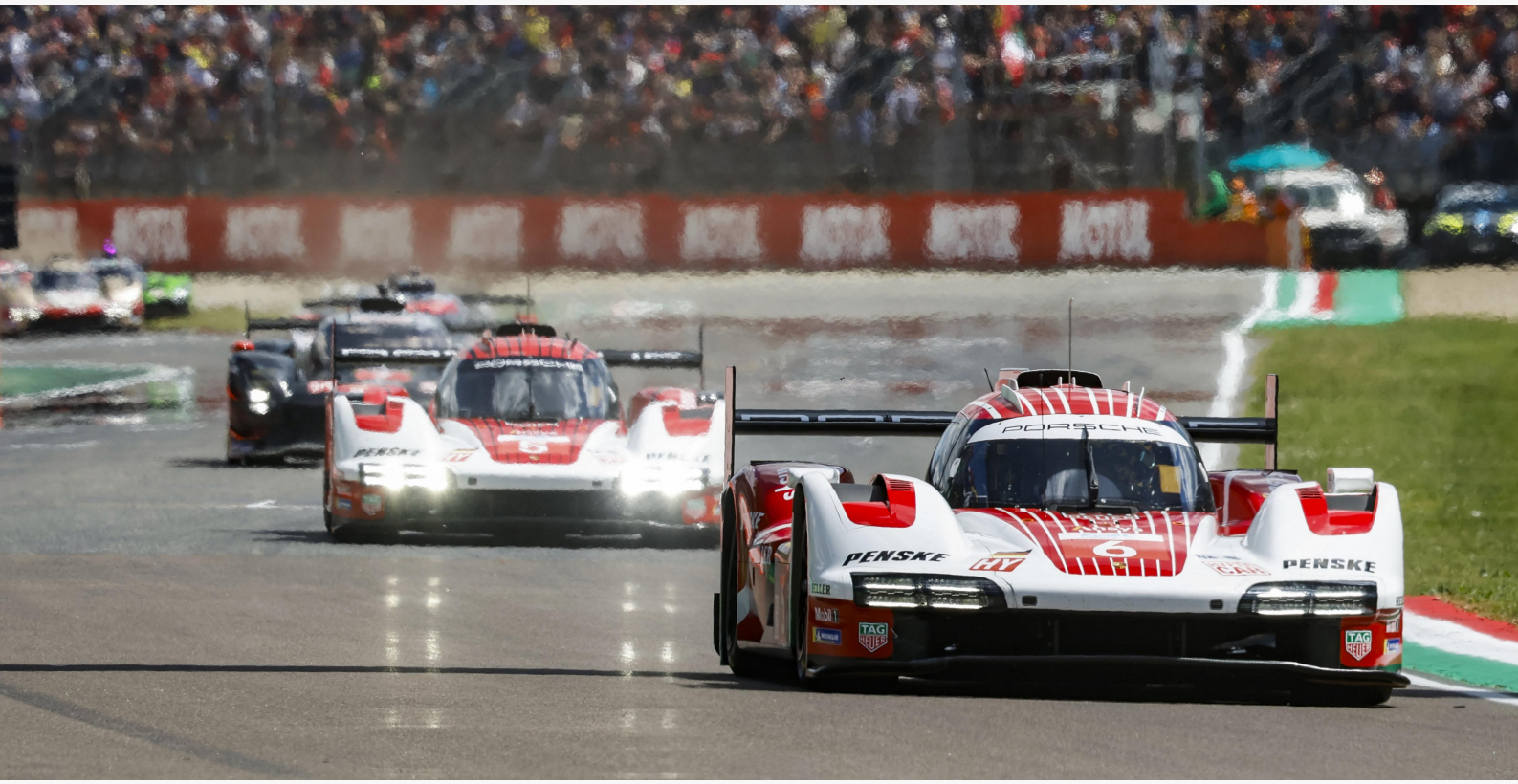


Porsche aims to reclaim the championship lead in Japan

11/09/2024 Porsche Penske Motorsport tackles the upcoming six-hour race in Fuji with a clear objective: Porsche is determined to reclaim the manufacturers' championship lead with a top result at the penultimate round of this year's FIA World Endurance Championship WEC.

Preview

The works team campaigns two Porsche 963 at Fuji Speedway. Three identical vehicles fielded by the Hertz Team Jota and Proton Competition customer squads also take on the competition in the top Hypercar class. The successful Manthey partner team is eager to take another step towards claiming the LMGT3 category title with its two Porsche 911 GT3 R.

This weekend in Fuji, Porsche Penske Motorsport returns to the circuit where the Porsche 963 was most competitive in its 2023 debut year. Last season, Kévin Estre from France, Germany's André Lotterer and Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium led the Japan event for more than half the total distance –

ultimately taking the flag in third place. The works driver trio in the No. 6 car currently leads the FIA WEC drivers' championship. Their Porsche colleagues Matt Campbell (Australia), Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) rank in fifth place. In the manufacturers' world championship, Porsche lies in second place, just eleven points off the leader.

"At the last race in America, we had to relinquish our championship lead. Now we want to switch the order again," says Thomas Laudenbach, outlining his expectations. The Vice President Porsche Motorsport adds: "Last season, our strategy with the Porsche 963 at its first outing in Fuji worked very well. And the racetrack suits us, too. I hope we can repeat that performance this year. We want to return to the podium, ideally back on the top step. I'm particularly looking forward to the avid Japanese fans. They never fail to make the race in Fuji very special."

"You always need to find a compromise with the car setup on this time-honoured Formula 1 circuit at the foot of Mount Fuji," explains Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. "The start-finish straight is almost 1.5 kilometres long. Low drag and a very high top speed are critical there. Other sections of the track require the exact opposite. Some corners, particularly in the second sector, need maximum downforce. Last season, we found a great setup for our two Porsche 963 for these conditions. The insights will help us to get the most out of the cars this year, too."

"The two weeks between the recent race at Austin and the 6 Hours of Fuji will be the tightest of the 2024 FIA WEC," states Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. The two Porsche 963 racing cars and the works team's equipment were loaded onto a plane in Texas immediately after the last race and transported directly to Japan. "This timeline puts additional pressure on the team and drivers. We must make sure we are well-prepared to continue the championship fight. We delivered our strongest performance in Japan in 2023, and we feel confident that our group can perform at a similar level this year. The round in Japan will be a critical event to capture as many points as possible for our ambitions in the overall standings. The competition will be fierce, and we can't wait to get back on track."

The race

Opened in 1966, the 16-turn, 4.563-kilometre Fuji Speedway lies at the foot of Mount Fuji, Japan's highest mountain at 3,776 metres. The snow-capped peak of the volcano, which was made a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2013 and is revered by the Japanese as a sacred natural monument, is often used as the spectacular backdrop in photos taken at the racetrack. The circuit layout features a range of corner radii as well as the longest straight on the World Endurance Championship calendar at 1.475 kilometres in length.

A special highlight of the WEC weekend in Japan is the "Circuit Safari". Shortly before the third Free Practice session on Saturday, all teams will send one of their vehicles onto the track at almost race speed. At the same time, buses will be given access to the racetrack, giving fans a chance to experience the circuit up close. This annual event is a huge hit with spectators, with the bus rides giving them

lasting memories of the impressive pace of the prototypes and GT3 vehicles as well as the racing operations of the FIA World Endurance Championship WEC.

An overview of the Porsche teams

Hypercar (Porsche 963):
Porsche Penske Motorsport #5: Matt Campbell (AUS), Michael Christensen (DK), Frédéric Makowiecki (F)
Porsche Penske Motorsport #6: Kévin Estre (F), André Lotterer (D), Laurens Vanthoor (B)
Hertz Team Jota #12: Will Stevens (UK), Callum Ilott (UK), Norman Nato (F)
Hertz Team Jota #38: Jenson Button (UK), Phil Hanson (UK), Oliver Rasmussen (DK)
Proton Competition #99: Julien Andlauer (F), Neel Jani (CH), Harry Tincknell (UK)

LMGT3 (Porsche 911 GT3 R):
Manthey EMA #91: Yasser Shahin (AUS), Morris Schuring (NL), Richard Lietz (A)
Manthey PureRxcing #92: Alex Malykhin (UK), Joel Sturm (D), Klaus Bachler (A)

TV / Stream

The German free-TV channel Sport1 will air a live broadcast of round seven of the FIA WEC 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.

Meisterschaftsstände FIA WEC

fiawec.alkamelsystems.com

Further comments ahead of the race

Michael Christensen (Porsche 963 #5): "Every year I get excited about the race in Japan because I find the country and the people fascinating. We're coming from the recent race in Austin where we didn't achieve the desired results. Had we not experienced the early setback in Texas, a podium finish would likely have been possible. We now have to put this experience behind us and look ahead. We're keen to rejoin the leaders in Japan and finish on the podium."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 963 #6): "Japan is one of my all-time favourite countries. The culture is incredibly vibrant and the people are extremely nice. Then there's the Fuji racetrack: We did very well there last season and climbed the podium – it was our best race of the WEC season. I'm confident that we'll be

strong again this year. After the difficult world championship race in Austin, we're now determined to turn things around. The main goal is to defend our lead in the drivers' championship and regain the lead in the manufacturers' championship."

Will Stevens (Porsche 963 #12): „I'm really looking forward to getting out to Japan as it's always a great place to visit. We have been coming to Fuji for a few years now in WEC so it's a track a lot of people know well and one I personally enjoy driving. The weather looks pretty mixed during the event so it will be a tricky weekend to make sure we are good to go in all conditions."

Phil Hanson (Porsche 963 #38): "I love racing at Fuji. I've never experienced a boring weekend there, there's always something going on. It's common for the weather conditions to change without warning and that plays a major role. I suspect that'll be the case at the upcoming event as well. I have great memories of racing there. I really like the circuit. As a driver, I feel privileged to compete in Japan. I enjoy the country and find the culture impressive. The fans are wonderful. They create a unique atmosphere. Fuji is one of the big highlights on the calendar for me."

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 963 #99): "Towards the end of the last race in Austin, our Porsche 963 was running very well. We want to build on that after the short break and push further to the front in Fuji. We're familiar with the track and we gained a lot of experience there in the 2023 season. We have the baseline. I think we'll find the key to optimal performance there in time. My teammates and I are really looking forward to the trip to Japan. It's a fascinating country and provides completely new impressions every year."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 GT3 R #91): "I've only ever missed one of the WEC races in Japan so far. The country has a huge automobile industry and a great motorsport tradition. We have often experienced very changeable weather conditions in Fuji, sometimes with torrential rain. I'm expecting a difficult race because we have to load a lot of success ballast in the Porsche 911 GT3 R due to our recent results. Still, we will do our very best. Once again, we have six hours of racing to work as far forward as possible. We're aiming for a top result towards potentially winning the championship."

Klaus Bachler (Porsche 911 GT3 R #92): "We're now heading into the seventh and penultimate race of the season and are currently ranked first in the overall standings. That's fantastic, but it's also a burden – literally! We have to load 40 kilograms of success ballast into our Porsche 911 GT3 R in Japan. Under these conditions, it'll be tricky to fight at the front. However, the last sector in Fuji has a lot of corners, some of which are extremely tight. As a driver, I enjoy that and our car should also be able to cope well with these sections. We want to defend the lead in the overall standings and take another step towards the title."

The schedule (local time, CEST +7)

Friday, 13 September
11:00 – 12:30 hrs: Free practice 1

15:30 – 17:00 hrs: Free practice 2

Saturday, 14 September
10:20 – 11:20 hrs: Free practice 3
14:20 – 14:32 hrs: Qualifying LMGT3
14:40 – 14:50 hrs: Hyperpole LMGT3
15:00 – 15:12 hrs: Qualifying Hypercar
15:20 – 15:30 hrs: Hyperpole Hypercar

Sunday, 15 September
11:00 – 17:00 hrs: Race

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Image Sublines

Path: Porsche aims to reclaim the championship lead in Japan/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Thomas Laudenbach (Director Porsche Motorsport), WEC, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Thomas Laudenbach (Vice President Porsche Motorsport)

Path: Porsche aims to reclaim the championship lead in Japan/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Urs Kuratle (Director Factory LMDh), Jonathan Diuguid (Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport) (l-r), WEC, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Urs Kuratle (Director Factory Motorsport LMDh) and Jonathan Diuguid (Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport) (l-r)

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