

First win for the new Porsche 911 RSR

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23/07/2017 The race weekend at Lime Rock Park could not have ended better for Porsche: The new Porsche 911 RSR celebrated its historic first victory at the racetrack in the US state of Connecticut. On Saturday, Patrick Pilet and Dirk Werner won round seven of the IMSA SportsCar Championship, North America's premier sports car race series.

The race car, which Porsche Motorsport designed from new at Weissach, had already posted three pole positions previously. In the fiercely-competitive and gripping race from start to finish, Porsche managed to beat its strong rivals from BMW, Chevrolet, Ferrari and Ford. Since Lime Rock was exclusively for GT vehicles, this meant that the Porsche pilots in the #911 Porsche 911 RSR were also the overall winners. In the second 911 RSR (#912) fielded by the Porsche GT Team, their teammates Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) clinched second place, making the weekend perfect for Porsche with a double victory. And the icing on the cake was the GTD class victory thanks to Jörg

Bergmeister (Germany) and Patrick Lindsey (USA) in the 911 GT3 R campaigned by the Park Place Motorsports customer team.

When the 24-strong field of the GTLM and GTD classes took off on the short 2.414-kilometre race track in the idyllic rural region of Connecticut, conditions were cloudy and not as hot as Friday's temperatures. In the two free practices and the qualifying, teams and drivers had had to contend with temperatures exceeding 30 degrees Celsius. Traditionally, Lime Rock is a two-day event. Racing is not permitted on Sundays as a church service is held in a small chapel close to the track. The crew of the Porsche GT Team coped well with the overtime hours in the heat, and were rewarded with pole position for the 911 RSR. The squad watched from the pit wall as polesitter Gianmaria Bruni made a catapult start off the line to pull clear of the field.

911 RSR still in the lead

On this short track where overtaking is extremely difficult, Dirk Werner also got away cleanly at the start to make up one position, which had the Porsches running in positions one and two at an early stage. After an unintentional detour off the track, Gianmaria Bruni had to come in for an earlier than scheduled first pit stop to remove grass from the radiator. Still, he managed to hand the 911 RSR over to his teammate Laurens Vanthoor while still in the lead. Dirk Werner pulled into the pits for a service and driver change immediately behind him. Patrick Pilet took the wheel of the #911 vehicle, and promptly rejoined the race in front his team colleague. Hence, shortly before the halfway mark of the 2.40-hour race, he was in the lead, with Laurens Vanthoor behind him in second place. With the Porsche duo fending off all attacks from their pursuers, this order remained to the flag. After 181 laps of Lime Rock Park, the double victory for the new 911 RSR was achieved – the greatest success of the season so far.

Victory in the GTD class, in which customer teams field the Porsche 911 GT3 R, rounded off Porsche's successful weekend at Lime Rock. This marks the seventh victory for Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) on this circuit. For this race, he joined forces with Patrick Lindsey (USA) for Park Place Motorsports. His factory driver colleague Patrick Long (USA) clinched third place for Alegra Motorsports with Daniel Morad (USA).

The highlight of the test phase was a 50-hour long-run at Sebring. Even before its first race, the 911 RSR proved to be reliable. The test on the bumpy Florida racetrack, famous for the extreme challenges it throws at man and machine, ran without any major problems. And when the new 911 RSR went racing, it immediately proved competitive. At the long distance classics of Daytona and Sebring, it impressed with strong performances. Until then, Porsche Motorsport had completed over 45,000 test kilometres on various racetracks – more than in the development of any other Porsche GT racer.

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