GR Racing heads into the six-hour race from fifth place, with Project 1 - AO in tenth and Iron Lynx in twelfth.

Drivers' comments after the qualifying

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 963 #5): "We went out on track early because we wanted to keep the option open to use a fresh set of tyres for qualifying. However, it took longer than expected to set a lap time with the first set. That's why we only stopped to adjust the tyre pressure – we'd hoped for a performance advantage. But that didn't happen as quickly as we'd wanted. Under different circumstances, we could've been just ahead of the Cadillac. Still, it's a long race. Now the ball is in our court because we should be pretty fast over each stint duration."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 963 #6): "That was a tough qualifying. We only used one set of tyres. My lap was

good. Unfortunately, it was only enough for tenth place, just behind the sister car. We noticed in the free practice sessions that we lacked some top speed compared to the other Porsche. We'll now take a look at the reason for this. Still, the Porsche feels good, so that's a positive sign."

Yifei Ye (Porsche 963 #38): "After wrapping up the two practice sessions in second and sixth, I'm a bit disappointed with ninth place in qualifying. We were quite close to the top in free practice. Nevertheless, the actual qualifying went pretty well: the car felt competitive. Ninth place was the best we could do. For the race, our focus is now on strategy, tyre management and pit stops. After Spa and Le Mans, we tried out several promising things and are learning quite a lot. We'll keep at it."

Harry Tincknell (Porsche 963 #99): "We're still getting to know the Porsche 963, we're learning a lot and are trying out different things. Now we've got a feel for the hybrid prototype in qualifying. Compared to the test sessions, we're a bit further behind than we'd hoped. Monza is a test weekend for us, so not every step will automatically mean progress. We're now looking forward to our first race, where we get the chance to drive longer stints. That will definitely give us a lot more experience."

Sarah Bovy (Porsche 911 RSR #85): "I'm over the moon and very proud of the team. When you have a great car and you're on a circuit you like, going for top times is huge fun. But at the end of the day, it came down to being in the right place at the right time – I think in that respect we were the best today. Tomorrow we'll concentrate on our race speed because it's always very competitive in our class. We want to be consistently fast and avoid mistakes. We've learned a lot since the beginning of the season. I'm confident that everyone in the team will give their absolute utmost tomorrow. We're facing a long, hot and tough race. I'm looking forward to this challenge."

Christian Ried (Porsche 911 RSR #77): "That was a gripping qualifying with a red flag at exactly the wrong time – we were in the pits and couldn't do a thing about it. After that it was difficult to find a clear lap in the heavy traffic out there. On my last attempt, I left a gap in front of me and that worked out pretty well. Now let's see what happens. The race is six hours long..."

Qualifying results

Hypercar class:

1. Conway/Kobayashi/Lopez (UK/J/ARG), Toyota #7, 1:35.358 minutes
2. Fuoco/Molina/Nielsen (I/E/DK), Ferrari #50, 1:35.375 minutes
3. Buemi/Hartley/Hirakawa (CH/NZ/J), Toyota #8, 1:35.460 minutes
8. Cameron/Christensen/Makowiecki (USA/DK/F), Porsche 963 #5, 1:35.973 minutes
9. Félix da Costa/Stevens/Ye (P/UK/CHN), Porsche 963 #38, 1:36.188 minutes
10. Estre/Lotterer/Vanthoor (F/D/B), Porsche 963 #6, 1:36.497 minutes
12. Bruni/Jani/Tincknell (I/CH/UK), Porsche 963 #99, 1:36.668 minutes

GTE Am class:

1. Bovy/Frey/Gatting (B/CH/DK), Porsche 911 RSR #85, 1:47.632 minutes

2. Al Harthy/Dinan/Eastwood (OMN/USA/IRL), Aston Martin #25, 1:48.058 minutes
3. Andlauer/Pedersen/Ried (F/DK/D), Porsche 911 RSR #77, 1:48.116 minutes
5. Barker/Pera/Wainwright (UK/I/UK), Porsche 911 RSR #86, 1:48.464 minutes
10. Cairoli/Castro/Moura de Oliveira (I/DOM/P), Porsche 911 RSR #56, 1:49.232 minutes
12. Picariello/Cressoni/Schiavoni (B/I/I), Porsche 911 RSR #60, 1:49.883 minutes

Full results.

Preview

In addition to its two hybrid prototypes and the Porsche 963 from Hertz Team Jota, the LMDh hypercar fielded by the customer team Proton Competition will also compete in Italy for the first time. In the GTE Am class, five 911 RSR will battle for positions, points and prizes.

The FIA World Endurance Championship WEC heads into the second half of the season with round five at the Autodromo Nazionale di Monza. To prepare for the race, Porsche Penske Motorsport spent several days in May testing at the 5.793-kilometre high-speed circuit in the Royal Park with the Porsche 963. The works team will again field two hybrid prototypes in the six-hour race in Italy. As usual, the No. 5 cockpit will be shared by Michael Christensen from Denmark, the Frenchman Frédéric Makowiecki and the American Dane Cameron. The No. 6 sister car also competes with the regular works-driver crew Kévin Estre (France), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and André Lotterer (Germany). The goal is clear: Porsche Penske Motorsport is determined to build on its strong form from the spring with a podium result and earn critical points towards the drivers' and team championship.

"Because of the Le Mans results, we've lost touch in the championship, so we'll concentrate on individual successes for the upcoming races," explains Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. "We're very familiar with the Monza circuit. We tested there with the Porsche 963 and will make the most of the insights we gained there. Monza is the home race of our rival Ferrari. It'd be so good to ruffle the feathers of the red cars there. I'm also looking forward to the first outing of the Proton Competition customer team's Porsche 963."

"We have to put the events of Le Mans behind us. Although we're carefully analysing what happened, we're of course looking ahead: a great spectacle awaits us in Monza," says Urs Kuratle. "Four Porsche 963 will line up on the grid for the Italian race. In addition to our two works cars, the customer-run cars from Hertz Team Jota and, for the first time, Proton Competition will also be competing. I hope we turn the huge potential of the car into a heap of points," adds the Director Factory Motorsport LMDh.

"Our Mannheim-based WEC team only had a few weeks after Le Mans to prepare for Monza," said Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. "The 24-hour race didn't yield the results we would've liked. But it's been a long road since the season opener at Sebring a few months ago to the team we had at Le Mans. We're evolving as a squad and we notice the improvements on the racetrack: we just need to get into a steady rhythm of consistency and reliability to turn that process

into regular top-3 results. We're up against some extremely strong competition but our goal for the FIA WEC race in Monza is clear: we want to bring home another podium result with the Porsche 963."

Premiere: Second privateer team fields a Porsche 963

Like at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, four Porsche 963 racing cars will tackle the Monza race: In addition to the two factory cars and Hertz Team Jota's entry, the German customer team Proton Competition will also campaign one of the hybrid prototypes for the first time. The No. 99 car will be driven by Porsche works driver Gianmaria Bruni from Italy, Englishman Harry Tincknell and Neel Jani. In 2016, the Swiss racer won the 24 Hours of Le Mans with Porsche at the wheel of the 919 Hybrid and was crowned FIA World Endurance champion that same year.

"We only received the car last Thursday and didn't have a chance to do any testing before the Monza race weekend," explains Christian Ried, the team owner of Proton Competition. "We regard our first WEC race as a test. For us, it's primarily about clocking up as many kilometres as possible with the Porsche 963 to collect as much data and insights as possible. In terms of our sporting goals, we're of course limited under these circumstances. I'm positive that with our experienced team and strong driver trio we will make quick progress."

In Italy, Hertz Team Jota puts its trust in Will Stevens from the UK, works driver António Félix da Costa from Portugal and Yifei Ye from China, who is Porsche Motorsport Asia Pacific's selected driver.

The WEC race

The first races in the Royal Park were contested as early as 1922, at that time on an oval circuit with banked turns that have been preserved to this day. The now 5.793-kilometre variant of the Autodromo Nazionale is all about high speed. Since 1950, a total of 72 Formula 1 Grands Prix have been held on the circuit near the northern Italian metropolis of Milan. In 2017, the FIA WEC conducted its official pre-season tests – the so-called prologue – at the Monza "Temple of Speed". In 2021, the FIA WEC ran a six-hour race for the first time on the high-speed track. On that occasion, the works-run Porsche 911 RSR won the GTE Pro class after a close battle.

Porsche customer teams and drivers in the GTE Am category

Five 911 RSR will once again take up the fight for points and trophies in the GTE Am class at Monza. In the GT race car campaigned by the Porsche customer team Iron Dames, Sarah Bovy from Belgium, Michelle Gatting from Denmark and Rahel Frey from Switzerland aim to clinch their first win of the season. In the Iron Lynx brother car, Claudio Schiavoni and Matteo Cressoni join forces with Belgium's Alessio Picariello at their home race. At Dempsey-Proton Racing, team boss Christian Ried from Germany will share the cockpit with Mikkel Pedersen from Denmark and the former Porsche Junior

Julien Andlauer from France. GR Racing again relies on Michael Wainwright from the UK, his compatriot Ben Barker and Riccardo Pera from Italy. Project 1 – AO tackles round five of the WEC season with the drivers Guilherme de Oliveira from Portugal, Efrin Castro from the Dominican Republic and Matteo Cairoli. The Italian has also come up through the ranks of Porsche's junior development initiative and won the Bronze Cup at the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps last weekend.

Drivers' comments ahead of the race

Michael Christensen (Porsche 963 #5): "I can't wait to drive the Porsche 963 in the high-speed temple of Monza. After Le Mans, we're totally focused on achieving a decent result. Hopefully, we can drive a clean race and turn our laps without any incidents. If we can do that, we have a chance at a podium finish. That's our big goal. In terms of performance, we're still lacking compared to some of our rivals, but recently we've been taking steps in the right direction. We want to continue this trend."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 963 #6): "Monza is a cool track, and the masses of Italian fans always make this event great fun. I also really like the atmosphere there. After our less-than-ideal performance at Le Mans, we want to make amends. We're hoping to do this at Monza. The high-speed circuit is known for its exciting slipstream duels – that'll be spectacular. Success here would be enormously important for everyone at Porsche Penske Motorsport."

Will Stevens (Porsche 963 #38): "I'm looking forward to the Monza race – especially because we demonstrated a lot of potential at Le Mans but didn't achieve the result that we felt was within reach. We learned a lot about our Porsche 963 during the many kilometres of racing there. Now we want to put it to good use in Italy and hopefully convert it into a strong result."

Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 963 #99): "At last, I'm back in the FIA WEC! I'm thrilled to be competing with Proton Competition in the Porsche 963 in the top Hypercar class. It's going to be very interesting because it'll be our maiden outing in the new hybrid prototype. We weren't able to test drive the car beforehand, and we're now going straight into the competition. That's why we mustn't set our expectations too high: our competitors are mostly factory-run squads with many months and countless kilometres of experience. We want to catch up quickly, but we face a steep learning curve. For me as an Italian, it's of course something very special that we're celebrating our debut with the Porsche 963 in Italy of all places!"

Overview of teams and drivers

Hypercar class (Porsche 963):

Porsche Penske Motorsport (#5): Dane Cameron (USA), Michael Christensen (DK), Frédéric Makowiecki (F)

Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6): Kévin Estre (F), André Lotterer (D), Laurens Vanthoor (B)

Hertz Team Jota (#38): António Félix da Costa (P), William Stevens (UK), Yifei Ye (CHN)

Proton Competition (#99): Gianmaria Bruni (I), Harry Tincknell (UK), Neel Jani (CH)

GTE Am class (Porsche 911 RSR):

Project1 – AO (#56): Matteo Cairoli (I), Guilherme de Oliveira (P), Efrin Castro (DOM)

Iron Lynx (#60): Claudio Schiavoni (I), Matteo Cressoni (I), Alessio Picariello (B)

Dempsey-Proton Racing (#77): Christian Ried (D), Mikkel Pedersen (DK), Julien Andlauer (F)

Iron Dames (#85): Sarah Bovy (B), Michelle Gatting (DK), Rahel Frey (CH)

GR Racing (#86): Michael Wainwright (UK), Riccardo Pera (I), Ben Barker (UK)

The schedule

Friday, 7 July

11:30 am – 1:00 pm: Free practice 1

4:40 pm – 6:10 pm: Free practice 2

Saturday, 8 July

10:45 am – 11:45 am: Free practice 3

2:40 pm – 2:55 pm: Qualifying GTE

3:30 pm – 3:45 pm: Qualifying Hypercar

Sunday, 9 July

12:30 pm – 6:30 pm: Race

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Video

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