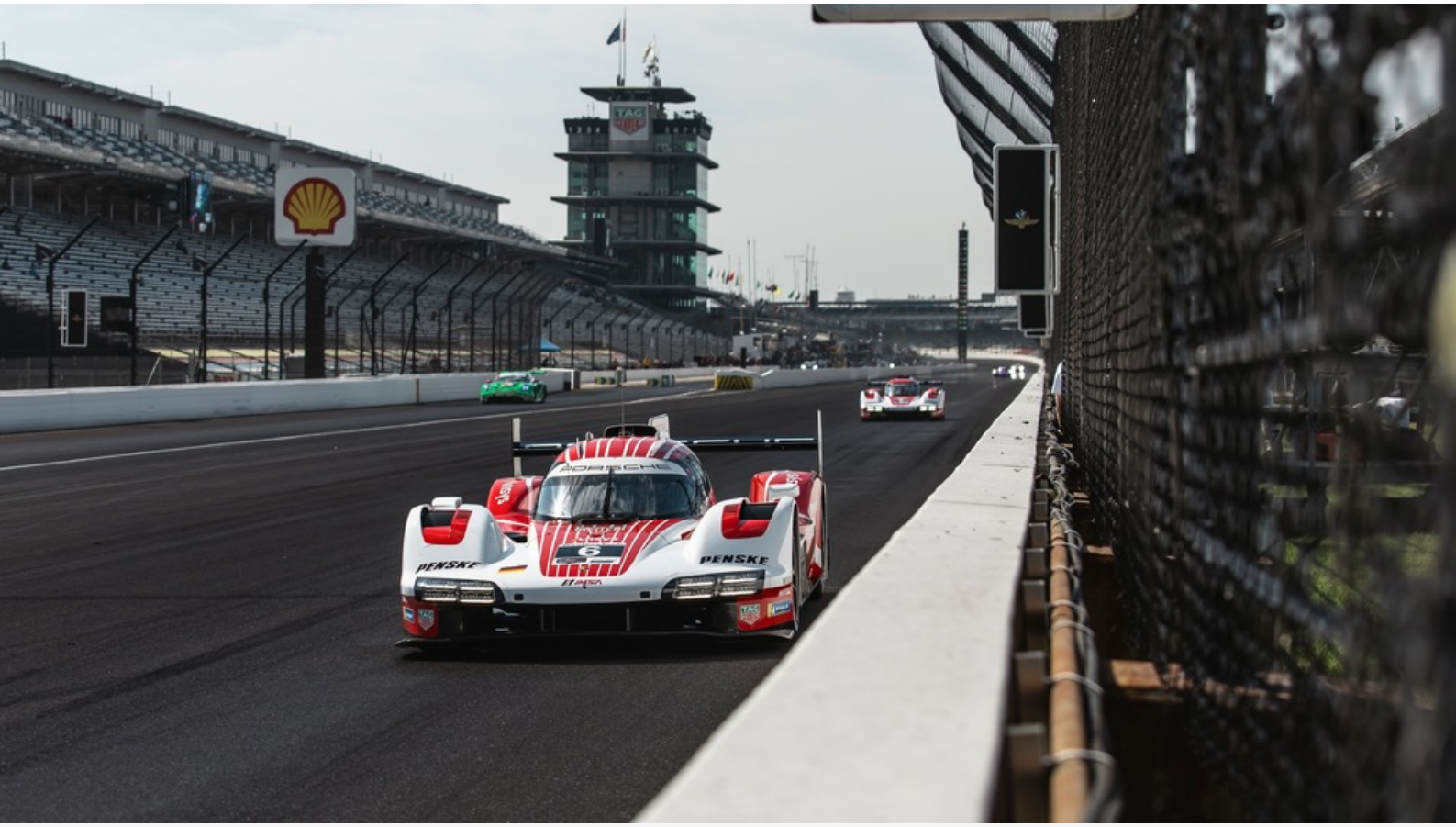


Best Porsche 963 tackles the penultimate 2024 IMSA race from P3

22/09/2024 The No. 6 Porsche 963 will tackle the endurance event in Indianapolis from the second row. Frenchman Mathieu Jaminet secured the third grid spot at the wheel of the hybrid prototype that recently won the Road America race.

Felipe Nasr from Brazil planted the sister car fielded by the Porsche Penske Motorsport works team on P7. The identical Porsche 963 racers campaigned by the customer teams Proton Competition and JDC-Miller MotorSports will head into the penultimate race of this year's IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship from positions nine and eleven. In the GTD Pro class, former Porsche Junior Laurin Heinrich from Germany set the best time in AO Racing's Porsche 911 GT3 R. However, the team lost pole position shortly afterwards due to the discovery that the ground clearance was too low during the technical inspection.

The qualifying

In air temperatures of around 32 degrees Celsius and slightly cloudy skies, the Porsche works drivers first cautiously brought the Michelin tyres into the ideal operating window. Then, from lap four, Jaminet and Nasr attempted their flying laps at the wheel of their Porsche 963 cars.The Frenchman improved over the next four laps, setting the third-quickest time in 1:14.848 minutes. The same progress evaded his Porsche colleague Nasr, who currently leads the drivers' championship with his American teammate Dane Cameron. The Brazilian allowed his tyres in his No. 7 car to cool down before making a final attempt. However, his last hot lap also failed to produce a better time.

“The qualifying result doesn't quite match our expectations, but it's no big deal,” explains Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. “The time gaps in the top GTP class are tiny. The competition is close and nail-biting. I'm sure that we've found a good setup for the long six-hour race. I'm feeling confident about Sunday. It's supposed to be a bit cooler, which will certainly favour us. Our grid position is okay. Let's see what we can achieve with it on race day.”

“The qualifying session was fascinating. The gaps between the fastest cars were super close. Just half a second separated the top eight,” says Jonathan Diuguid. The Managing Director of Porsche Penske Motorsport adds: “Mathieu and Felipe did a good job. The grid spot in a 6-hour race isn't so important. Our starting position is fine. We expect another top result in the race.”

At the midway mark of the session, works driver Gianmaria Bruni from Italy was in fourth place in Proton Competition's Porsche 963. However, he was unable to maintain this position and ultimately qualified ninth. Dutchman Tijmen van der Helm could not match the pace of the fastest and wrapped up the session in P11.

GT classes: “Rexy” Porsche 911 GT3 R loses pole position

In the GTD Pro category, Laurin Heinrich from Germany again demonstrated his determination to claim the title. The former Porsche Junior turned his fastest qualifying lap after just six minutes, which propelled him to the top of the timesheets. His best time of 1:23.150 minutes remained the same until the end of the session. However, his pole position was annulled. During the post-qualifying technical inspection, the No. 77 car was found to have too little ground clearance. In the race, Heinrich will share AO Racing's dinosaur-liveried “Rexy” Porsche 911 GT3 R with works driver Michael Christensen from Denmark. In the GTD category, the identical ca. 416 kW (565 PS) 911 racing cars fielded by the customer teams Kellymoss with Riley, MDK Motorsports, Wright Motorsports and Andretti will take on the competition from positions eleven, twelve, 15 and 20 respectively.

Round ten of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway gets underway on Sunday, 22 September at 11:40 am local time (17:40 pm CEST). Outside the USA and Canada, the entire six-hour race will be broadcast live in a free stream on imsa.tv.

Drivers' qualifying quotes

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 963 #6): "Third place is not bad at all. Our car felt great in qualifying. The setup was virtually perfect. It was super close, but the Cadillac was out of reach today. P2 might have been possible for me, but that's about all. I'm pleased with how the weekend has gone so far. Next comes race day: I'm confident that we're well placed for the six-hour event. We aim to advance from third to the very front."

Felipe Nasr (Porsche 963 #7): "Things didn't go as smoothly for us. During the second free practice, we'd worked out an excellent setup for qualifying. But when things got serious, the temperatures suddenly spiked higher than expected and the car dropped out of the ideal operating window. Now we're starting from seventh place. I anticipate that we'll catch up in the race and score a bunch of points for the championship."

Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 963 #5): "That was an interesting qualifying session. Beforehand, we tried to optimise the system settings in our Porsche 963. Unfortunately, that backfired. We'll now take another close look at it and find out what we need to change for the race. I'm really looking forward to competing over the longer distance on this time-honoured track."

Tijmen van der Helm (Porsche 963 #85): "We simply needed test days. Our lack of experience will be obvious in Indianapolis. We're a little behind the competition, so we need to make the most of it. I hope we're closer in the race. Let's see if we can achieve something over the six-hour distance."

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 911 GT3 R #77): "Unfortunately, the excitement after my first pole position in the IMSA series didn't last long. I planted our car on pole but then it failed the technical inspection. This means that we're relegated to start the race from the very back of the grid. Luckily, the race is six hours long. We have plenty of time to work our way up the order to where we belong – at the top. I don't blame my team in the slightest. I'm still really looking forward to the upcoming race."

Qualifying result

GTP class:
1. Van der Zande/Bourdais (NL/F), Cadillac #01, 1:14.592 minutes
2. J. Taylor/Deletraz (USA/CH), Acura #40, 1:14.817 minutes
3. Tandy/Jaminet (UK/F), Porsche 963 #6, 1:14.848 minutes
7. Cameron/Nasr (USA/BR), Porsche 963 #7, 1:15.083 minutes
9. Bruni/Viscaal/Picariello (I/NL/B), Porsche 963 #5, 1:15.343 minutes
11. Van der Helm/Westbrook/Hanson (NL/UK/UK), Porsche 963 #85, 1:15.767 minutes

GTD-Pro class:
1. Milner/Catsburg (USA/NL), Corvette #4, 1:23.209 minutes

2. Tincknell/Rockenfeller (UK/D), Ford #64, 1:23.245 minutes
3. Snow/Verhagen/Sellers (USA/USA/USA), BMW #1, 1:23.261 minutes
DQ. Heinrich/Christensen (D/DK), Porsche 911 GT3 R #77, 1:23.150 minutes

GTD class:
1. Grenier/Koch/Skeen (CDN/USA/USA), Mercedes-AMG #32, 1:23.537 minutes
2. Barker/Levorato/Lewis (UK/I/USA), Ford #55, 1:23.799 minutes
3. Foley/Gallagher/Walker (USA/USA/USA), BMW #96, 1:23.948 minutes
11. Pedersen/van Berlo/Dickinson (USA/NL/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #90, 1:24.595 minutes
12. Fjordbach/Li/Leitch (DK/CHN/NZ), Porsche 911 GT3 R #86, 1:24.660 minutes
15. Adelson/Skeer/Heylen (USA/USA/B), Porsche 911 GT3 R #120, 1:24.796 minutes
20. Andretti/Chaves/Hargrove (USA/USA/CDN), Porsche 911 GT3 R #43, 1:25.427 minutes

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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