

Keating Conquers. Texan Takes Bahrain WEC Win with Porsche Customer Team.

16/12/2019 Porsche Motorsport Weekly Event Notes

Porsche Profile. Event Story Lines.

Keating Conquers. Texan Takes Bahrain WEC Win with Porsche Customer Team

Porsche has concluded the calendar year with another victory in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). At the Eight Hours of Bahrain on December 14, American Ben Keating (Tomball, Texas) and his two Dutch teammates Larry ten Voorde and Jeroen Bleekemolen won the LMGTE-Am class in the No. 57 Team Project 1 Porsche 911 RSR. It was the Texan's first win in WEC and with Porsche. With the victory, the 2018 – 2019 WEC GTE-Am class team championship effort has moved to the top of the team points' standings.

The Porsche GT Team (LMGTE-Pro class) has enjoyed a successful start to the 2019 – 2020 WEC race season, however the squad was struck by misfortune at the eight-hour race. The new Porsche 911 RSR spent time in the class lead, only to have technical problems relegate both factory-run race cars down the final finishing order. A shock absorber broke on the No. 92 car driven by the world champions Kévin Estre (France) and Michael Christensen (Denmark), while a wheel nut on the sister car manned by Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) and Richard Lietz (Austria) came loose and caused tire damage. The repairs resulted in both ca. 515-hp cars losing two laps to the frontrunners. Despite great teamwork and a strong performance from the drivers, the gap could not be closed. The No. 91 Porsche was categorized in fifth-place followed by the No. 92 Porsche 911 RSR in sixth-place. Porsche heads into the second half of the season ranked second in the class manufacturers' classification.

The next two rounds of the world championship take place in the United States. Round Five is scheduled for the Circuit of the Americas (COTA) in Austin, Texas on February 22. The sixth race of the season, the 1,000-Miles of Sebring, will run in conjunction with the internationally renowned Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring in Florida. For the second year, the WEC race will run on Friday, March 18 while the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship race will run for 12-hours on Saturday, March 19.

Pascal Zurlinden, Director Factory Motorsport.

"I'm delighted for our Team Project 1 customer squad, who claimed their first win of the season and took over the championship lead. For Ben, Jeroen and Larry – our new Porsche family members in the WEC – this is a well-deserved and tremendous success. In the GTE-Pro class, our works teams were plagued by a lot of bad luck. Finishing fifth and sixth still puts us in a good position in the championship. We'll strike back next year at the Austin round."

Alexander Stehlig, Head of Operations FIA WEC.

"What a huge disappointment. We only achieved fifth and sixth at the longest and most important race of the first half of the season. The fact that a lot of points were awarded at this round makes it even worse. We had minor defects on both cars, which we'll now take a good look at. We didn't think the last outing of the year would turn out like this."

Ben Keating, Driver, No. 57 Team Project One Porsche 911 RSR.

"What a fantastic race! When you start from pole, everything is much easier. I was able to immediately build a gap at the front after the start. I was in high form. So good, in fact, that my team left me in the car for three straight stints. This had the advantage that we could save a driver change at the end. My teammates put in extremely strong drives; the team did a perfect job. This is my first win in the WEC, and it's now time to celebrate!"

Richard Lietz, Driver, No. 91 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"We simply have to accept this result. We all did our best, but sometimes we even stood in our own way. We'll learn from this and will return stronger. The important thing is that we reached the finish line with our cars and at least earned some points."

Gianmaria Bruni, Driver, No. 91 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"This is not exactly the nicest present just before Christmas. Our car was fast and consistent as always, but this time we were unlucky on the technical side. We'll examine the causes in more detail during the test on Sunday. I think it is terrific how our team never gave up and kept pushing despite the setbacks. We would have deserved more, but sometimes that's how it goes in motor racing. Setbacks are just part of it."

Kévin Estre, Driver, No. 92 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"Initially the race went well for us. With this track layout, it was hard to find an opportunity to overtake. But at some point it worked and I was in the lead. As a result, I was able to build a decent lead, but then bad luck struck. The left rear shock broke. We lost a lot of time in the pits and couldn't catch up. We've lost a lot of ground in the drivers' standings."

Michael Christensen, Driver, No. 92 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"Our car was strong, the team worked perfectly and we drivers did our job. A top result would have been possible at Bahrain. Unfortunately, this time technology threw a spanner in the works. Things like this can happen, although of course it's painful for us, particularly at this race where so many points were up for grabs."

Moorespeed for Dickinson. Young Driver Returns to Texas-Team in Porsche One-Make Series.

Moorespeed will enter the 2020 IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA by Yokohama with driver Riley Dickinson. The 17-year-old driver will follow his successful rookie season by chasing the Porsche one-make series' Platinum Cup class championship in the No. 53 Moorespeed Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car. Dickinson finished third in the 2019 season-long standings, highlighted by a race win in the final weekend at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. The season was his first behind the wheel of a car after racing karts near his Austin, Texas-area home at the age of seven.

Dickinson's work with Moorespeed was noticed by others in the industry, as he was one of four young drivers selected to work with Hurley Haywood and Patrick Long, among other Porsche notables, at the Porsche Young Driver Academy (PYDA) in November. Through his work at the PYDA, Dickinson remains a finalist for the 2020 Hurley Haywood Scholarship. The annual award provides the selected driver a package of tangible assets for the upcoming IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA season.

The 2020 IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA by Yokohama season begins at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg, March 13-15 on the street course.

David Moore, President, Moorespeed.

"Riley is a special young man with a bright future. He has grown so much. Everyone on our team is champing on the bit to get back on track to help him achieve his goals. Preparations for 2020 began right after Petit Le Mans by racing in Carrera Cup Asia, then back home here at COTA in the Radical Cup. An hour after he won the last race, Riley caught a plane straight to Birmingham [Alabama] to participate in the Porsche Young Driver Academy, all the while keeping his grades up in high school. He's now spending time at our workshop after school quizzing me how to reach out to companies who may be interested in sponsoring our GT3 Cup driver development program. Riley keeps us on our toes to say the least."

Riley Dickinson, Driver, No. 53 Moorespeed Porsche 911 GT3 Cup.

"We grew as a team each time that we were together for race weekends and testing in 2019. From my side, every moment that I was in the car it gave me the opportunity to continue my progression as a driver, and that continued all the way up until the last laps at the season finale at Road Atlanta. I am looking forward to starting off the year having a full season together under our belts. With the exception of St. Petersburg, we have been to all these tracks previously, and I believe that will make a meaningful difference in 2020. Having the ability to review data and notes from the previous year will be a huge help in terms of being able to immediately get to work as soon as we hit the track. I'm looking forward to getting started!"

Pfaff Plans. Toronto Team Back in IMSA GTD for 2020.

Hot on the heels of its third-place finish in the overall IMSA WeatherTech GTD championship in 2019, Pfaff Motorsports recently announced its plans for the 2020 season and beyond. A new multiyear title partnership with Motul will allow the Toronto, Canada area-based team to once again contest the Pro-Am style championship with the No. 9 Porsche 911 GT3 R. Canadian Zacharie Robichon returns to the team's full-season driver lineup alongside Intercontinental GT Challenge champion Dennis Olsen (Norway). Porsche Test and Development driver Lars Kern (Germany) will join the team for the series' endurance rounds with Porsche factory driver Patrick Pilet (France) completing the lineup at the Rolex 24 At Daytona.

In 2019, Robichon earned the WeatherTech Sprint Cup Championship with Pfaff. The Porsche North America Young Driver Academy graduate and 2018 IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Canada by Yokohama Champion helped Porsche earn the Manufacturer's title in the championship-within-championship for IMSA GTD races under six-hours in length. The program won two races in IMSA competition last season with Robichon sharing the Lime Rock Park class win with Olsen. A second GTD class race victory came with now Porsche Factory Driver Matt Campbell (Australia) at Road America.

At a launch event held in front of over 300 people, Pfaff Motorsports, Pfaff Automotive Partners – including Canada's largest Porsche dealership – and Motul unveiled the team's new livery for 2020. The new artwork is an evolution of 2019's popular "plaid Porsche" design that also references historic Motul liveries.

Steve Bortolotti, Team Manager, Pfaff Motorsports.

"We are beyond excited to have a new long-term title partner in Motul. It's great to have Zach back for a second season, and having raced with us last year, including a win at Lime Rock, we already know that Dennis is a great fit for our team. In our second year in the WeatherTech series, we're really looking to build on our learnings from our rookie year, execute perfectly throughout the season, and aim for our first championship."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



Frank Wiesmann - Motorsports and Brand Heritage

Manager, Product Communications
770-290-3414
frank.wiesmann@porsche.us

Link Collection

Link to this article

https://newsroom.porsche.com/en_US/motorsport/porsche-motorsport-weekly-december-16-2019-19581.html

Media Package

<https://pmdb.porsche.de/newsroomzips/b63d4361-d355-4dca-8d2b-8504d0110a0c.zip>