

Porsche returns to the scene of great triumphs in Texas

28/08/2024 Porsche Penske Motorsport will line up on the grid with two Porsche 963 at the Circuit of The Americas (COTA) on 1 September. The FIA World Endurance Championship WEC returns to the Formula 1 track near Austin for the third-to-last round of the 2024 season. The race will run for six hours.

Atlanta. Between 2015 and 2017, Porsche clinched three consecutive victories in Texas with the 919 Hybrid. This year, Porsche arrives leading the manufacturers' standings. Factory drivers Kévin Estre from France, André Lotterer from Germany, and Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium are on top of the drivers' championship. The customer team Manthey holds the lead in the LMGT3 class with their two Porsche 911 GT3 R.

Porsche Motorsport has fond memories of the Grand Prix circuit on the outskirts of Austin, Texas. In 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Porsche 919 Hybrid LMP race car secured overall FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) victories at the Circuit of The Americas (COTA). The 911 RSR also won in the LMGTE Pro class in 2015. For this Sunday's six-hour race (September 1), Porsche Penske Motorsport

aims to replicate past successes with their two 682 HP Porsche 963. Customer race teams Hertz Team Jota and Proton Competition will field three more hybrid prototypes in the Hypercar class. In the LMGT3 category, the experienced partner team Manthey will race two Porsche 911 GT3 R with up to 550 HP.

“We are very much looking forward to the FIA WEC's return to Austin,” states Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. “On one hand, we have great memories of past WEC events in Texas, and on the other hand, we are returning after a successful test. Our factory team is well-prepared for the challenge. The third-to-last race of the year marks the beginning of the 2024 season's final push. We are leading both the manufacturers' and drivers' standings, and we aim to maintain and extend this lead with a strong result in Austin. We anticipate a very tight competition and a quite literally hot race.”

“We learned a lot during our recent tests in Austin. At the end of July, we encountered both heavy rain and intense heat,” explains Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. “We covered more than three WEC race distances during the test, and everything ran smoothly. Additionally, in the presence of several other Hypercar competitors, it became clear that the fans can look forward to an exciting six-hour contest. I'm confident that both Porsche 963 from the works team, as well as the three identical customer-run cars, will be in the mix at the front.”

“The circuit is a world-class facility and has put on fantastic races for the WEC championship nearly a decade ago,” states Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. “Our organization has had exposure to the track in both IndyCar as well as with our NASCAR teams. Additionally, our sports car team will have invested some test days in COTA prior to hitting the track on the race weekend. This race will test both the cars and the drivers, as Texas in the middle of summer can be very warm. The Porsche Penske Motorsport WEC team has been performing well in all conditions in 2024, so we will be pushing for our organizations first win at COTA.”

The race

The six-hour race at Circuit of The Americas (COTA) is titled “Lone Star Le Mans”. The FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) previously visited the Formula 1 circuit between 2013 and 2017 and again during the 2019/20 season. With three overall victories, Porsche is the most successful manufacturer in these WEC races held just outside of Austin. At the end of August and beginning of September, air temperatures often soar close to 104 degrees Fahrenheit (40 degrees Celsius), with asphalt temperatures exceeding 122 F (50 C). This presents a significant challenge for tire management as the surfaces heat up considerably.

The 3.42-mile (5.513-kilometer) circuit with 20 corners has hosted Formula 1 Grands Prix eleven times since its opening in 2012. The facility is known for its distinctive observation tower, a steep climb leading into the first corner and a fast sequence of corners at the beginning of the second sector. The track is also characterized by extremely bumpy asphalt. As in São Paulo, Brazil (most recent round of the championship) the race direction is counterclockwise. Many drivers enjoy the event, as Austin is celebrated as the “Live Music Capital of the World,” offering a high entertainment value with its

numerous event venues.

An overview of the drivers and vehicles

Hypercar (Porsche 963):
- Porsche Penske Motorsport No. 5: Matt Campbell (Australia), Michael Christensen (Denmark), Frédéric Makowiecki (France)
- Porsche Penske Motorsport No. 6: Kévin Estre (France), André Lotterer (Germany), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium)
- Hertz Team Jota No. 12: Will Stevens (UK), Callum Ilott (UK), Norman Nato (France)
- Hertz Team Jota No. 38: Jenson Button (UK), Phil Hanson (UK), Oliver Rasmussen (Denmark)
- Proton Competition No. 99: Julien Andlauer (France), Neel Jani (Switzerland), Harry Tincknell (UK)

LMGT3 (Porsche 911 GT3 R):
- Manthey EMA No. 91: Yasser Shahin (Australia), Morris Schuring (Netherlands), Richard Lietz (Austria)
- Manthey PureRxcing No. 92: Alex Malykhin (UK), Joel Sturm (Germany), Klaus Bachler (Austria)

TV / Stream:
In North America, the race will be aired live on MotorTrend TV, on the Max Streaming app and on fiawec.tv.

Championship Standings FIA WEC:
fiawec.alkamelsystems.com

Further comments ahead of the race

Matt Campbell, Driver, No. 5 Porsche Penske Motorsport Porsche 963:
“We’ve tested at Austin multiple times, which was really beneficial. However, we weren’t alone on track as other manufacturers were also present. We feel well-prepared. Let's see if that translates into the race. As far as I know, a few minor changes were made to the track after our last test, so there will be something new to discover. But that’s the same for everyone. The event in Texas has always been very entertaining, and I’m sure this year will be no different – very exciting and very hot.”

Laurens Vanthoor, Driver, No. 6 Porsche Penske Motorsport Porsche 963:
“With only three races left, the goal is clear: We want to become world champions! From now on, we’ll be more strategic, focusing on consistent points finishes. Of course, we want to win every race if we get the chance. Our recent test at the circuit went well. Austin is a very cool city, although it does get extremely hot. I’m looking forward to it. I always enjoy racing in the US.”

Dieter Gass, Team Principal, Hertz Team Jota:
“We’re excited to return to Austin. The track is very demanding and interesting for drivers with a good

mix of fast corners and a long straight. After São Paulo, where we lost out on a better result due to a few small mistakes, we're aiming for another strong performance in Austin, similar to what we achieved in the first half of the season.

Neel Jani, Driver, No. 99 Proton Competition Porsche 963:
"I expect a tough race for us because, unlike the other Hypercar teams, we haven't tested there. We'll have to learn quickly during practice. I know Austin and the conditions from my LMP1 days. The weather always brings some excitement. It can get extremely hot, and suddenly intense thunderstorms with heavy rain can occur – we've experienced it all. I think we'll see different tire strategies due to the heat, which will make it exciting and interesting for teams, drivers, and fans."

Morris Schuring, Driver, No. 91 Manthey EMA Porsche 911 GT3 R:
"In São Paulo, we showed great potential, but unfortunately, we didn't get the result to match. We want to change that in Austin and have done a test there – not with the 911 GT3 R, but with [Porsche 911 GT3] Cup cars based on the 911. It helped me get a good feel for the track. My co-driver Yasser Shahin put in a great performance, and Richard Lietz was also satisfied. We feel well-prepared and want to defend our team's top positions. It will be my first race in the US, and I'm really looking forward to it!"

Joel Sturm, Driver, No. 92 Manthey PureRxcing Porsche 911 GT3 R:
"After our victory in Brazil, we're heading to Austin with a bit of a points cushion. The confidence within the team is very high. Our aim in Texas is to further extend our lead at the top – or at least, maintain it. I'm expecting a tough race. The Circuit of The Americas has several long straights, which don't play to our car's strengths. But our Manthey team has proven time and time again how formidable it is. We handle every challenge that comes our way. I'm confident that we'll score a lot of points in Austin and take another step towards the championship."

The schedule (Local Austin Time)

Friday, August 30
12:40 p.m. – 2:10 p.m. – Free Practice 1
6:10 p.m. – 7:40 p.m. – Free Practice 2

Saturday, August 31
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Free Practice 3
3:00 p.m. – 3:12 p.m. – LMGT3 Qualifying
3:20 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. – LMGT3 Hyperpole
3:40 p.m. – 3:52 p.m. – Hypercar Qualifying
4:00 p.m. – 4:10 p.m. – Hypercar Hyperpole

Sunday, September 1
13:00 p.m. – 19:00 p.m. – Race – Lone Star Le Mans (Six-Hours)

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Subline: Jonathan Diuguid (Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport)

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