

AO Racing Porsche maintains points lead with Canadian Podium

15/07/2024 AO Racing charged to a third-place finish in the Grand Prix at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park on Sunday. The result secured the No. 77 Porsche 911 GT3 R, affectionately known as “Rexy”, the GTD Pro class Team points lead. Full season pilots Laurin Heinrich (Germany) and Seb Priaulx (United Kingdom) maintain their lead in the Drivers' standings in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship while Porsche also holds the distinction of being at the top of the Manufacturer standings with four races remaining. The podium was the fourth for the Chicago-area based race team in the first six races of the season. A second Porsche customer team, High Class Racing, also captured a top 10 finish in the pro/am style GTD class with the No. 86 Porsche 911 GT3 R racer. On Saturday, RS1 became the second team to win this season in the Michelin Pilot Challenge with the Porsche 718 GT4 RS Clubsport.

Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada. Porsche customer team AO Racing finished in third place at the Grand Prix of Canadian Tire Motorsport Park on Sunday, July 14. The finish was the fourth podium in the first six rounds of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship's GTD Pro class season for the team based outside of Chicago, Illinois. With four races remaining for the year, the result maintains the

position of the No. 77 Porsche 911 GT3 R, affectionately known as “Rexy”, at the top of the class points standings for Team and Drivers. The season-long performance of AO also keeps Porsche at the top of the point standings for GTD Pro Manufacturers. In the GTD class of the same Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (CTMP) race, fellow Porsche privateer High Class Racing earned a 10th-place result. The fast and traditional road course north of Toronto in Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada also proved a strong venue for GT4-style Porsche race cars as RS1 earned the sports car manufacturer its second race win of the year in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge on Saturday, July 13.

The Race

A sharp pit strategy and pinpoint exactness behind the wheel have been tools the PJ Hyett-owned and Gunnar Jeanette-managed AO operation has focused on in the 2024 race season. The result has been two race wins (WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca and Detroit) and the lead in the point standings since round three of 10 race season. The two-hour and 40-minute race on the fast Canadian Tire Motorsport Park circuit was no exception to the team's approach. While starting eighth in the 10 car GTD Pro class for GT3-spec race machines, the green dinosaur liveried Porsche smoothly cut its way to the front first with 2021 Porsche Carrera Cup North America champion Priaulx behind the wheel and then former Porsche Junior Heinrich bringing the car to the checkered flag. For the final stage of the race, Heinrich was in a four-place battle for the win with the Corvette Z06 GT3.R team cars ahead in first and second and the Ford Mustang GT3 pressing hard from behind. They would finish just that way as the checkered flag fell bringing to a close the only WeatherTech Championship race outside of the United States.

Meanwhile, the GTD class – using cars identical to those of the GTD Pro category but without an all-professional driver lineup – battled for position. Porsche privateer High Class Racing – competing in relationship with MDK Motorsports – finished 10th in class. With a team and driver pairing in only its first season of IMSA, the No. 86 Porsche 911 GT3 R continues to gain experience and results. Andrea Fjordbach (Denmark) and Kerong Li (China) now hold 11th in the Drivers' championship for GTD class.

Michelin Pilot Challenge

The two-hour IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge race for GT4-style race cars was held on Saturday, July 13 and it was RS1 that scored the second win of the season for the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport. Starting third on the 34-car grid, Trent Hindman (Ocean Township, New Jersey) and Stevan McAleer (Scotland) piloted the No. 28 to an impressive victory of with a 2.5-second gap over the van der Steur Racing Aston Martin in second place. RS1 is now third in the GS class Team standings. Porsche is second in the Manufacturer ranking with four races remaining in the season.

Closely based on the road-going Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS, the motorsport-variant of the two-seat sports car also won the season-opening race of the year at Daytona International Speedway. Porsche one-make racing veterans Riley Dickinson, Michael McCarthy and Brady Golan won in their first career

start driving for Kellymoss with Riley. The Dickinson-McCarthy combination finished 14th in Saturday's race. Kellymoss with Riley ranks sixth in Team points.

The IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, as well as the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge and Porsche Carrera Cup North America, will next race at "America's National Park of Speed", Road America. The Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin track hosts the three IMSA race series August 1 – 3.

Laurin Heinrich, Driver, No. 77 AO Racing Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"Obviously, really happy with our podium here in Canada. We didn't expect this. This is not a track that really suits us. But we just executed the race really well. We didn't make any mistakes. Seb had a great start and I think that was key. At this track, overtaking is super difficult, so we are always trying to get track position. That was important with the start, and we gained with our pit stops. At the end, we could hold it. We got another podium for Rexy and extended our lead which was our goal. Now we are going to have a four-race sprint to the end of the season."

Seb Priaulx, Driver, No. 77 AO Racing Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"For me, I felt like I did a pretty good start. I passed a couple cars which is not easy here. I am really happy with how the whole end of the race went. I didn't get a whole lot of time in the car, but I am happy with where I finished in my part of the stint. Laurin got in and did just an amazing job. I am really proud of the team. This was a championship-winning type of day."

GTD-Pro class:
1. Garcia/Sims (Spain/UK), Corvette No. 3, 113 laps

2. Milner/Catsburg (USA/Netherlands), Corvette No. 4, +0.408 seconds

3. Heinrich/Priaulx (Denmark/UK), Porsche 911 GT3 R No. 77, +1.064 seconds

4. Tincknell/Rockenfeller (UK/Germany), Ford Mustang GT3 No. 64, +1.502

5. Gunn/Farnbacher (UK/Germany), Aston Martin No. 23, - 1 lap

GTD class:
1. De Angelis/Pumpelly (Canada/USA), Aston Martin No. 27, 112 laps

2. Ward/Ellis (USA/UK), Mercedes-AMG No. 57, +5.06 seconds

3. Iribe/Schandorff (USA/Denmark), McLaren 720S GT3 EVO No. 70, +5.450
10. Li/Fjordbach (China/Denmark), Porsche 911 GT3 R No. 86, - 1 lap

Full unofficial results and championship standings can be found at: https://imsa.results.alkamelcloud.com/?season=24_2024&evvent=13_Canadian+Tire+Motorsport+Park .

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