

Two Porsche finish in the top 10 in the Spa endurance classic

30/06/2024 Porsche's customer teams SSR Herberth and Rutronik Racing wrapped up the 24 Hours of Spa in positions eight and nine. After 478 laps on the 7.004-kilometre Grand Prix circuit, the best-placed 911 GT3 R was on the same lap as the victorious Aston Martin. The Dinamic GT team from Italy finished 27th overall and ranked second in the Silver Cup.

The race

Changeable conditions at the long-distance classic on the so-called “Ardennes rollercoaster” threw big challenges at Porsche's customer teams. The race got underway in summery weather, with a long safety car phase during the night due to heavy rain. In the last third of the race, competitors tackled the final sprint on a dry track in cooler temperatures. After a relatively uneventful start, the time between 6 pm and 11 pm proved to be particularly ill-fated for the Stuttgart sports car manufacturer: Due to accidents, collisions and other incidents, six of the twelve 911 GT3 Rs had to retire early – including the top aspirants for overall victory from the Pro category of Schumacher CLRT and HubAuto Racing.

As dawn broke after a night of numerous yellow phases, three 911 GT3 R racing cars fielded by Rutronik Racing, SSR Herberth and Phantom Global Racing were still in on the same lap as PureRxcing's Porsche, which was fighting for the lead. Shortly after 9 am, however, the team's dream of overall victory was dashed: At the wheel of the No. 911 car, Joel Sturm left the track in the fast Blanchimont curve. The German, who shared the cockpit with the UK driver Alex Malykhin and Klaus Bachler from Austria, was uninjured in the hefty crash.

Matt Campbell from Australia and the two Frenchmen Mathieu Jaminet and Frédéric Makowiecki brought SSR Herberth's 911 GT3 R over the line in eighth place. The Porsche works drivers – part of the regular crew of the 963 hybrid prototype in the FIA World Endurance Championship and the North American IMSA series – had taken the lead for a while in the early morning hours. However, unexpected heavy rain shortly after switching to slicks relegated them back behind the safety car.

The two former Porsche Juniors Sven Müller from Germany and Julien Andlauer from France as well as Patric Niederhauser from Switzerland had worked their way up the order from 27th on the grid to temporarily lead the field. Thanks to their team Rutronik Racing's favourable tyre choices, the three ultimately finished in ninth place.

After losing time with brake problems and a slow puncture, Phantom Global Racing crossed the finish line five laps behind the winner in 26th place. The Chinese team is supported by Team75 Motorsport owned by Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard. The reigning DTM champion and Porsche works driver Thomas Preining shared driving duties with New Zealander Jaxon Evans – a former Porsche Junior like Preining – and Joel Eriksson from Sweden.

Silver Cup podium for Dinamic GT

Theo Nouet (France), Jop Rappange (Netherlands), Marius Nakken (Norway) and Axel Blom from Finland were rewarded for their strong drive in the No. 55 Porsche campaigned by the Italian team Dinamic GT with second place in the Silver Cup. Tackling the race from P56, the quartet crossed the finish line after 24 hours in 27th place.

Lionspeed X Herberth's drivers Belgian Alessio Picariello, Alexander Fach from Switzerland, Antares Au from Hong Kong and Estonian Martin Rump concluded the race in 22nd place overall and seventh place in the Bronze Cup. For Au, this result also handed him victory in the Independent Cup of the Intercontinental GT Challenge.

Comments on the race

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R):"We'd hoped for more at the 24-hour race in Spa. Unfortunately, we lost a few 911 GT3 R early on due to accidents and technical problems. Plus,

there were too many time penalties. At the end of the day, we're disappointed. But we're thrilled about Dinamic GT's second place in the Silver Cup and the victory for Antares Au in the Independent Cup of the Intercontinental GT Challenge. We'll now take our time analysing the race and learn for next time."

Mathieu Jaminet (F, Porsche 911 GT3 R #23):"I'm super exhausted after this gruelling race. The changeable conditions were tricky, but I still enjoyed my triple stint at night, and managed to get us in the lead. Towards the end I was still in contention for seventh place, but there was no point risking too much. We did our absolute utmost and reached the flag as the best-placed Porsche. In the end, we lacked a bit of performance and a time penalty cost us valuable time, otherwise we could've made it into the top four or five. We couldn't do much more than that, but I enjoyed driving a modern-generation GT3 racing car again with good friends in a team like SSR Herberth."

Patric Niederhauser (CH, Porsche 911 GT3 R #96):"That was a particularly tough version of the 24 Hours of Spa! The race went quite well for us. A shunt in the early stages put us a lap down, but we fought our way back. Unfortunately, we lacked the ultimate performance to be right up there with the frontrunners."

Marius Nakken (N, Porsche 911 GT3 R #55): "That was a long and tough race, especially with the storm during the night. The name of the game was about making smart decisions and not taking unnecessary risks. We did that well. At one point, we led the Silver Cup and were ninth overall. Achieving the goal of second in our class is a wonderful success."

Martin Rump (EST, Porsche 911 GT3 R #80):"What an experience! But most important of all is that we've reached the finish line! We tweaked our Porsche's setup during the race and tried to get everything out of the 911 GT3 R. I really enjoyed it. The stints in the rain and behind the safety car were very long – sometimes I wished I had a coffee in the cockpit. But the funny banter with my race engineer kept me awake. During my last stint, I went on the attack again in the dry."

Race result
1. (1. Pro) Drudi/Thiim/Sørensen (RSM/DK/DK), Aston Martin #7, 478 laps
2. (2. Pro) Rovera/Rigon/Pier Guidi (I/I/I), Ferrari #51, 478 laps
3. (3. Pro) D. Vanthoor/Van der Linde/Weerts (B/ZA/B), BMW #32, 478 laps
8. (7. Pro) Jaminet/Campbell/Makowiecki (F/A/F), SSR Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 478 laps
9. (8. Pro) Andlauer/Müller/Niederhauser (F/D/CH), Rutronik Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #96, 477 laps
22. (7. BC) Au/Fach/Rump/Picariello (HK/CH/EST/B), Lionspeed X Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R #80, 475 laps
26. (14. Pro) Evans/Eriksson/Preining (NZ/S/A), Phantom Global Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #23, 473 laps
27. (2. SC) Rappange/Blom/Nakken/Nouet (NL/FIN/N/F), Dinamic GT, Porsche 911 GT3 R #55, 473 laps

Pro = Pro class; PAC = Pro-Am Cup; GC = Gold Cup; SC = Silver Cup; BC = Bronze Cup.

Full results https://www.gt-world-challenge-europe.com/watch-live

Interim Report 2

Porsche's customer teams are on track for top results at the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps after encountering difficult track conditions during the night. With more than two-thirds of the race over, Rutronik Racing's 911 GT3 R was running in sixth place, with SSR Herberth's Porsche in seventh.

Heavy losses for Porsche Motorsport's partner teams marked the opening phase of the endurance classic in Belgium's Ardennes: After the first eight hours, half of the twelve 911 GT3 R racing cars were out of the contention due to accidents and incidents. Despite changeable weather with occasional heavy rainfall, 15-degree Celsius air temperatures and 21-degree asphalt temperature, the situation calmed down during the night. Choosing the right tyres proved critical in such difficult conditions. By 8:30 am, the remaining six GT3 vehicles from Weissach were still out on the 7.004-kilometre racetrack. Depending on the pit stop rhythm, four of them took turns in the lead and were looking good for a top result.

Rutronik Racing's 911 currently looks particularly promising. Julien Andlauer (France), Sven Müller (Germany) and Patric Niederhauser (Switzerland) made up crucial ground in the early morning hours. At the two-thirds distance, the car was in P16 and has now ploughed its way up to sixth place.

SSR Herberth also spent time in the lead with its drivers Matt Campbell from Australia and the two Frenchmen Mathieu Jaminet and Frédéric Makowiecki. Two weeks ago, these three competed in a hybrid prototype 963 at Le Mans. By 8:30 am, they were running in seventh place.

Phantom Global Racing's 911 GT3 R is also among the frontrunners, despite being handed a 30-second penalty just before the halfway mark for exceeding the track limits too often. The Chinese team is supported by Team75 Motorsport owned by Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard. With eight hours left on the clock, Joel Eriksson from Sweden, New Zealander Jaxon Evans and the Austrian Thomas Preining were in P14.

PureRxcing also had good chances of clinching a top result. Around midnight on a wet track, Klaus Bachler from Austria and Germany's Joel Sturm swept into the lead for the first time. They share the cockpit with the UK driver Alex Malykhin. After 16 hours, the No. 911 entry was back in first place. A short time later, however, an accident at the exit of the fast Blanchimont curve abruptly ended the trio's charge.

With 66 racing cars entered, the 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps is the world's largest event for GT3 vehicles and counts towards the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup and the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC). Drivers and teams receive points for the GTWC after six, twelve and 24 hours. The race will be streamed live in several languages on the website www.intercontinentalgtchallenge.com.

Comments on the race so far

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R):"We experienced some tough hours. Accidents and technical issues have cost us seven vehicles. SSR Herberth, Phantom Global Racing, Rutronik Racing and Lionspeed X Herberth made it through the night unscathed and have put in strong drives. PureRxcing was looking particularly good. After the car's accident, we're relieved that Joel Sturm is okay. Now, there is less than a third of the distance to go with the transition from wet to dry conditions. In this difficult phase, the drivers must keep the slicks at the right temperature and within their optimal working window."

Julien Andlauer (F, Porsche 911 GT3 R #96): "We survived the night and made it back into the leading lap. In such changeable conditions, you sometimes have to take risks and need a bit of luck to make the switch to the right tyre at the right time."

Joel Eriksson (S, Porsche 911 GT3 R #23):"The conditions out there are pretty gnarly. During my stint, the track was drying out. We had to pit a little earlier than planned when the time was right to mount slicks. If we continue to drive cleanly and avoid penalties, things look good for us."

Klaus Bachler (A, Porsche 911 GT3 R #911): "Our Porsche 911 GT3 R handled beautifully in the wet and partly wet conditions. The car's balance was top-notch! We were leading with eight hours to go – anything was possible. We're super happy that Joel Sturm is in good shape after the accident."

Matt Campbell (AUS, Porsche 911 GT3 R #92): "The bad weather during the night made conditions difficult – even driving slowly behind the safety car. But we survived the night without any major issues. Our performance under green is good, we're among the frontrunners. In the next few hours, strategy will play an increasingly important role."

Full results https://www.gt-world-challenge-europe.com/watch-live

Interim report 1

At its centenary edition, the endurance classic on the 7.004-kilometre Grand Prix circuit in Belgium's Ardennes region took off with sunny conditions, an air temperature of 25 degrees Celsius and an asphalt temperature of 38 degrees. The opening stage of the race ran without any major dramas. Subsequently, several collisions and off-track excursions resulted in six yellow-flag phases. Of the twelve 911 GT3 R fielded by the Porsche customer teams, eight were still in the running after five hours – five of them on the same lap as the leading pack.

By 21.30 hrs, the best-placed GT3 racing car from Weissach was Phantom Global Racing's 911 GT3 R in eleventh place. The Chinese squad receives support from Team75 Motorsport owned by Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard. Joel Eriksson from Sweden, New Zealander Jaxon Evans and

Austria's Thomas Preining share driving duties in the racing car. After five hours of racing, UK driver Alex Malykhin, Joel Sturm from Germany and Austrian Klaus Bachler were running in 17th place at the wheel of PureRxcing's 911.

After starting from P27 on the grid, the No. 96 Porsche fielded by Rutronik Racing was chasing down the top-10 pack. However, after a shunt with another competitor, the car driven by Julien Andlauer (France), Sven Müller (Germany) and Patric Niederhauser (Switzerland) had to pit for checks and consequently fell back to 41st place. The same collision knocked Schumacher CLRT's 911 GT3 R out of the race.

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Comments on the race after five hours

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R):"The opening phase of this 24-hour race showed just how close the field is. The performance is on an equal footing. The full course yellows and safety car phases proved strategically helpful. Still, we took a bad hit with technology and accidents. Dinamic GT had to retire due to a leak in the clutch hydraulics, while HubAuto Racing had an issue with the wheel suspension. We got a fright when EBM collided with a stationary car. Fortunately, nothing happened to the driver. We're now expecting heavy rain, which will reshuffle the cards. We're trying to find the right moment to switch to rain tyres."

Jaxon Evans (NZ, Porsche 911 GT3 R #23):"This is my first time contesting the 24 Hours of Spa, so it's something special for me. I simply tried to get through cleanly and maintain a good position in the field with our 911 GT3 R. I even managed to make up a few places and got into a good rhythm."

Matt Campbell (AUS, Porsche 911 GT3 R #92):"My first stint was tricky. Compared to the test at the beginning of the week, we lacked a bit of pace. But we're managing to stay out of trouble, and our car is still in one piece. Now we're waiting for the rain."

Full results https://www.gt-world-challenge-europe.com/watch-live

Superpole

The best 911 GT3 R will head into the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps on Saturday from position ten on the grid. Works driver Mathieu Jaminet set the eighth fastest time in the individual time trial. However, like the two other GT3 racing cars fielded by Porsche's customer teams Phantom Global

Racing and Schumacher CLRT, SSR Herberth's 911 failed to leave the pit lane at the right moment. For this infraction, all three received penalties. Phantom Global Racing tackles the endurance classic from the 18th grid spot, with Schumacher CLRT starting from P20.

Three Porsche racing cars took part in the so-called Superpole on the Formula 1 circuit in Spa-Francorchamps on Friday afternoon. In the 30-minute session, the best 20 competitors from Thursday's qualifying determined the grid lineup of the first ten rows. For each vehicle, the fastest of two flying laps counted in the individual time trial. The GT3 cars headed out onto the 7.004-kilometre "Ardennes rollercoaster" in one-minute intervals. The regulations stipulate a ten-second time window in which each driver must leave the pits and attempt their laps. The three 911 GT3 R were too late passing the pit exit. The difference to the allocated time was added to their fastest lap result.

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The Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by the German squad SSR Herberth was the first of the Porsche trio to attempt the Superpole qualifier. Clocking 2:14.250 minutes in his second flying lap, Mathieu Jaminet improved his standing. The Frenchman shares the cockpit with his fellow countryman Frédéric Makowiecki and Matt Campbell from Australia.

Their works driver colleague Thomas Preining – a former Porsche Junior like Jaminet and Campbell – was a touch slower in his first hot lap, setting a time of 2:14.271 minutes. In the second lap, it seemed as if the reigning DTM champion would improve his time. The Austrian joins forces with Joel Eriksson from Sweden and New Zealander Jaxon Evans. However, after exceeding the track limits, Preining returned to the pits early in Phantom Global Racing's 911. The Chinese team is supported by Team75 owned by Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard.

Dorian Boccolacci turned his faster first lap in a time of 2:15.966 minutes. The Frenchman competes

for Schumacher CLRT with Ayhancan Güven from Turkey and Germany's Laurin Heinrich. Güven and Heinrich have also come up through the ranks of Porsche's Junior support programme.

With 66 racing cars entered, the 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps is the world's largest event for GT3 vehicles and counts towards the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup and the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC). Drivers and teams receive points for the GTWC after six, twelve and 24 hours. The race will be broadcast live in several languages on the website www.intercontinentalgtchallenge.com.

Quotes after Superpole

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R):"Generally speaking, we can be satisfied with the performance of our Porsche 911 GT3 R in the Superpole session, as the eighth and tenth fastest times underlined. Being relegated down the grid is obviously annoying, but it's no big deal. We'll now support our customer teams in finding out how this could've happened. But first, we're focussing on the upcoming 24-hour race. We're still optimistic."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #92):"We hardly made any changes to the setup of our 911 GT3 R compared to yesterday, because the performance was great. It was the same today. Basically, we're pleased with our performance – our result is pretty much what we expected. The leading cars are fast. We have a long race ahead of us and a lot can happen."

Dorian Boccolacci (Porsche 911 GT3 R #22):"This was the first time I've ever taken part in an individual time trial – getting a clear run without traffic is a lot of fun. I was a little surprised that I immediately had great grip on my first lap. Unfortunately, I couldn't improve my time on the second lap. The Porsche 911 GT3 R felt great. I'm looking forward to the race."

Thomas Preining (Porsche 911 GT3 R #23):"It's always cool to have the track to yourself in the Superpole session. My lap was solid, but I made a minor mistake. We still have a few issues with the overall balance of the vehicle. Still, we'll make progress in the warmup so that we'll be well-sorted for the race."

Superpole result

1. (1. Pro) Perera/Mapelli/Pepper (F/CH/ZA), Lamborghini #163, 2:13.718 minutes
2. (2. Pro) Engel/Morad/Auer (D/CAN/A), Mercedes-AMG #48, 2:13.754 minutes
3. (3. Pro) Rovera/Rigon/Pier Guidi (I/I/I), Ferrari #51, 2:13.,968 minutes
10. (7. Pro) Jaminet/Campbell/Makowiecki (F/A/F), SSR Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 2:14.432 minutes
18. (13. Pro) Evans/Eriksson/Preining (NZ/S/A), Phantom Global Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #23, 2:15.557 minutes

20. (15. Pro) Güven/Heinrich/Boccolacci (TR/D/F), Schumacher CLRT, Porsche 911 GT3 R #22, 2:15.986 minutes

The other grid positions

27. (20. Pro) Andlauer/Müller/Niederhauser (F/D/CH), Rutronik Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #96, 2:16.500 minutes
30. (21. Pro) Malykhin/Sturm/Bachler (UK/D/A), PureRxcing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #911, 2:16.574 minutes
43. (9. BC) Sager/Moura de Oliveira/Zöchling/Dienst (A/P/D/D), Dinamic GT, Porsche 911 GT3 R #54, 2:17.043 minutes
44. (23. Pro) Estre/Pilet/Vanthoor (F/F/B), HubAuto Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #992, 2:17.125 minutes
47. (12. BC) Au/Fach/Rump/Picariello (HK/CH/EST/B), Lionspeed X Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R #80, 2:17.191 minutes
59. (10. SC) Rappange/Blom/Nakken/Nouet (NL/FIN/N/F), Dinamic GT, Porsche 911 GT3 R #55, 2:17.949 minutes
62. (18. BC) Bohn/A. Renauer/Schuring/R. Renauer (D/D/NL/D), Herberth Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R #91, 2:18.298 minutes
65. (6. PAM) D'Silva/Li/Bamber/Leitch (MAL/USA/NZ/NZ), EBM, Porsche 911 GT3 R #61, 2:21.031 minutes
66. (20. BC) Blattner/Richard Robichon/Marschall/Hartog (USA/CDN/D/NL), Rutronik Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #97

Pro = Pro class; PAM = Pro-Am Cup; GC = Gold Cup; SC = Silver Cup; BC = Bronze Cup
Full results

Qualifying

In the four-part qualifying for the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, three of the twelve Porsche 911 GT3 R advanced into the Superpole. This puts them in the top 20 that will vie for the best grid positions in the Superpole session on Friday from 15:45 hrs (CEST).

Phantom Global Racing clocked the fastest time for a Porsche with sixth place thanks to the driver trio Joel Eriksson from Sweden, Jaxon Evans from New Zealand and the Austrian Thomas Preining. The Schumacher CLRT squad followed closely in seventh position. SSR Herberth qualified on P9. The endurance classic on the Belgian Grand Prix circuit starts on Saturday at 16:30 hrs (CEST).

The Porsche customer teams encountered ideal summer conditions with an air temperature of 25 degrees Celsius and track temperatures of 35 degrees. The fastest lap for a 911 GT3 R was 2:15.163 minutes – shaving 1.7 seconds off Porsche's top time from last year's Superpole session. This gain is

also due to the new asphalt on various sections of the track, which offers significantly more grip and traction.

The Chinese outfit Phantom Global Racing emerged from today's qualifying session as the best-placed Porsche customer team. The squad receives support from Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard's Team75. Joel Eriksson from Sweden and the two former Porsche Juniors Jaxon Evans (New Zealand) and Thomas Preining (Austria) achieved an average lap time of 2:15.689 minutes – earning them sixth place. The French team Schumacher CLRT qualified in seventh, just 0.062 seconds behind. Two other drivers from the junior programme represent this team, with Ayhancan Güven from Turkey and Germany's Laurin Heinrich sharing the cockpit with Dorian Boccolacci from France. The German squad SSR Herberth also made it into the so-called Superpole on Friday with its 911 GT3 R driven by Australian Matt Campbell and the two Frenchmen Mathieu Jaminet and Frédéric Makowiecki. Barely two weeks ago, these three contested the 24 Hours of Le Mans for the Porsche Penske Motorsport works team. Jaminet – who like Campbell is another former Porsche Junior – finished third in the Porsche 963 at the IMSA race in Watkins Glen (USA) last Sunday.

The organising SRO Motorsports Group established four classes for the GT World Challenge Europe based on the official FIA driver rankings: Pro, Gold Cup, Silver Cup and Bronze Cup. In the Gold Cup, a combination of one "silver" and two "gold" drivers are eligible to compete. The silver category stipulates four drivers with silver status. In the Bronze Cup, a maximum of one driver may have platinum status and two others must be ranked no higher than silver. Only the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps features the Pro-Am league: in this class, two drivers must be classified as bronze. There are no qualitative restrictions in the Pro class, hence mostly fully professional pairings compete in this classification – albeit, only three drivers are allowed per racing car. This is why participants in this class must forfeit the first of the four qualifying segments.

The final 30-minute Superpole session for the 20 best grid spots gets underway on Friday at 15:45 hrs (CEST). With 66 racing cars entered, the 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps is the world's largest event for GT3 vehicles and counts towards the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup and the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC). Drivers and teams receive points for the GT World Challenge ranking after six, twelve and 24 hours. The race will be broadcast live in several languages on the website.

Qualifying quotes

Sebastian Golz (Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R):"All in all, we achieved a good result, but missed our target – three Porsche in the top 20 falls short of our expectations. We're now working with the teams to prepare the three eligible Porsche racing cars for the Superpole. At the same time, we're keen to understand why the other three Pro cars didn't make it into the top twenty."

Thomas Preining (Porsche 911 GT3R #23): "That was a decent qualifying session. All three of us got a clean lap without too much traffic – which is unusual for Spa. Despite qualifying for Superpole, there's

some work to do. We're still not completely happy with the balance of the car. Fundamentally, despite lacking a bit of pace compared to one or two other manufacturers, the 911 GT3 R runs beautifully. But I'm sure we'll sort it out by the start of the race."

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 911 GT3R #22):"With more than 60 cars on the track, qualifying at Spa is always a bit chaotic. It's extremely important to find a suitable gap. All three of us did exactly that; we found a clear lap, didn't stray from the track limits and made no other mistakes – that was the key to success today."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3R #92):"I haven't sat in the cockpit of a GT3 car for more than a year now. It was also my first-ever qualifying session at the wheel of the Porsche 911 GT3 R – which was great fun! I set the third-fastest time in my group. Matt Campbell and Frédéric Makowiecki also put in strong drives, so we qualified for the Superpole. So far, I'm enjoying my GT3 comeback..."

Qualifying results

1. (1. Pro) Perera/Mapelli/Pepper (F/CH/ZA), Lamborghini #163, 2:15.275 minutes
2. (2. Pro) Rovera/Rigon/Pier Guidi (I/I/I), Ferrari #51, 2:15.321 minutes
3. (3. Pro) Engel/Morad/Auer (D/CAN/A), Mercedes-AMG #48, 2:15.371 minutes
6. (6. Pro) Evans/Eriksson/Preining (NZ/S/A), Phantom Global Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #23, 2:15.689 minutes
7. (7. Pro) Güven/Heinrich/Boccolacci (TR/D/F), Schumacher CLRT, Porsche 911 GT3 R #22, 2:15.751 minutes
9. (9. Pro) Jaminet/Campbell/Makowiecki (F/A/F), SSR Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 2:15.828 minutes
27. (20. Pro) Andlauer/Müller/Niederhauser (F/D/CH), Rutronik Racing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #96, 2:16.500 minutes
30. (21. Pro) Malykhin/Sturm/Bachler (UK/D/A), PureRxcing, Porsche 911 GT3 R #911, 2:16.574 minutes
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Preview

Ten Porsche customer teams will field twelve 911 GT3 R crewed by 42 drivers at the endurance classic in Belgium next weekend. The 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium's Ardennes region celebrates its centenary this year. Six of the racing cars from Weissach will tackle the Pro class helmed exclusively by professional drivers – including many Porsche works drivers. Since 2011, the outright winner has always come from this top category. This year, a total of 24 vehicles will contest this class.

Porsche can reflect on a long and illustrious history at the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps: to date, a racing car from Weissach has won eight of the 75 endurance classics. "This year, we're once again heading to Spa with high hopes of a top result and realistic chances of clinching the ninth overall victory for Porsche," states Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. "Ten customer teams campaigning a total of twelve Porsche underline the trust that our GT3 racing car enjoys. We're contesting the race with top-tier driver crews, particularly in the Pro category. This gives us the perfect basis for maximum success. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of this classic, we'll do everything possible to achieve this."

After Porsche conducted successful tests during the two-day prologue about a month ago, large sections of the Belgian Grand Prix circuit have been resurfaced. "This throws totally new conditions at everyone – the new asphalt will turn everything upside down," asserts Golz. "The track surface is not as rough, and the bumps have changed. In terms of vehicle setup, this means that everyone is starting from scratch." To explore parameters such as the optimal spring-damper setup and tyre wear, the drivers spent valuable time on the track on Tuesday as part of an additional practice session.

The race

The Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium's east has thrown one of the greatest challenges at racing drivers from all over the world since 1921 – and for many, it is also one of their all-time favourite circuits. Measuring 7.004 kilometres and featuring 21 turns, the storied Grand Prix circuit is still the longest track on the Formula 1 calendar. The "Ardennes rollercoaster" still deserves its nickname, by virtue of the spectacular steep section "Raidillon/Eau Rouge" and the downhill passage with the notorious "Blanchimont". At the end of the start/finish straight, however, drivers encounter the tight "La Source" hairpin – one of the slowest corners of the GT3 season. Teams and drivers must expect notoriously changeable weather, which makes racing in the Ardennes even more thrilling.

The first 24-hour race in Spa-Francorchamps was contested in 1924. This year marks the centenary

edition. To date, a Porsche racing car has won the historic endurance event eight times. The last two victories came in succession: in 2019, Kévin Estre (France), Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Richard Lietz (Austria) brought home overall victory with the 991.2-generation 911 GT3 R. A year later, another works driver trio climbed to the top of the podium: Nick Tandy (Great Britain), Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium).

Free live stream of the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps

The official YouTube channel of the GT World Challenge (www.youtube.com/@GTWorld) will broadcast all sessions of this year's 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps in a free live stream, starting from the pre-qualifying on Thursday afternoon. Viewers can choose between a commentary in German, English, French, Italian, Dutch or Portuguese. Porsche provides continuous commentary via the „X"-channel @PorscheRaces and the Instagram channels @porsche.customerracing, @porsche.motorsport and @porsche_newsroom.

24 Hours of Spa: the highlight of the GT World Challenge Europe

A 67-strong field of GT3 cars will tackle the 76th edition of the endurance classic. Teams can again earn points towards the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC) at the 24 Hours of Spa. This year's IGTC included the Nürburgring 24-hour race for the first time.

First and foremost, however, the longest Ardennes race of the year is part of the GT World Challenge Europe, one of the world's most important GT3 racing series. The 2024 calendar encompasses ten races, which are divided equally into two separate championships: a Sprint Cup and an Endurance Cup. After the season opener in Le Castellet in early April, the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps event marks the second race in the endurance classification. In addition to the 55 GT3 teams registered for the Endurance Cup, twelve guest starters have also entered the classic.

The customer teams and drivers in the Pro category

Twelve Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by ten customer teams will take on the challenge of this year's 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps. Six of them, each with three drivers sharing the cockpit, will tackle the 24-strong Pro division. With only professional drivers eligible to contest this class, the big favourites for overall victory are in this category. Schumacher CLRT with the Frenchman Dorian Boccolacci and the two former Porsche Juniors Ayhancan Güven from Turkey and Germany's Laurin Heinrich, represents one of the permanently registered teams in the GT World Challenge Europe. The same applies to Rutronik Racing with Patric Niederhauser from Switzerland, Sven Müller from Germany and the Frenchman Julien Andlauer. The latter two have also come up through the Porsche Junior ranks. Pure Rxcing rounds off the trio of registered Porsche customer teams in the Pro classification with drivers Alex Malykhin from the UK, former Porsche Junior Klaus Bachler from Austria and Joel Sturm from

Germany.

Three other 911 GT3 R guest entries will tackle the Pro category with strong line-ups. Joel Eriksson from Sweden, former Porsche Junior Jaxon Evans from New Zealand and Porsche works driver Thomas Preining from Austria will share driving duties for the Chinese team Phantom Global Racing. Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard is also strongly involved in this project. SSR Herberth puts its trust in an all-works driver-crew with the two Frenchmen Mathieu Jaminet and Frédéric Makowiecki as well as the Australian Matt Campbell. Jaminet and Campbell also benefited from the sports car manufacturer's junior initiative. Two current and one former Porsche works drivers will share a HubAuto Racing cockpit: local hero Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium, and the French pair Kévin Estre and Patrick Pilet.

Drivers' pre-race comments

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 GT3 R #992): "Spa-Francorchamps will be my third 24-hour race in just four weeks. I live about an hour from the racetrack and I've won my home race twice. I think that Kévin Estre, Patrick Pilet and I make an excellent crew – although it'll be tough, especially against the permanently registered teams in the championship. I'm curious to see how it is out on the track after the major resurfacing work. We're determined to bring home a podium result. If the chance to win presents itself, we want to be in a position to grab it."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #92): "I missed last year's 24 Hours of Spa for the first time in ages, so I'm thrilled to be back. SSR Performance and Herberth Motorsport – the two teams with whom I've achieved successes in the past – have joined forces for this race. The teamwork with Matt Campbell and Frédéric Makowiecki always runs beautifully. We have everything we need to hold our own against the strong competition."

Thomas Preining (Porsche 911 GT3 R #23): "As the world's biggest and toughest GT3 race, the 24 Hours of Spa are always extremely entertaining. For us drivers, it's particularly tricky to manage the traffic in such a huge field of racing cars that are almost equally competitive. Joel Eriksson, Jaxon Evans and I make a strong squad and we have a great team behind us. I can't wait."

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 911 GT3 R #22): "I always look forward to the 24 Hours of Spa. We finished fifth at my Spa debut last year. With the new asphalt, everyone is starting from scratch before this weekend, which makes things particularly interesting. Dorian Boccolacci, Ayhancan Güven and I form a young and dynamic driver crew. With the second grid spot and a strong start at the season opener in Le Castellet, we demonstrated that we're a force to be reckoned with."

Porsche's customer teams and their drivers

Pro class
Schumacher CLRT (#22)

Dorian Boccolacci (F) / Ayhancan Güven (TR) / Laurin Heinrich (D)
Phantom Global Racing (#23)
Joel Eriksson (S) / Jaxon Evans (NZ) / Thomas Preining (A)
SSR Herberth (#92)
Mathieu Jaminet (F) / Matt Campbell (AUS) / Frédéric Makowiecki (F)
Rutronik Racing (#96)
Patric Niederhauser (CH) / Sven Müller (D) / Julien Andlauer (F)
Pure Rxcing (#911)
Alex Malykhin (UK) / Klaus Bachler (A) / Joel Sturm (D)
HubAuto Racing (#992)
Kévin Estre (F) / Patrick Pilet (F) / Laurens Vanthoor (B)

Pro-Am class
EBM (#61)
Adrian D'Silva (MAL) / Kerong Li (CHN) / Earl Bamber (NZ) / Brendon Leitch (NZ)

Silver Cup
Dinamic GT (#55)
Theo Nouet (F) / Jop Rappange (NL) / Marius Nakken (N) / Axel Blom (FIN)

Bronze Cup
Dinamic GT (#54)
Philipp Sager (A) / Guilherme Moura de Oliveira (P) / Christopher Zöchling (A) / Marvin Dienst (D)
Lionspeed X Herberth (#80)
Antares Au (HK) / Alessio Picariello (B) / Martin Rump (EST) / Alexander Fach (CH)
Herberth Motorsport (#91)
Ralf Bohn (D) / Robert Renauer (D) / Morris Schuring (NL) / Alfred Renauer (D)
Rutronik Racing (#97)
Dustin Blattner (USA) / Dennis Marschall (D) / Loek Hartog (NL) / Zacharie Robichon (CAN)

The schedule for the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps (all times CEST)

Thursday, 27 June:
11:20 – 12:50 hrs: Free Practice
16:30 – 17:30 hrs: Pre-Qualifying
20:35 – 21:55 hrs: Qualifying
22:25 – 23:55 hrs: Night Practice

Friday, 28 June:
15:45 – 16:15 hrs: Superpole

20:10 – 20:40 hrs: Warm-up

Saturday, 29 June:
16:30 hrs: Green light 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps

Sunday, 30 June:
16:30 hrs: Chequered flag 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps

24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps – all overall wins with Porsche

2020 Tandy / Bamber / Vanthoor (Porsche 911 GT3 R)
2019 Lietz / Christensen / Estre (Porsche 911 GT3 R)
2010 Dumas / J. Bergmeister / Ragginger / Henzler (Porsche 911 GT3 RSR)
2003 Ortelli / Lieb / Dumas (Porsche 911 GT3 RSR)
1993 C. Fittipaldi / Jarier / Alzen (Porsche 911 RSR)
1969 Chasseuil / Ballot-Léna (Porsche 911)
1968 Kremer / H. Kelleners / Kauhsen (Porsche 911)
1967 Gaban / Van Assche (Porsche 911)

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Video

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Image Sublines

Path: Porsche 911 GT3 R lead the 24 Hours of Spa at times/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Mathieu Jaminet (F), Matt Campbell (AUS), Frederic Makowiecki (F), SSR Herberth (#92) (l-r), 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, Spa, Belgium, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Mathieu Jaminet, Matt Campbell and Frédéric Makowiecki , 911 GT3 R

Path: Porsche 911 GT3 R lead the 24 Hours of Spa at times/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Porsche 911 GT3 R, Phantom Global Racing, Joel Eriksson, Jaxon Evans, Thomas Preining, 24h Spa-Francorchamps, Race, Belgium, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Phantom Global Racing's 911 GT3 R

Path: Porsche 911 GT3 R lead the 24 Hours of Spa at times/Images/img_7.jpg
Title: Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R, 24h Spa-Francorchamps, Race, Belgium, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Sebastian Golz

Path: Porsche 911 GT3 R lead the 24 Hours of Spa at times/Images/img_10.jpg
Title: Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R, 24h Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Sebastian Golz

Path: Porsche 911 GT3 R lead the 24 Hours of Spa at times/Images/img_11.jpg
Title: 24h Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium, 2024, Porsche AG
Subline: Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps

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