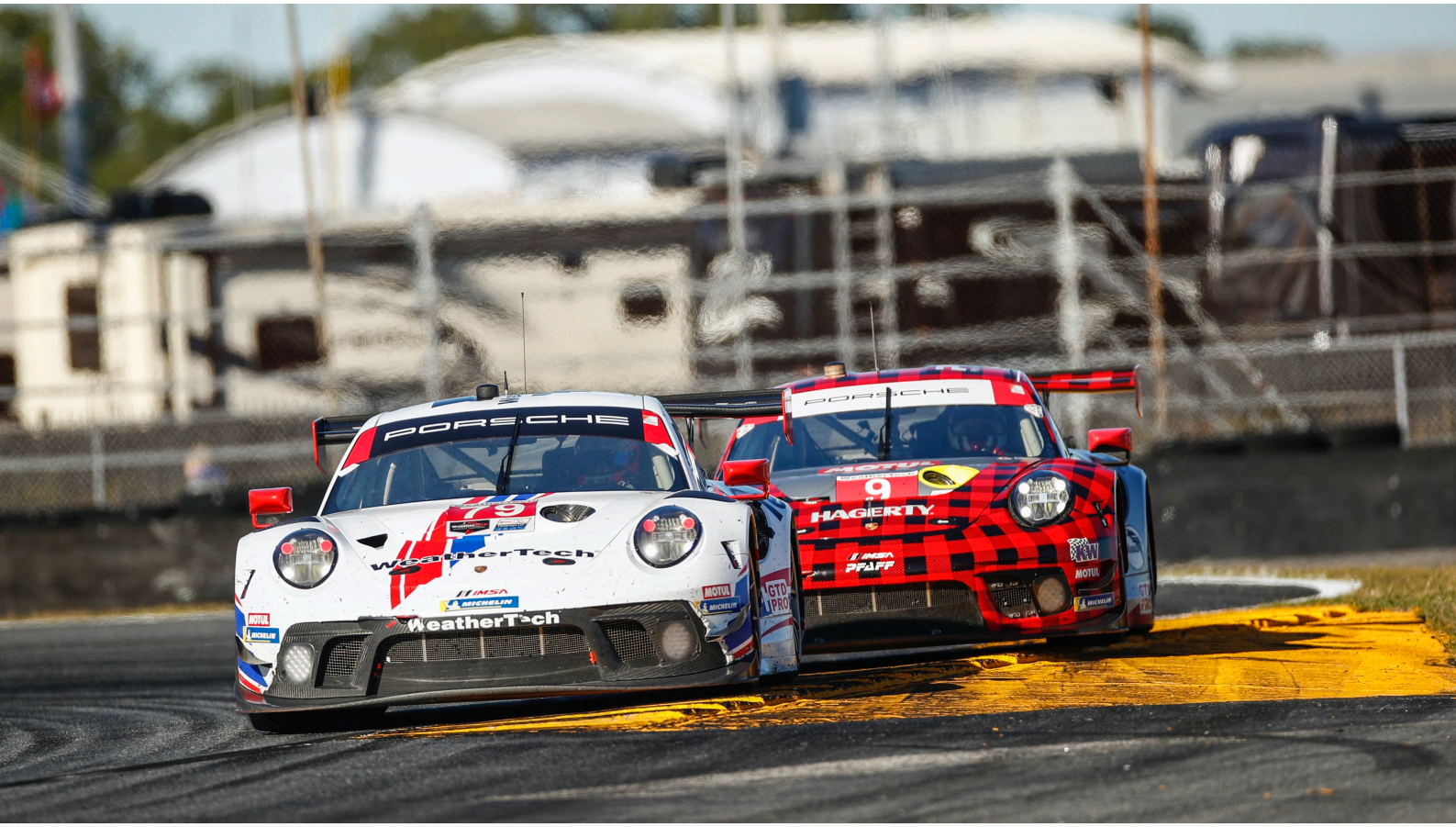


Porsche 911 GT3 R tackles Daytona 24 Hours from first grid row

24/01/2022 Porsche customer teams have secured strong starting positions in the qualifying race for the 24 Hours of Daytona.

Qualifying race

The 100-minute session run as part of the so-called “Roar Before the 24” on Sunday determined the grid spots for the season-opening round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. In the new GTD-Pro class, the Porsche 911 GT3 R shared by drivers Julien Andlauer from France and Alessio Picariello from Belgium claimed second place. Felipe Nasr (Brazil) and Mathieu Jaminet (France) planted the identical model fielded by Pfaff Motorsports on third. In the GTD category, American Ryan Hardwick and Belgium's Jan Heylen were the fastest Porsche drivers, taking third place at the wheel of Wright Motorsports' 911. The 60th running of the endurance classic in Florida takes off next Saturday, 29 January, at 1.40pm local time (7.40pm CET)

The qualifying race at Daytona marked a premiere for the North American championship and Porsche's successful customer squads. For the first time, the competition adopted the new IMSA classification structure. The former GTLM category, in which the Porsche 911 RSR has harvested exceptional successes in recent years, has been replaced by the new GTD-Pro class. This category is reserved for GT3 vehicles built to FIA GT3 technical regulations – which includes the Porsche 911 GT3 R. In this class, only professional racing drivers are eligible to share a car. The GTD class regulations, however, remain unchanged: at each race, the car must be shared by at least one amateur driver – and two at the 24 Hours of Daytona.

For the 100-minute qualifying race, only two drivers were required per vehicle. In sunny and cool conditions in Florida, two 911 GT3 R dominated the first half of the race at the front of the GTD-Pro field. In the No. 9 car, Mathieu Jaminet beat Alexandre Imperatori at the wheel of his pole-setting KCMG car in the first lap. The pair then commanded the two front spots until the scheduled pit stops at the halfway mark. While everything ran like clockwork for the Pfaff Motorsports squad, for the customer team from Asia, the petrol flowed too slowly into the tank and, as a result, KCMG lost about a minute. Ultimately, Patrick Pilet from France finished in tenth place. Meanwhile, in the final 30 minutes, Alessio Picariello battled for the lead but had to relinquish the top spot to the eventual winner, Lamborghini. WeatherTech Racing's Porsche 911 GT3 R finished in second place, ahead of the 500+ PS 911 campaigned by Pfaff Motorsports.

Catch-up in the GTD category

In the GTD category, Jan Heylen launched a strong charge through the field at the wheel of the Wright Motorsports entry. At half-time, the Belgian had taken the wheel from his teammate Ryan Hardwick (USA) and worked his way up the order to third place. In the race without a single caution phase, the 911 GT3 R racers fielded by Hardpoint, GMG Racing and TGM finished on positions 14, 15 and 19.

"All in all, this was a very successful start. The double podium result in the GTD-Pro class and the podium spot in the GTD category create a very positive mood within the Porsche family," concludes Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. "Most of the driver pairings and their teams met for the first time at this Daytona event. So far everything has gone really smoothly, the teamwork is exemplary. It's a great basis for the coming week when it really counts."

Drivers' comments on the qualifying race

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 911 GT3 R #79): "We stormed from P13 to second – not bad! It was so much fun. The car's balance was great in the cool conditions. Still, as great as this result is, it doesn't really mean much. What's more important is how we're placed next weekend. That's when we go for the big trophies."

Felipe Nasr (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "It was a fantastic experience for me because it's my first race

outing in the Porsche 911 GT3 R. Mathieu did a great job and put us in first place. It immediately became clear: our No. 9 car is superbly balanced and has what it takes to compete at the top. It was also important for me to familiarise myself with the procedures. Things like driver changes at pit stops can be practised often and well, but they have to flow flawlessly when it matters most. It worked brilliantly today, and that makes me very happy."

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #2): "During the refuelling pit stop, the petrol didn't flow as planned and that cost us a lot of time. Still, I'm glad it happened in the qualifying race. Imagine if something like that happened in the 24-hour race. So with that in mind, I'm almost happy that this problem cropped up today. Otherwise, our car ran very well. We were fast and consistent throughout the test week, so we're in high spirits."

Jan Heylen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16): "While third place looks good, I'm not at all sure if this reflects the true picture. My charge through the field seemed too easy. Sure, some colleagues didn't go all-out. But okay, I guess it's not yet serious. We got a clean run with a lot of overtaking – it was fun."

Qualifying race result

Result GTD-Pro class
1. Caldarelli/Bortolotti (I/A), Lamborghini Huracan GT3, 56 laps
2. Andlauer/Picariello (F/B), Porsche 911 GT3 R #79, 56 laps
3. Jaminet/Nasr (F/BR), Porsche 911 GT3 R #9, 56 laps
10. Imperatori/Pilet (CH/F), Porsche 911 GT3 R #2, 55 laps

Result GTD class
1. Auer/Ward (A/USA), Mercedes-AMG GT3, 55 laps
2. Holten/Miller (USA/USA), McLaren 720S GT3, 55 laps
3. Hardwick/Heylen (USA/B), Porsche 911 GT3 R #16, 55 laps
14. Wilson/Boulle (GB/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #88, 55 laps
15. Washington/Bachler (USA/A), Porsche 911 GT3 R #34, 55 laps
19. Giovanis/Trinkler (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #64, 45 laps

Full results and championship standings at imsa.alkamelsystems.com.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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