Three Porsche 963 qualify in the top 10 at the Fuji Speedway

14/09/2024 The best Porsche 963 fielded by the Porsche Penske Motorsport works team will tackle the six-hour race at the Fuji Speedway from position five. Kévin Estre was just a quarter of a second off pole position. With Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium and Germany's André Lotterer, the Frenchman heads into the penultimate round leading the standings.

Qualifying

Matt Campbell planted the works team's sister car on eighth. The Australian shares the cockpit of the hybrid prototype with Michael Christensen from Denmark and Frédéric Makowiecki from France. As the best hypercar customer team, Proton Competition wrapped up the qualifying session with P10. As the leader in the LMGT3 classification, Manthey PureRxcing's Porsche heads into the race at the foot of Mount Fujiyama from 14th on the grid. The 911 GT3 R fielded by Manthey EMA set the 15th fastest time.

The qualifying session on the 4.563-kilometre Fuji Speedway was held in warm summer temperatures

of 28 degrees Celsius and asphalt temperatures reaching 39 degrees. Three of the five Porsche 963 contesting the hypercar category wrapped up the 12-minute session in the top ten. Setting the second fastest time, Kévin Estre advanced to the hyperpole session, while his French compatriot Julien Andlauer put in a stellar performance with third place in the hybrid prototype fielded by the Proton Competition customer team. Matt Campbell scored P8 in Porsche Penske Motorsport's No. 5 car, thus progressing into the heat of the top ten.

Both works cars started the hyperpole session with two warm-up laps before making their first bid for pole position. Estre achieved third place, with Campbell in fifth and Andlauer in eighth. After taking time to cool down, they attempted another flying lap shortly before the end of the ten-minute session. Campbell started strongly with the best time in the first sector and a personal best in the second, only to abandon his attempt. The other two drivers were also unable to improve.

Porsche Penske Motorsport concluded both practice sessions on Friday with top results. In the first 90-minute session, the hybrid prototype driven by Estre/Vanthoor/Lotterer clocked the best time. In the second session, Campbell/Christensen/Makowiecki in the sister car turned the second fastest lap. In the third free practice on Saturday morning, the works team settled for positions 14 and 16: unlike many of its rivals, the team had waived the qualifying simulations. In the session, which was shortened to 40 minutes, Hertz Team Jota's No. 38 car driven by Button/Hanson/Rasmussen finished eighth as the best Porsche 963.

"We progressed to the hyperpole with both works cars, which is positive," explains Urs Kuratle, Director of Factory Motorsport LMDh. "We'd expected slightly better results there, but we can still head into the race with a good conscience. Our team has done a solid job and we know where we stand. Still, it'll be tough to challenge Toyota at their home race."

"We're obviously pleased to qualify for the hyperpole with both Porsche 963. It was very close out there: in eighth, Matt Campbell was just three-tenths of a second shy of pole position," states Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director of Porsche Penske Motorsport. "I'm happy with the pace we set over longer distances in the practice sessions and I feel confident about tomorrow. Six hours is a long time. We can fight for the podium places."

The Hertz Team Jota customer squad will tackle the penultimate race of the season on Sunday from P16 with the Porsche 963 shared by Norman Nato (France), Callum Ilott and Will Stevens (both Great Britain). The sister car crewed by Oliver Rasmussen (Denmark), Jenson Button and Phil Hanson (both Great Britain) will start from 17th place.

Manthey's Porsche 911 GT3 R

The 911 GT3 R missed out on advancing into the LMGT3 class hyperpole session on Saturday. The two successful vehicles have to tackle the race in Japan carrying significant extra weight of up to 40 kilograms. Alex Malykhin qualified the Porsche run by the Manthey PureRxcing customer team on P14.

The Englishman shares the leading racing car in the GT3 championship based on the 992-generation 911 with Austrian Klaus Bachler and Joel Sturm from Germany. In the twelve-minute session, Yasser Shahin from Australia set the 15th quickest time. Joining forces with Richard Lietz from Austria and the Dutchman Morris Schuring in the Manthey EMA-Porsche, he is second in the FIA Endurance Trophy for GT3 teams.

The seventh of eight races in this year's FIA WEC gets underway on Sunday, 15th September at 11:00 hrs local time (4:00 am CEST).

TV/Stream

The German free-TV channel Sport1 will air a live broadcast of the six-hour race on Sunday, 15 September, from 4 am (CEST) on its website. The free-TV channel Sport1 and the pay-TV provider Sport1+ offer several features from Fuji over the following week. The Eurosport Group channels will also televise race recaps. The fee-based FIA WEC app offers live timing and a live stream.

Drivers' post-qualifying quotes

Matt Campbell (Porsche 963 #5):"The qualifying turned out to be more difficult than we thought. Our Porsche 963 had the performance, but we didn't pull it together. At least we're starting in the top 10. So far we've had strong long runs in all practice sessions this weekend. I'm confident that this will help us in the race tomorrow."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 963 #6):"The hyperpole session was good, the Porsche 963 felt great – but I didn't manage to get a perfect lap. In such a competitive field, that'll throw you two or three places further back. Still, we have a decent starting position. If Laurens manages to get a strong start, we can be up among the frontrunners after the first stint tomorrow."

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 963 #99):"The qualifying went very well for us with the third fastest time. I saw opportunities where we could be even faster. The car felt completely different in the hyperpole session. Perhaps the warm-up procedure didn't work as well as before. Another lesson learned. Nevertheless, tenth place on the grid is a good starting position."

Qualifying result

Hypercar class:
1. Bamber/Lynn (NZL/UK), Cadillac #2, 1:28.901 minutes
2. Buemi/Hartley/Hirakawa (CH/UK/JPN), Toyota #8, 1:28.942 minutes
3. Vanthoor/Marciello/Wittmann (B/CH/D), BMW #15, 1:29.059 minutes
5. Estre/Lotterer/Vanthoor (F/D/B), Porsche 963 #6, 1:29.152 minutes

8. Campbell/Christensen/Makowiecki (AUS/DK/F), Porsche 963 #5, 1:29.223 minutes
10. Andlauer/Jani/Tincknell (F/CH/UK), Porsche 963 #99, 1:29.589 minutes
16. Ilott/Stevens/Nato (UK/UK/F), Porsche 963 #12, 1:30.072 minutes
17. Hanson/Button/Rasmussen (UK/UK/DK), Porsche 963 #38, 1:30.092 minutes

LMGT3 class:
1. Heriau/Mann/Rovera (F/USA/I), Ferrari #55, 1:40.893 minutes
2. van Romply/Andrade/Eastwood (B/AGO/IRL), Corvette #81, 1:40.975 minutes
3. Caygill/Pino/Sato (UK/RCH/JPN), McLaren #95, 1:41.120 minutes
14. Bachler/Malykhin/Sturm (A/UK/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 1:41.935 minutes
15. Lietz/Shahin/Schuring (A/AUS/NL), Porsche 911 GT3 R #91, 1:41.999 minutes

Full results at fiawec.alkamelsystems.com

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Holger Eckhardt

Spokesperson Motorsports LMDh, GT, Customer Racing
+49 (0) 170 / 911 4982
holger.eckhardt@porsche.de

Image Sublines

Path: Three Porsche 963 qualify in the top 10 at the Fuji Speedway/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Julien Andlauer (F), Neel Jani (CH), Harry Tincknell (UK), Porsche 963, Proton Competition (#99), WEC, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Julien Andlauer in the Porsche 963 (#99)

Path: Three Porsche 963 qualify in the top 10 at the Fuji Speedway/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Oliver Rasmussen (DK), Hertz Team Jota (#38), WEC, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Oliver Rasmussen from Hertz Team Jota (#38)

Path: Three Porsche 963 qualify in the top 10 at the Fuji Speedway/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport, WEC, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Jonathan Diuguid (Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport)

Link Collection

Link to this article
https://newsroom.porsche.com/en/2024/motorsports/porsche-fia-world-endurance-championship-wec-race-7-fuji-37295.html

Media Package
https://pmdb.porsche.de/newsroomzips/3ec6e396-4aec-45d4-8dc4-3c9941a56540.zip

Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Aktiengesellschaft
Porscheplatz 1
70435 Stuttgart