

Charlie Collins impresses at the PESC race in Magny-Cours

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19/02/2023 Round two of the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup was again dominated by the VRS Coanda team: Zac Campbell won the sprint race, with his teammate Charlie Collins clinching victory at the feature race. Laurin Heinrich, the 2022 Porsche Junior, underlined his sim racing talent in the All-Star competition.

Race

Scoring second place in the feature race at the Circuit de Nevers in France, defending champion Diogo C. Pinto has moved into the lead of the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup (PESC). Driving for Team Redline, the Portuguese sim racer crossed the finish line about 6.6 seconds behind Charlie Collins after 20 laps. Earlier in the day, Collins' VRS-Coanda teammate Zac Campbell won the sprint race over half

the distance. A collision in the feature event, however, signalled an early end to the American's race. The esports one-make cup with the digital Porsche 911 GT3 Cup is contested on the iRacing simulation platform. At ten rounds this season, 30 competitors fight for prize money totalling 200,000 USD.

In Magny-Cours, Zac Campbell took up where he left off at the season opener in Hockenheim: on the 4.411-kilometre Formula 1 circuit, the American qualified for P1 with a mere 0.005-second advantage. This earned him crucial points for TAG Heuer Pole Award and the first grid spot for the sprint. Lining up behind him: Britain's Sebastian Job from the Oracle Red Bull Racing Esports squad, title defender Diogo C. Pinto (Team Redline) and Cooper Webster. Driving for Oracle Red Bull Racing Esports, the Australian won the 2022 rookie classification.

Campbell also dominated the sprint race. After ten laps, he beat Webster, Pinto and Job to the flag. Trailing the leading pack were the two Altus Esports sim racers Oscar Mangan from Italy and Jordan Caruso (Australia), as well as Finland's Tuomas Tähtelä and Charlie Collins. The Welshman was trailed over the finish line by his younger brother Bryn. Finishing eighth, however, proved hugely advantageous for him: It meant that he could tackle the feature race from pole position, while sprint race winner Campbell was relegated to P8 on the grid.

When the lights turned green, Charlie Collins immediately catapulted into the lead and attempted to pull clear of the field. Campbell had less luck: a collision in the Adelaide hairpin threw him out of the race. Tähtelä initially settled into second place followed by Job, Pinto and Caruso. Job then launched an attack that saw the Finn drop back to fifth place. Towards the end of the race, a gripping three-way battle for second place unfolded. On the final lap, Pinto made the decisive move and outbraked Job – a tactic that earned him the championship lead. Caruso also got past. Almost at the same time, Webster squeezed past Tähtelä and moved into fifth place. Charlie Collins took the flag as the undisputed winner with an advantage of 6.605 seconds.

Casey Kirwan shines among content creators in the All-Star races

Guest driver Laurin Heinrich again underlined his sim racing talent at round two of the Porsche TAG Heuer Esport Supercup: the Porsche contract driver dominated the qualifying on the Circuit de Nevers in Magny-Cours and went on to win the eleven-lap All-Star sprint race at the wheel of his 911 GT3 Cup. The German crossed the finish line with a comfortable lead of more than three seconds over esports professional Casey Kirwan, Emily "Emree" from Australia, and American Tyson "Quirkitized" Meier.

The grid for the 17-lap All-Stars feature race lined up in the reverse order of the sprint race results. Two other specialists from the world of real racing shared the front grid row: Brazilian Tony Kanaan – 2004 IndyCar champion and 2013 Indy500 winner – started from pole position, with Porsche works driver Laurens Vanthoor lining up next to him. The Belgian fluffed his start and fell far down the field. Heinrich also lost ground when a rival shunted his car into a spin. This handed the lead to Kanaan, while Casey Kirwan launched his charge through the pack. After the second lap, the American had already progressed up the order to sixth. Shortly after, he was running in second place. At the halfway mark,

Kirwan swept past Kanaan to snatch the lead and cross the finish line first with a 12-second advantage. Second place went to Oliver "Basic Ollie" Furnell from the UK ahead of Jaroslav "Jardier" Honzik from the Czech Republic and the Spaniard Xabier "Heikki360ES" Sánchez. After an excursion off the track, Kanaan fought his way back to finish in seventh.

The voters have decided: PESC round 3 will be contested in Long Beach

Fans of the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup have cast their votes on iRacing's social media channels: In two weeks, the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup entourage heads to 'virtual' California. On 4 March, the digital Long Beach Grand Prix Circuit hosts round three of the sim racing one-make cup contested with the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup. The 3.167-kilometre street circuit around the Long Beach Convention Center runs in a clockwise direction and served as a racetrack since 1975. Its unique features include a tight right-hander at the end of the lap and a sweeping start-finish straight along the Pacific coast. Between 1976 and 1983, Formula 1 raced here on a temporary track. Since then, the circuit has hosted the ChampCar and IndyCar Series as well as IMSA races. The Long Beach E-Prix of the FIA Formula E Championship has been held on a shorter 2.131-kilometre version since 2015. The PESC celebrates its debut on this track. The sprint race runs over 13 laps with the feature race contested over twice the distance.

Comments after the race

Charlie Collins (UK/VRS Coanda):"My qualifying was horrible, there's no way around it. Still, I finished the sprint race in eighth place which meant I started the feature race from pole position. On lap one, things turned chaotic behind me after the start. Luckily, I wasn't affected and managed to control the race. Now we're off to the spectacular Long Beach circuit. That'll be exciting!"

Diogo C. Pinto (P/Team Redline): "I was hit with technical issues before the start of today's race. I didn't know if I could even start. Luckily, things worked out. I was very pleased with my qualifying and my sprint race result. I was really lucky in the feature race: at the start, I saw a gap, grabbed it, and gained a lot of positions. My tyres were still in great condition at the end. I had to battle hard for second place – it was definitely a tough but fair move, which earned me second place."

Jordan Caruso (AUS/Altus Esports): "We worked hard as a team and reaped the rewards. I finished third with my teammate Oscar Mangan in the top eight. He put in a huge effort in practice and made great progress. I benefited from this as well. We deserve these results, even if it still sometimes seems a bit weird: one minute everything's going well, and the next minute I suddenly lose a few tenths of a second. I can't really explain it properly right now."

Magny-Cours, sprint race

1. Zac Campbell (USA/VRS Coanda)
2. Cooper Webster (AUS/Oracle Redbull Racing Esports)
3. Diogo C. Pinto (P/Team Redline)
4. Sebastian Job (UK/Oracle Redbull Racing Esports)
5. Oscar Mangan (I/Altus Esports)

Magny-Cours, feature race

1. Charlie Collins (UK/VRS Coanda)
2. Diogo C. Pinto (P/Team Redline)
3. Jordan Caruso (AUS/Altus Esports)
4. Sebastian Job (UK/Oracle Redbull Racing Esports)
5. Cooper Webster (AUS/Oracle Redbull Racing Esports)

Overall standings after the second of 10 rounds

1. Diogo C. Pinto (P/Team Redline), 138 points
2. Charlie Collins (UK/VRS Coanda), 136 points
3. Jordan Caruso (AUS/Altus Esports), 122 points
4. Zac Campbell (USA/VRS Coanda), 100 points
5. Sebastian Job (UK/Oracle Redbull Racing Esports), 87 points

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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