

Porsche works drivers win the FIA World Endurance Championship

03/11/2024 Porsche's works drivers Kévin Estre, André Lotterer and Laurens Vanthoor have secured the drivers' world championship crown at the final round of this season's FIA World Endurance Championship WEC. At the eight-hour race in Bahrain, the trio crossed the finish line eleventh in their hybrid prototype – enough to claim the title. The No. 5 sister car wrapped up the season with another podium finish in third place. Porsche takes runner-up honours in the manufacturers' championship. This season, the sports car manufacturer from Stuttgart has clinched 13 titles in the two top endurance series FIA WEC and IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

The grand finale over eight hours on the Bahrain International Circuit unfolded into a thriller as the race progressed. Initially, the No. 6 Porsche 963 lost significant ground after the start – but then Kévin Estre from France, André Lotterer from Germany and Belgian Laurens Vanthoor launched an impressive comeback. The hybrid prototype and its identical 514 kW (699 PS) sister car at times looked good for a podium finish, only to have several penalties cause the No. 6 crew to lose touch with the leaders. Ultimately, Estre, Vanthoor and Lotterer took the flag in eleventh place and lifted the drivers' world championship trophy. Their brand colleagues Matt Campbell from Australia, Michael Christensen from

Denmark and Frédéric Makowiecki from France reached the podium in third place. After spending time in the lead, the trio were hampered by two late safety car phases that robbed them of their hard-fought lead.

“We had a mega season and won a world championship title in the second year with the Porsche 963,” says a delighted Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. “Compared to 2023, we made significant improvements in all areas – that’s fantastic! I’d like to extend my biggest compliments to everyone involved. Still, it hurts to narrowly miss out on the manufacturers’ championship. Anyone who comes so close to winning that title wants to claim it in the end. Unfortunately, that’s how it goes sometimes in motor racing. But at the end of the day, our joy and pride in what we’ve achieved outweighs everything else.”

“For the last two years, we’ve worked hard to build and develop our team. It feels great to reap the well-deserved rewards for this hard work,” explains Roger Penske, founder and chairman of the Penske Corporation. “We’ve enjoyed huge successes in IMSA and now secured the world title in the WEC. Every member of the team has played their part in making this project a success. It’s a great honour to work with Porsche to create such a successful programme.”

“Congratulations to our driver world champions in the number 6 Porsche 963. That was incredible,” says Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. “All in all, it was a fantastic year. We won everything in the IMSA series and now we’ve secured our first world championship title with the 963 in the WEC. Unfortunately, we just missed out on the manufacturers’ crown. At that same time, of course, huge congratulations to my colleagues from Toyota on winning the world championship – but next year, it’s our turn!”

“Today’s race was sensational,” concluded Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. “The fact that our No. 6 drivers won the world championship is an enormous success for the team and marks the first world championship title for Porsche Penske Motorsport. Hopefully, there will be many more to come. Unfortunately, we missed out on winning the race today. Our No. 5 Porsche held the lead over long stretches. Unfortunately, the late safety car deployments wiped out our advantage. At least we climbed the podium again.”

With 150 points to their credit, Lotterer, Estre and Vanthoor wrapped up the 2024 season first in the drivers’ standings. Their brand colleagues Campbell, Christensen and Makowiecki rank fifth with 100 points. In the manufacturers’ standings, Porsche concluded the season as vice-champions with 184 points. The title went to Toyota Gazoo Racing. The Japanese factory team earned 190 points.

On Sunday and Tuesday, the Porsche 963 returns to the Formula 1 circuit in Bahrain, where works driver Mathieu Jaminet will take part in the FIA WEC official rookie test. On Tuesday, partner Michelin conducts tyre tests with the hybrid prototype.

Porsche customer teams scoop the title pool in the FIA WEC

The Proton Competition customer team put in a strong performance in the early stages of the race. The No. 99 Porsche 963 was running in the top 3 for many laps, only to have penalties relegate the car down the field. Ultimately, the team took the flag in P13 at the season finale. Hertz Team Jota's two hybrid prototypes finished the eight-hour race in positions eight and 14. Jota's No. 12 car had already secured an early title in the FIA World Cup for private Hypercar teams at the previous race in Fuji, Japan. After two seasons competing with the Porsche 963, the all-British crew will switch to another manufacturer. "The last race with the Porsche didn't go quite as we'd hoped, but at least we managed to finish second in the World Cup with our number 38 car – which means we locked out the first two places in this classification for private teams. That's something to be proud of," said team co-owner Sam Hignett.

Manthey EMA's Porsche 911 GT3 R finishes in fifth place

In the LMGT3 class, the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Manthey EMA finished the season finale in fifth place with drivers Australian Yasser Shahin, Richard Lietz from Austria and Morris Schuring from the Netherlands. The sister car from Manthey PureRxcing crossed the finish line in P9. The German customer team's No. 92 entry was shared by Austrian Klaus Bachler, Joel Sturm from Germany and Alex Malykhin from the UK. The team had already secured the Endurance Trophy at the penultimate race in Fuji (Japan).

"We clinched a one-two result in our classification and celebrated class victory at Le Mans – it doesn't get much better than that. I'm super impressed by our team and extremely proud," explains Niki Raeder, Managing Director of Manthey. "Returning to the WEC stage after a year's break took a lot of work. We stepped back into the world championship spotlight and people can see what we're capable of. Aside from the DTM, which we won last year, the WEC is the biggest GT3 racing scene."

Drivers' comments on the race

Kévin Estre (Porsche 963 #6):"We're world champions, we bested everyone. I'm beyond proud to be a part of this fantastic team. We had a mega season and deserve the title. We were simply the strongest and most consistent throughout the year. Apart from today's final, we always squeezed the maximum out of every race. It wasn't for the faint-hearted. Doesn't matter, we're champions."

André Lotterer (Porsche 963 #6): "It's an amazing feeling to be a world champion with Porsche! However, race day was really tough for us. But that doesn't matter now – we've clinched the world title! Joining forces with Kévin and Laurens was fantastic. Our engineers also did an incredible job throughout the year. This strong collaboration earned us those successes. That was my last race with the Porsche Penske Motorsport team. We had a mega time; it was a lot of fun."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 963 #6):"That was one of the best days of my career, maybe even of my entire life! Today's race was horrible, but we'll probably have forgotten about it in a few days. I've won championships before, but the World Championship title is a different beast altogether. After the award ceremony, I'll have a lovely meal, lots of sleep and time with my family. I don't have any crazy plans."

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 963 #5):"We were so close to victory – but unfortunately close isn't enough in motorsport. Still, I'm very proud of what we achieved today. We managed to fight at the front in a very difficult race. In a way, today reflects the whole season; huge potential, but in the end just a little bit is missing."

Race result

Hypercar class:
1. Buemi/Hartley/Hirakawa (CH/NZL/J), Toyota #8, 235 laps
2. Pier Guidi/Calado/Giovinazzi /I/UK/I), Ferrari #51, - 27.539 seconds
3. Campbell/Christensen/Makowiecki (AUS/DK/F), Porsche 963 #5, - 29.177 seconds
8. Hanson/Button/Rasmussen (UK/UK/DK), Porsche 963 #38, - 1:00.834 minutes
11. Estre/Lotterer/Vanthoor (F/D/B), Porsche 963 #6, - 1:19.711 minutes
13. Andlauer/Jani/Tincknell (F/CH/UK), Porsche 963 #99, - 1 lap
14. Ilott/Stevens/Nato (UK/UK/F), Porsche 963 #12, - 1 lap

LMGT3 class:
1. Heriau/Mann/Rovera (F/USA/I), Ferrari #55, 214 laps
2. Van Rompuy/Andrade/Eastwood (B/ANG/IRL), Corvette #81, - 3.022 seconds
3. Koizumi/Baud/Juncadella (J/F/E), Corvette #82, - 4,879 seconds
5. Lietz/Shahin/Schuring (A/AUS/NL), Porsche 911 GT3 R #91, - 30.654 seconds
9. Bachler/Malykhin/Sturm (A/UK/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, -1:08.767 minutes

Full results and championship standings: fiawec.alkamelsystems.com.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Video

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Image Sublines

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Title: Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport, FIA WEC, Bahrain, race, 20024, Porsche AG
Subline: Thomas Laudenbach

Path: Porsche works drivers win the FIA World Endurance Championship/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh, FIA WEC, Bahrain, race, 20024, Porsche AG
Subline: Urs Kuratle

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Title: Kevin Estre (F), Andre Lotterer (D), Laurens Vanthoor (B), l-r, Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6), FIA WEC, Bahrain, race, 20024, Porsche AG
Subline: André Lotterer, Kévin Estre, Laurens Vanthoor

Path: Porsche works drivers win the FIA World Endurance Championship/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: Porsche 963, Hertz Team Jota (#38), Jenson Button (UK), Phil Hanson (UK), Oliver Rasmussen (DK), FIA WEC, Bahrain, race, 20024, Porsche AG
Subline: Hertz Team Jota's #38 Porsche 963

Path: Porsche works drivers win the FIA World Endurance Championship/Images/img_5.jpg
Title: Porsche 911 GT3 R, Manthey EMA (#91), Yasser Shahin (AUS), Morris Schuring (NL), Richard Lietz (A), FIA WEC, Bahrain, race, 20024, Porsche AG
Subline: Manthey EMA's #91 911 GT3 R

Path: Porsche works drivers win the FIA World Endurance Championship/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Frederic Makowiecki (F), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#5), FIA WEC, Bahrain, race, 20024, Porsche AG
Subline: Frédéric Makowiecki

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