

Two Porsche 911 GT3 R compete at Le Mans in historic livery from 1951

04/06/2026 The Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG, together with the Manthey customer team, is aiming for its third consecutive class victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The 94th edition of the endurance classic takes place on 13/14 June at the Circuit des 24 Heures in northwestern France. Manthey will field two Porsche 911 GT3 R cars in the LMGT3 class. In 2026, the two 911 will compete in silver livery to mark "75 Years of Porsche Motorsport".

The livery of the two race cars from Weissach is based on the design of the 1951 Porsche 356 SL Coupé. That year, the two Frenchmen Auguste Veuillet and Edmond Mouche secured a class victory in Porsche's very first appearance at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. To date, race cars from the Zuffenhausen-based sports car manufacturer have achieved a total of 19 overall victories and 112 class wins. For the 76th consecutive year, at least one Porsche will be on the starting grid of the world's largest endurance race.

"We are not only the record holders for overall and class victories, but also the only manufacturer to have had at least one car on the starting grid at Le Mans without interruption since 1951," says Thomas

Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. “This statistic makes us very proud. It underscores just how much Porsche relies on motorsport as a development platform. The internally ventilated disc brakes, the PDK dual-clutch transmission which is now indispensable and the 800-volt high-voltage technology are just three examples of this. We have brought these innovations from Weissach to production readiness through racing engagements, including at Le Mans. They are thus ‘raceborn’ in the truest sense of the word.”

The first class victory at Le Mans

The year 1951: Following initial motorsport engagements, such as city races or the Midnight Sun Rally with road-going versions of the 356, the next step was onto the big international stage. With a 356 SL, Porsche made its debut at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Internally, the vehicle was designated “Type 514 Porsche Sport for Le Mans 1951.” The journey to and from the Sarthe circuit was made by road at the time, an eleven-hour drive on country roads starting in Zuffenhausen.

On June 23, 1951, the French drivers Auguste Veuillet and Edmond Mouche started the 24-hour race in their silver 356. It bore the chassis number 356/2-063. The road to the first class victory proved to be a long one, as two of the three competition and practice cars had already been damaged in accidents by the time the race began. All hope rested on the remaining lightweight car with its air-cooled 46-horsepower four-cylinder boxer engine displacing 1,086 cubic centimeters. At Le Mans, the 356 SL impressed with its reliability, efficiency, and precision. On lap 158, the car set its fastest lap time of 5:44.7 minutes. The top speed of the 635-kilogram vehicle was 160 km/h. When the checkered flag waved, Veuillet/Mouche had secured victory in their class as well as 20th place overall. In total, they covered 2,840.65 kilometers at an average speed of 118.36 km/h.

Customer racing is a core competence of Porsche Motorsport

Two Porsche race cars will compete in the 94th edition of the 24 Hours of Le Mans on 13/14 June. The Manthey customer team will field two Porsche 911 GT3 R cars in the LMGT3 class. The two 911 will take to the track in silver, a tribute to the silver-colored 1951 Porsche Coupé. The car number 91 will be driven by, among others, works driver Ayhancan Güven from Turkey, while his Porsche colleague Richard Lietz will drive the sister car with number 92.

For many years, the brand has been among the manufacturers with the most customer vehicles in racing. The current portfolio includes the Porsche 911 GT3 R, the 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport, the 911 Cup, and the 911 GT3 Cup with Rally GT Kit. Added to these are the Porsche 99X Electric and the 963, both of which are also fielded by the factory.

The Porsche history at Le Mans

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