

Porsche wins GT class and earns WEC points for the Porsche 963 in Imola

20/04/2025 The Porsche customer team Manthey 1st Phorm has won the GT category at the six-hour race of the FIA World Endurance Championship in Imola. After a spirited duel against BMW, Austrian factory driver Richard Lietz and his teammates Ryan Hardwick from the USA and Italian Riccardo Pera came out on top. The two factory Porsche 963 race cars fielded by Porsche Penske Motorsport finished eighth and eleventh in the top Hypercar class. The Iron Dames squad took home their first championship points with Porsche in the LMGT3 category with eighth place.

Under cloudy skies and in temperatures around 20 degrees Celsius, the second round of the FIA World Endurance Championship WEC initially got underway in an orderly fashion – only to have two safety car deployments and multiple full course yellows add more spice to the six-hour race. Hampered by a difficult start, the Porsche Penske Motorsport factory team focussed on making the most of the opportunities presented. Thanks to an alternative tyre strategy, the No. 6 car even spent many laps at the head of the field.

During the final third of the race, Kévin Estre from France, Australian Matt Campbell, and Belgian Laurens Vanthoor struggled to defend their lead against some significantly faster competitors. Ultimately, the trio finished eighth, collecting six world championship points at the Italian Grand Prix circuit. The sister car, driven by Dane Michael Christensen and Frenchmen Mathieu Jaminet and Julien Andlauer crossed the finish line in eleventh place. Proton Competition's Porsche 963 took the flag in P14.

"We're not happy with eighth and eleventh," concluded Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. "The team fought hard and did a great job. We now need to step back and take a closer look at everything. The performance differences between the various Hypercars give us pause for thought. Congratulations to the Manthey 1st Phorm team. What a stunning performance. We're delighted about the victory of the Porsche 911 GT3 R!"

"A disappointing day. We didn't have enough pace to challenge the leaders," outlines Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. "The No. 6 crew followed a good strategy and even led the race for a while, but they couldn't hold on to the front spot to the flag. The drivers did a faultless job and so did our team. Now we're turning our attention to the next race in Spa and hope things go better there."

LMGT3 class: Manthey's Porsche 911 GT3 R wins gripping duel

The Manthey 1st Phorm customer team celebrated its first victory of the season in the LMGT3 class. At the wheel of the No. 92 Porsche 911 GT3 R, factory driver Richard Lietz beat BMW in a last-ditch dash to the flag. The driver lineup of the No. 46 car included Italian motorsport legend Valentino Rossi. In the lead-up, Manthey 1st Phorm drivers Ryan Hardwick from the USA and Riccardo Pera from Italy had driven inspired stints to catapult the 911 into the leading pack. The Manthey squad contributed to the class victory with an excellent strategy and perfect pit stops. The Iron Dames team finished eighth with the 911 GT3 R, earning their first points in the FIA WEC LMGT3 classification.

Spa-Francorchamps hosts round three of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) on 10 May. The six-hour race in Belgium is considered crucial preparation for the following season highlight in Le Mans (14-15 June).

Drivers' comments after the race

Matt Campbell (Porsche 963 #6): "We had a super clean race and even led the field at times. In the end, we scored some world championship points. Obviously, we'd have preferred to have finished further up the rankings, but the result reflects our performance compared to the competition. We really did the best we could today."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 963 #5): "That was tough and ultimately disappointing. I'd expected a

slightly better result. We were on course for a top 5 finish, but it didn't pan out. We now need to see where we can make more improvements to the performance and strategy."

Nico Pino (Porsche 963 #99): ⊠It proved difficult to rival the competition. We tried a lot of things strategically. Over long stints, I had to fend off the attacks on old tyres. It wasn't exactly the best race for the Porsche Hypercar teams. We now need to take what we've learned from Imola and use it to our advantage in the next race."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 GT3 R #92): ⊠That was very exciting and extremely close! And it was a stressful race. Others made a few mistakes, but our six-hour race was flawless. That was the deciding factor. One more lap would have been difficult for us in the tough and spirited duel against BMW. I want to thank Ryan, Riccardo, and the entire team. Hopefully, things will continue to go this well – perhaps with a little less drama at the end."

Rahel Frey (Porsche 911 GT3 R #85): ⊠Eighth place – and our first WEC points with Porsche. We're happy with that. While we've taken a noticeable step forward, we're still making too many mistakes. We need to figure out how to avoid them. That's our goal for Spa-Francorchamps. Congratulations to the sister car: Its victory underlines the potential of the 911 GT3 R."

Race result

Hypercar class:
1. Pier Guidi/Calado/Giovinazzi (ITA/GBR/ITA), Ferrari #51, 212 laps
2. Van der Linde/Rast/Frijns (RSA/DEU/NLD), BMW #20, + 8.490 seconds
3. Schumacher/Gounon/Makowiecki (DEU/FRA/FRA), Alpine #36, + 12.450 seconds
8. Campbell/Estre/Vanthoor (AUS/FRA/BEL), Porsche 963 #6, + 41.280 seconds
11. Andlauer/Christensen/Jaminet (FRA/DNK/FRA), Porsche 963 #5, + 1,14.220 minutes
14. Jani/Pino/Varrone (SUI/CHL/ARG), Porsche 963 #99, + 1,17.150 minutes

LMGT3 class:
1. Hardwick/Lietz/Pera (USA/AUT/ITA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 193 laps
2. Al Harthy/Rossi/van der Linde (OMA/ITA/RSA), BMW #46, + 0.316 seconds
3. Robin/Gehrsitz/Masson (FRA/DEU/FRA), Lexus #78, + 24.301 seconds
8. Frey/Gatting/Martin (SUI/DNK/FRA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #85, + 25.312 seconds

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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