

Matt Campbell secures first pole position for Porsche at Bathurst

01/02/2020 Australian ace Matt Campbell has earned Porsche its first major pole position at Mount Panorama with a stunning lap in the Top 10 Shootout for the 2020 Bathurst 12 Hour.

It was the ideal qualifying for the Porsche customer team Absolute Racing at the opening round of this year's Intercontinental GT Challenge. Porsche works driver Campbell turned the fastest lap of the day (2:03.554 minutes) in qualifying.

The qualifying

In the identical Porsche 911 GT3 R, Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium, No. 1) secured the fifth grid spot for Earl Bamber Motorsport (EBM) on Saturday.

On the 6.213-kilometre racetrack in the state of New South Wales, both Porsche drivers made it into the decisive pole shootout. Last year's winner Campbell kept his cool in temperatures of 39 degrees Celsius and underlined his intentions of claiming another home victory. The 24-year-old shares the vehicle with his two French works driver teammates Mathieu Jaminet and Patrick Pilet. The two IMSA champions Vanthoor and Porsche works driver Earl Bamber (New Zealand) share driving duties with the Australian motor racing star Craig Lowndes.

Matteo Cairoli narrowly missed out on taking part in the top 10 pole shootout by a mere 0.238 seconds. The driver from Como in Italy planted the Porsche 911 GT3 R, which is based on the high-performance Porsche 911 GT3 RS road-legal sports car, on twelfth. He shares the cockpit of the No. 912 vehicle with Porsche works driver Dirk Werner (Germany) and Porsche Young Professional Thomas Preining (Austria).

The qualifying in the Pro-Am class

The Grove Racing squad claimed the second grid spot in the Pro-Am class (16th overall) on the circuit about 200 kilometres west of Sydney. In the No. 4 car, Ben Barker (Great Britain) was only 0.088-seconds shy of the class leader. Stephen Grove (Australia) and his son Brenton Grove round off the driver trio.

The qualifying for the NED Racing Team (No. 12) and Porsche works driver Romain Dumas (France) did not turn out quite as well. During his flying lap, the seasoned specialist encountered a red flag and was

forced to stop. In the end, Dumas finished on fifth in the Pro-Am class (25th overall). For the race, Porsche Junior Jaxon Evans (New Zealand) and David Calvert-Jones (Australia) join the Frenchman at the wheel of NED Racing's 911.

Qualifying quotes

Fritz Enzinger (Vice President Motorsport): "I wanted nothing more than pole position for my first visit to Bathurst. And Matt did that very well. He is a fantastic driver, particularly here in Australia. Bathurst is an incredible track with many passages that are blind. The race will be really interesting. I'm looking forward to it."

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R): "We're happy with pole position. To set a perfect lap here you need to fit a sheet of paper between the wing mirror and the wall – and Matt had scratches on his wing mirror. Laurens also performed really well, and Cairoli did a super job too. As a newcomer, qualifying on 12th is a great achievement. We'll take a look at why the other two vehicles didn't place further up the field. We're confident that the performance is there – we've already underlined that."

Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 GT3 R #911): "Pole is of course a fantastic result. Luckily, I clocked a similar time in the first qualifying session. In the pole shootout I had a pretty good idea what I had to do. Still, I got nervous when everyone else went out to turn their lap and I was the last to be allowed on the track. But it worked out well."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 GT3 R #1): "In the first two corners I made two minor mistakes. After that my run went well, but the perfect lap was gone. It's perfect for Porsche with P1 and P5. In the race, the weather may well play a role. Rain is predicted for the last hours of the race. That can make things really exciting."

Matteo Cairoli (Porsche 911 GT3 R #912): "The standard in the series is really high. I managed to get a good lap in, but unfortunately it wasn't enough for the top ten. It's my first time here at Bathurst and my goal is to improve from session to session. The qualifying setup was 95 percent right. We'll work on the rest. The race runs over twelve hours and during that time we aim to get to the front."

Ben Barker (Porsche 911 GT3 R #4): "Unfortunately, our qualifying was a little disappointing. We were much better in the free practice sessions. Our car wasn't perfectly balanced so I lost a bit of confidence in some of the difficult passages. We'll now adjust the setup for the race. Generally, our strategy is to keep out of any trouble and drive a good race."

Romain Dumas (Porsche 911 GT3 R #12): "There was a crash in qualifying and then the session was red-flagged. That put a stop to my attempt at a fast lap. The team then decided to save the second set of tyres for the race. That was a strategic decision. Our qualifying result is not so great but the race is long. A lot can happen."

Qualifying result

1. Jaminet/Pilet/Campbell (F/F/AUS), Porsche 911 GT3 R
2. Parente/Barnicoat/Blomqvist (P/GB/GB), McLaren 720S GT3
3. Fraga/Buhk/Marciello (BR/D/CH), Mercedes AMG GT3
4. De Oliveira/Liberati/Imperatori (BR/I/CH), Nissan GTR Nismo GT3
5. Bamber/Vanthoor/Lowndes (NZ/B/AUS), Porsche 911 GT3 R
12. Werner/Preining/Cairolì (D/A/I), Porsche 911 GT3 R
16. S. Grove/B. Grove/Barker (AUS/AUS/GB), Porsche 911 GT3 R
25. Calvert-Jones/Dumas/Evans (USA/F/NZ), Porsche 911 GT3 R

The preview

Porsche launches its Title Defence Mission in the Intercontinental GT Challenge at Bathurst, Australia. In 2019, the sports car manufacturer claimed the IGTC titles in the manufacturers' and drivers' classifications. The gruelling twelve-hour race (January 31 to February 2) traditionally marks the start of the most important championship for GT3 sports cars. In the race at Mount Panorama, five Porsche 911 GT3 R face strong opposition from vehicles from ten other manufacturers. Last year, Porsche won the long-distance event at Bathurst for the first time in its history thanks to the customer squad EBM (Earl Bamber Motorsport).

The race

This year marks the 18th running of the 12-hour race at the Mount Panorama Circuit in the Australian state of New South Wales. The endurance classic was first contested here in 1991. The 6.213-kilometre circuit 200 kilometres west of Sydney consists of public roads with 23 curves. Per lap, vehicles have to cope with an elevation difference of 174 metres. The track layout poses a great challenge to drivers and engineers. The tight corner combinations to the south demand utmost concentration at the wheel. The fastest passages are the two long sections, Conrod Straight (1.916 km) and Mountain Straight (1.111 km). Around 40 vehicles will line up on the grid this year, 33 of which are GT3 cars – a Bathurst 12-Hour record.

The Porsche teams and drivers

At the event Down Under, four Porsche customer teams compete with a total of five Porsche 911 GT3 R. As last year's winners, EBM, the team of Porsche works driver Earl Bamber, tackles the race with the starting number one. Sharing the wheel of the 911 are the two reigning champions of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) as well as the Australian motorsport legend Craig Lowndes. In the No. 12 vehicle fielded by NED Racing

Team are Porsche works driver Romain Dumas (France), Porsche Junior Jaxon Evans (New Zealand) and David Calvert-Jones (Australia). Absolute Racing campaign two vehicles: Porsche works driver Matt Campbell (Australia) shares driving duties in the No. 911 car with the two Frenchmen Mathieu Jaminet and Patrick Pilet. Porsche works driver Dirk Werner (Germany) and Porsche Young Professional Thomas Preining (Austria) team up with Matteo Cairoli (Italy) in the No. 912 contender. Grove Racing tackles the event with Stephen Grove (Australia), his son Brenton Grove, and Ben Barker (Great Britain).

The Porsche 911 GT3 R

In the Intercontinental GT Challenge, the latest Porsche 911 GT3 R made its first appearance at Laguna Seca (USA) last year. It is based on the high-performance 911 GT3 RS* road-legal sports car. The flat-six engine in the rear puts out over 368 kW. This coming weekend, the current version of the Porsche 911 GT3 R makes its debut at the Mount Panorama Circuit.

The schedule

The event at Bathurst begins with the free practice this coming Friday. In the qualifying session on Saturday, drivers will battle for the best grid spots. Traditionally, the race takes off on Sunday, 2 February, before dawn at 5.45am local time (Saturday, 7.45pm CET). The entire race can be watched live on <https://www.bathurst12hour.com.au/>.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



Holger Eckhardt

<mailto:holger.eckhardt@porsche.de>

Image Sublines

Path: IGTC: Qualifying, round 1/Images/img_1.jpg

Title: 911 GT3 R, EBM, NED Racing, Grove Racing, Absolute Racing (911), Absolute Racing (912), Free Practice, Intercontinental GT Challenge, Round 1, Bathurst 12 Hour, Australia, 2020, Porsche AG

Subline: The Porsche teams and drivers in the Intercontinental GT Challenge 2020

Path: IGTC: Qualifying, round 1/Images/img_2.jpg

Title: 911 GT3 R, Absolute Racing (911), Free Practice, Intercontinental GT Challenge, Round 1, Bathurst 12 Hour, Australia, 2020, Porsche AG

Subline: The 911 GT3 R (911) of Absolute Racing at the free practice in Bathurst

Link Collection

Link to this article

https://newsroom.porsche.com/en_AU/2020/motorsports/porsche-international-gt-challenge-bathurst-first-round-12-hour-911-gt3-r-19844.html

Media Package

<https://pmdb.porsche.de/newsroomzips/88373039-9088-4794-96e0-61d483826d4d.zip>

External Links

<https://www.intercontinentalgtchallenge.com/>