

Porsche at the “Race to the Clouds”: A class apart

This article reflects the status at the time of its publication. The content may since have become outdated.

13/09/2018 It is considered one of the toughest hill climbs in the world: The race to the finish line on the summit of Pikes Peak in the Rocky Mountains – 4,301 metres above sea level. This year saw Porsche launch its own one-make class, while Pikes Peak legend Jeff Zwart attended the race as a coach.

156 bends, a 19.99-kilometre course and a finish line 4,301 metres above sea level – held annually near Colorado Springs since 1916, the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb is one of the oldest car races in the world. And one of the toughest.

No crash barriers and basically no margin for error, with craggy rock faces descending into nothingness alongside the narrow track – it’s these things that make the race to the summit so captivating. This race pushes the driver to the very limit: The higher you go, the thinner the air becomes. Gaining more

than 1,400 meters of altitude in about ten minutes takes its toll on both man and machine – and where there is low air density, engine power reduces drastically, by up to 30 per cent. Less power, less grip and changes to the tyre and engine temperatures the further you travel up the mountain – an appealing challenge for racing drivers.

The Porsche Cayman GT4 Clubsport class: A star-studded line-up

The 96th Broadmoor Pikes Peak International Hill Climb 2018 saw a world-first, as Porsche became the first manufacturer to host its own one-make class. Eight drivers were invited to compete for the Porsche Cayman GT4 Clubsport Pikes Peak Hill Climb Trophy by Yokohama. All but two of the drivers were complete "Race to the Clouds" newbies, while for some the practice runs were the first ever time they had driven a Porsche GT4 Clubsport Cayman.

Among the participants were motocross champion, X Games winner and stunt performer Travis Pastrana, former professional baseball player CJ Wilson and IMSA driver Till Bechtolsheimer – a famous face in each and every cockpit. The driver line-up represented the "perfect cross-section of Porsche customers and partners", Daniel Armbruster, CEO of Porsche Motorsports North America.

"The Broadmoor Pikes Peak International Hill Climb is a race with a cult status", said Travis Pastrana, who after previously participating in the 2004 and 2005 editions of the race was thrilled to take part in the hill climb once again – this time in a Porsche. The daredevil's previous experience certainly served him well: He was the winner of the Porsche GT4 Cayman Clubsport class, with a time of 10 minutes 34 seconds. JR Hildebrand, known for his appearances in the IndyCar racing series, also achieved a time of less than 10 minutes 40 seconds. Armbruster knows: "This is a mark that will be hard to beat when we return to compete in 2019."

The perfect choice: Pikes Peak legend Jeff Zwart coaches the new Porsche class

The drivers racing in the new Porsche class were coached by Pikes Peak legend Jeff Zwart. The commercial film director and racing driver took part in the famous hill climb a total of 14 times, achieving eight class victories and multiple records in the "Time Attack" division. All of his victories were achieved in variants of the Porsche 911. Zwart decided not to race himself this year in pursuit of a potential ninth win so that he could share his extensive experience with the Porsche Cayman GT4 Clubsport drivers and support them throughout the practice runs and the race.

Before the race, he spoke with Porsche about his successes and the distinct features of the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb:

Link Collection

Link to this article
https://newsroom.porsche.com/en/motorsports/porsche-pikes-peak-international-hill-climb-rocky-mountains-race-cayman-gt4-clubsport-class-jeff-zwart-interview-16049.html

Media Package
https://pmdb.porsche.de/newsroomzips/a992fe78-dae0-457c-93b2-90517671628b.zip

External Links
https://911-magazine.porsche.com/en/

Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Aktiengesellschaft
Porscheplatz 1
70435 Stuttgart