

Porsche 911 GT3 R narrowly misses victory in the 1,000-kilometer race

15/09/2025 Absolute Racing concluded the 1,000-kilometer endurance at Suzuka with top results. Over six and a half hours on the Japanese Formula 1 circuit, factory drivers Kévin Estre (France) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium), together with Frenchman Patrick Pilet, claimed second place overall. The sister Porsche 911 GT3 R, entered by the same Asian partner team, secured victory in the Bronze Cup with Richard Lietz from Austria, Antares Au from Hong Kong, and Dutchman Loek Hartog.

After strong pace in practice, all eleven Porsche 911 GT3 R entries started the Japanese endurance classic from promising grid positions. Initially, the #6 car of Origine Motorsport made a strong impression. After two and a half stints, Laurin Heinrich (Germany), Alessio Picariello (Belgium), and Bastian Buus (Denmark) were running second. Then came a major setback: on the fast Grand Prix layout, the underfloor of the 911 sustained damage due to the high loads. The car, running in historic Kremer-Porsche colors, was unable to maintain front-running pace and finished P5 in round four of the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC). The identical machine of Phantom Global Racing crossed the line eighth.

Absolute Racing, meanwhile, executed a flawless run. At the wheel of the #7 Porsche in "New Man" livery, Estre/Vanthoor/Pilet delivered a perfect performance, finishing just 13.647 seconds behind the winning BMW in second place overall. The sister car dominated the Bronze Cup. In the final stages, Loek Hartog even fought for an overall podium, missing out by a mere 0.263 seconds to finish fourth. The Dutchman shared the cockpit with works driver Richard Lietz and Antares Au.

"We witnessed world-class motorsport with outstanding wheel-to-wheel battles. Unfortunately, it wasn't enough to topple the leading BMW," comments Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. "Absolute Racing did a tremendous job: P2 overall and a win in Bronze. I'd also like to highlight Origine's P5, given the underfloor damage they sustained. It was wonderful to finally be back racing in Japan. I'm proud to be part of IGTC – lining up with eleven Porsche 911 GT3 R, more than any other manufacturer. A strong showing from us and our customer teams."

Herberth Motorsport's Porsche finished third in Bronze at Suzuka. In a grid of 38 starters, all eleven Porsches reached the chequered flag after six and a half hours. After four of five races in the 2025 season, Porsche sits second in the manufacturers' standings with a mathematical shot at the title heading into the season finale. The showdown takes place on October 18 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, running over eight hours.

Drivers' quotes after the race

Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 GT3 R #7): "We delivered a strong race, but ultimately the performance wasn't quite enough to take the win. The BMW was simply too strong today. We fought hard and left absolutely everything on track. In the end, we missed out by just over 13 seconds after six and a half hours – that's almost nothing. We can be proud of our performance. Overall, Japan was a fantastic event."

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 911 GT3 R #6): "We started from P4 and worked our way forward consistently. After the second pit stop, we were already up to second place. Then we suffered underfloor damage. On a track like Suzuka, with so many high-speed corners, losing aero downforce has a massive impact. From then on, we had no chance in the fight for the lead – you can't repair that quickly or compensate for it as a driver. In the end, it was a solid result and we scored manufacturer points for Porsche. But our target was overall victory, which sadly we didn't achieve. Apart from that, it was still a cool weekend."

Klaus Bachler (Porsche 911 GT3 R #23): "Driving Suzuka was fantastic fun, but unfortunately we didn't achieve the result we were aiming for. Our 'Pink Pig' Porsche crossed the line in eighth place. At the first two pit stops, we suffered major refuelling delays, which dropped us back and stuck us in traffic. Strategically, that put us on the defensive for the rest of the race. We tried everything, and hopefully next year we can come back stronger."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 GT3 R #10): "My first outing at Suzuka turned into a top-class result. The

track is fantastic, and the overall event was just as impressive. Our victory in the Bronze Cup is a great achievement. My teammates Antares Au and Loek Hartog collected valuable championship points with this result. Many thanks to the team and to my co-drivers in the cockpit. I'm already looking forward to my next trip to Japan: in less than two weeks I'll be racing in Fuji with the FIA WEC – hopefully with similar success."

1,000 km Suzuka race results

1. Marciello/van der Linde/Weerts (ITA/RSA/BEL), BMW #32, 170 laps
2. Estre/Vanthoor/Pilet (FRA/BEL/FRA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #7, + 13.647 seconds
3. Sims/Catsburg/McLaughlin (GBR/NLD/NZL), Corvette #2, +45.859 seconds
4. Lietz/Hartog/Au (AUT/NLD/HKG), Porsche 911 GT3 R #10, +46.122 seconds
5. Picariello/Heinrich/Buus (BEL/DEU/DNK), Porsche 911 GT3 R #6, + 1:12.800 minutes
8. Bachler/Boccolacci/Niederhauser (AUT/FRA/CHE), Porsche 911 GT3 R #23, + 1:19.457 minutes
11. Bohn/A. Renauer/R. Renauer (DEU/DEU/DEU), Porsche 911 GT3 R #91, + 1:30.305 minutes
12. D'Silva/King/Müller (MYS/GBR/DEU), Porsche 911 GT3 R #61, - 1 lap
14. Nagai/Kotaka/Shinohara (JPN/JPN/JPN), Porsche 911 GT3 R #18, - 1 lap
19. Li/Fjordbach/Hongli (CHN/DNK/CHN), Porsche 911 GT3 R #86, - 2 laps
23. Kim/Jiatong/Arrow (KOR/CHN/NLD), Porsche 911 GT3 R #33, - 4 laps
24. Fong/Jingzu/Menzel (CHN/CHN/DEU), Porsche 911 GT3 R #13, - 8 laps
27. MacPherson/Denyer/Porter (AUS/AUS/AUS), Porsche 911 GT3 R #51, - 26 laps

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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