

Rennsport Reunion Legends: Vol. 9

15/09/2023 Celebrating the motorsports stars that have helped make Porsche legendary in the run up to Rennsport Reunion 7

Atlanta. At Rennsport Reunion, we celebrate the stories and accomplishments of legendary drivers that gave their all for Porsche. Each week leading up to the event, we will showcase drivers and share their stories. These are the heroes of Rennsport Reunion 7 for the week of September 15: Alwin Springer, Danny Sullivan, and Gijs van Lennep.

Alwin Springer

It was as at the helm of Vasek Polak's race campaigns that Alwin Springer first made his name in the North American Porsche Motorsport community. He oversaw the preparation of a wide variety of customer race cars at their operation in Manhattan Beach, California, including examples of the 904, 906, 907, 908 and 911. In addition, Springer was also involved in the dominant appearance of the Porsche 917 in Can-Am during the early 1970s, having spent four months in Zuffenhausen, Germany learning everything he could about the car and its development potential.

Springer forged close ties with the factory and, in 1975, established ANDIAL, a Porsche performance specialist tuning both race and road car engines. Widely respected and proven in the toughest endurance races, ANDIAL became synonymous with reliability and performance of Porsche race cars from the 1970s through the 1990s.

In 1997, Springer took up a new role as the first president of Porsche Motorsport North America, a position that he held until his retirement in 2004.

In recognition of his decades of tireless work with and for Porsche, Springer has been appointed Co-Grand Marshal at Rennsport 7 alongside Patrick Long.

Danny Sullivan

Kentucky-born Danny Sullivan walked an unconventional path to sporting glory, including potentially invaluable stints in both a military academy and as a New York City cab driver. Presented with a course at the highly regarded Jim Russell Racing School in the United Kingdom for his 21st birthday, Sullivan would sharpen his skills in European single-seater racing reaching Formula One in 1983.

He returned to the US and the dominate motorsport brand of the decade, Indy Car, in 1984 winning three races that season. His skill was so apparent that he was called upon to join the sport's powerhouse team, Penske Racing, in 1985. "Sully" would go on to take a dramatic "Spin and Win" victory at the Indianapolis 500 his first Month of May with Penske. Three years later, in 1988, he would clinch the Indy Car championship with four wins and three further podiums in the season.

A multi-discipline driver in a career that spanned two decades, Sullivan has also competed in NASCAR, drove for Tyrell in F1 and raced at Le Mans on four occasions. His most successful outing there was in 1994 when he drove the Dauer 962 entered by Porsche. Sharing the car with works driver Hans-Joachim Stuck and Thierry Boutsen, Sullivan finished third overall and second in class. He had multiple starts in endurance sports car races in North America at the wheel of Porsche machinery including co-driving with AJ Foyt in Porsche 962 entries and a year with Joest Racing. Sullivan also has multiple starts in Porsche 911-based race cars with Brumos Racing and Rohr during his career.

Gijs van Lennep

Born a few miles from Circuit Zandvoort in the Netherlands, Gijs van Lennep was drawn to racing from an early age. His first competitive outings were in a Volkswagen Beetle, his first win in a 904 Carrera GTS. Van Lennep would go on to enjoy further success with privately entered examples of the Porsche 906, 908/2 and 911, winning the inaugural Porsche Cup in 1970.

The achievement was enough to see the talented Dutchman drafted to drive the Porsche 917 in its second year of competition, sharing the AAW entry with David Piper. Van Lennep experienced a high-

speed tire blowout on lap 120, from which he was able to walk away unscathed.

Undeterred by the incident, he returned to Le Mans in 1971, driving the Martini Racing Porsche 917 K with Helmut Marko. The pair would win the race in commanding fashion, becoming the first car to cover more than 3,107 miles (5,000 Km) over the 24 hours, a record that would stand for 39 years.

In 1973, van Lennep took a famous win against the odds in a 911 Carrera RSR on the final staging of the Targa Florio and stunned the racing world when he and Herbert Müller almost won Le Mans outright in 1974 driving a Porsche 911 RSR Turbo. He took another overall victory for Porsche at Le Mans in 1976, this time driving the works 936 with Jacky Ickx, and retired later that same year.

Image Sublines

Path: media/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Patrick Long and fellow Grand Marshall Alwin Springer with Porsche 962-001 courtesy of PMNA.jpg
Subline: Alwin Springer (right) and fellow Rennsport Reunion 7 Grand Marshall Patrick Long with the Porsche 962-001.

Path: media/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: 1994 - Danny Sullivan at 24 Hours of Le Mans in the Dauer Porsche 962.jpg
Subline: Danny Sullivan pilots the Dauer Porsche 962 at the 24 of Le Mans in 1994.

Path: media/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Gijs van Lennep at Nürburgring
Subline: Gijs van Lennep wheels the Porsche 908:3 at the 1000Kn of Nürburgring in 1971.

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