

919 Hybrid goes to Le Mans as title defender

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10/06/2016 Porsche enters the world's hardest race, the Le Mans 24-Hours, with the 919 Hybrid as a record holder, title defender and leader in both the manufacturers' and drivers' world championships. A preview.

Public expectations are high ahead of the Le Mans 24-Hour on June 18 and 19. Le Mans is also the third round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). Ahead of the season's highlight, the trio of Romain Dumas (FR), Neel Jani (CH) and Marc Lieb (DE) leads the drivers' standings. The reigning world champions in the sister car, Timo Bernhard (DE), Brendon Hartley (NZ) and Mark Webber (AU), have been unlucky in the first two rounds (accident in Silverstone, puncture in Spa-Francorchamps) and can't wait to catch up. At the classic on La Sarthe, the teams and drivers are rewarded with double points compared to the other eight six-hour races in the championship.

For Porsche it is the third entry in Le Mans after returning to top level motorsport. In 2015, at only the second try, Porsche managed a one-two result. The 919, with its ground-breaking downsizing two-litre V4 turbocharged petrol engine and its two energy recovery systems (brake and exhaust energy), has been significantly developed. It produces a system power of 662 kW and hits the Le Mans roads with an aerodynamic configuration for low drag. On the long straights the 919 frequently reaches top speeds above 320 km/h.

The Porsche drivers in the LMP1 class

The six works drivers have between them participated in the Le Mans race a total of 49 times. Bernhard/Hartley/Webber finished second last year and now drive the futuristic prototype with the number 1. Dumas/Jani/Lieb came fifth in 2015 and share the number 2 Porsche 919 Hybrid. Last year's winning car was in the hands of Earl Bamber (NZ), Nico Hülkenberg (DE) and Nick Tandy (GB).

As the most successful manufacturer in the history of the prestigious long distance classic, Porsche is again represented by a large contingent. In the strongly supported GT classes, a total of seven 911 RSR tackle the world's toughest automobile race: The Porsche Motorsport factory squad fields two 911 RSR with the overall Le Mans winners Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and with five nine-eleven contenders campaigned by customer teams. With the two 919 Hybrid in the LMP1 class, Porsche is represented at Le Mans by total of nine vehicles and 16 works drivers.

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