

Porsche claims sensational Bathurst victory

19/02/2024 Matt Campbell helps power 992 GT3R to victory as Manthey EMA win dramatic Repco Bathurst 12 Hour endurance race at Mount Panorama.

Porsche has powered to their second victory in the Repco Bathurst 12 Hour, Australia's international endurance race.

Driving a Porsche 992 GT3R, Manthey EMA Motorsport and drivers Matt Campbell, Ayhancan Guven and Laurens Vanthoor powered their bright 'Grello' entry to victory by just 2.6 seconds following 12 Hours of grueling competition at Mount Panorama.

Their win is the second for Porsche at the annual Bathurst endurance classic in 2019, a race that also saw Campbell part of the driving squad.

Campbell's second Bathurst victory came just two weeks after his success at the Daytona 24 Hour classic in Florida, driving the Porsche 963 for the factory Porshe Penske Motorsport team.

First-time success

Debut driver Guven becomes the first driver since 2020 to win on his first Bathurst start, while Vanthoor finally broke through for a Bathurst 12-hour win since first tackling the race in 2014. It was also a win on debut for the 992-Generation GT3R which had not raced in Australia prior to the 2024 race.

The Pro-Am class entry of Yasser Shahin, Allesio Picariello and Harry King claimed victory in their class, earning Manthey EMA and Porsche success in the race's two top categories.

It was the first Bathurst 12 Hour start for King and Picariello, while Shahin claimed his first Bathurst win having raced for EMA Motorsport in GT World Challenge Australia last year.

Driving the previous-generation 991.2 GT3R, the Shell V-Power supported Manthey EMA entry finished just one lap behind the outright winners after a race-long battle with key rivals in the Pro-Am category, that battle also finalized in the final thirty minutes of the race.

The pathway to success for Manthey EMA was not easy. After a bright, sunny start to the day, heavy rain and storms appeared mid-way through the race.

Persistent rain made the conditions extremely challenging for much of the second half.

A drive-through penalty was the only glitch for the winners as Campbell, Guven and Vanthoor combined to lead 195 of the 275 completed race laps – a Bathurst 12 Hour record.

The team led much of the final third of the race and having emerged from their final pit stop in the race lead. They then had to survive a late-race restart following a Safety Car intervention in order to win.

Campbell judged the restart to perfection and fended off three-time winner Jules Gounon to ultimately claim victory.

Behind the winners, a tight battle emerged for second through sixth position with the Phantom Global Racing Porsche impressing on their Bathurst 12 Hour debut.

Former Carrera Cup Australia champion Jaxon Evans shared the driving duties with Swedish ace Joel Eriksson and reigning Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup Champion Bastian Buus. They qualified outside the top 10 but gradually worked their way into contention throughout the race thanks to their consistent performance.

With Evans behind the wheel in the intense final stanza, he attempted a move for second on Gounon at The Chase.

Evans attempted to grab second place from Gounon during the finals laps of the race. In a battle that lasted the next several kilometres, Evans was forced wide and was ultimately passed by Christopher Haase – the Porsche having to settle for fourth position in what remains an incredible Bathurst debut for the China-based team.

Porsche's Bathurst success was their second major endurance racing victory at Mount Panorama.

It was also the fourth time a local team from the highly competitive Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia had succeeded at Bathurst.

EMA Motorsport play a large role in their partnership with the iconic Manthey squad, last year claiming the DTM title in Germany.

EMA Motorsport won the Carrera Cup round at Mount Panorama last October, with Harry King driving.

Previous Porsche successes have included Earl Bamber Motorsport winning outright in 2019, Scott Taylor Motorsport / ASM winning Class C in 2022 and McElrea Racing finishing second outright and winning the Pro-Am class for Porsche in 2017.

Much of the Porsche contingent, including winners Campbell and Vanthoor, will now head to the opening round of the FIA World Endurance Championship in Qatar, which begins this weekend with the pre-season prologue event.

Campbell will contest the full World Championship with the factory Porsche Penske Motorsport team, including the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

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