

# Priaulx Enters Record Book as First Winner of Porsche Carrera Cup North America

19/03/2021 A mixture of young up-and-coming drivers, veteran racing champions and gentleman drivers took to the notoriously bumpy track

The Porsche Carrera Cup North America continues to tick off a series of firsts in the newest one-make championship for the German marque. After debuting the newest Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car in an open series test here at Sebring International Raceway, a 35-car entry list was eager to tackle the 3.74-mile, 17-turn circuit in central Florida this weekend. The first of twin, 45-minute races followed a 30-minute qualifying session for the three classes that make-up the new race series – Pro, Pro-Am and Pro-Am 991. A mixture of young up-and-coming drivers, veteran racing champions and gentleman drivers took to the notoriously bumpy track at 5:30 p.m. E.T. on Friday, March 18 for Round 1. At the conclusion of the first race of the 16-round championship which utilizes the Michelin Pilot Sport Cup N3 racing slick on both the new Porsche 911 GT3 Cup, type 992 and type 991.2 race cars, Sebastian Priaulx (United Kingdom) and Kay van Berlo (Netherlands) continued to highlight the expertise of the veteran Kelly-Moss Road & Race operation with a one-two finish in the race. Porsche racing champion Leh Keen (Dublin, Georgia) finished in third-place. With the victory, which follows fastest laps in practice 1 and 2 as well as in today's qualifying, Priaulx holds the distinction of leading most every category in the infant Porsche Carrera Cup North America record books.

Round 2 of the new one-make championship will start at 10:10 a.m. ET, Friday, March 19. The grid is set based on the second fastest lap in qualifying or the driver's fastest race lap if it is quicker than their qualifying lap time. This will place Priaulx, van Berlo, Keen and Riley Dickinson (New Braunfels, Texas) in the top four-spots at the start on Friday.

## **Dr. Daniel Armbruster, president & CEO, Porsche Motorsport North America.**

"Watching today's race I was reminded of why North America has needed a Porsche Carrera Cup. Racing in America is extremely competitive, a perfect framework for our new series. We are very happy with how this first race went. Most importantly, it was safe. I am most pleased with that. But it was also very competitive. Everyone was fighting very hard and that is what a Carrera Cup event is: every position in every class being fought over to the very end. My hope, my expectation actually, is this will be the new normal of Porsche one-make racing. We want to set the international standard on and off the race track."

## **Pro Class.**

Sebastian Priaulx (United Kingdom) sat on the inaugural pole position of the 34-car grid in the first

Porsche Carrera Cup North America event. Despite leading from the drop of the green flag through to the checkered flag 45-minutes later, the results sheet does not tell the whole story. It was never an easy cruise for the 20-year-old driver from Guernsey. Despite having led each of the two practice sessions and setting quick time in qualifying with a lap of 2:03.109, Priaux's No. 15 Kelly-Moss Road & Race Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car was under constant assault by teammate Kay van Berlo (Netherlands) in the No. 3 machine. Although incidents proved the hard-driving efforts in the one-make series further back, the two Porsche Junior Program North America drivers fought cleanly. A single yellow flag with 16-minutes remaining narrowed the pack. Priaux expertly brought the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup field back to the green flag making a perfect re-start with four-minutes remaining. Despite the initial pressure, the Dutchman was not able to close on the No. 15 and Priaux secured victory lane. Just behind the pair in third-place at the flag was sports car champion Leh Keen (Dublin, Georgia) in the guards red No. 12 entered by 311RS Motorsport.

Seven of the eight Porsche Junior Program North America drivers finished in the top-eight in today's first race with Priaux earning the victory ahead of van Berlo. Parker Thompson (Canada) took the checkered flag in fourth-place with the No. 9 JDX Racing entry, Dylan Murry (Cumming, Georgia) closed-out the top-five in the No. 38 BGB Motorsports machine after a nail-biting battle with Riley Dickinson (New Braunfels, Texas) driving the No. 53 Team Hardpoint-EBM Porsche. Sebastian Carazo (Puerto Rico) drove the No. 27 of Kelly-Moss to seventh-place while Sean McAlister (Beverly Hills, California) raced the No. 2 JDX machine to eighth in the field. Max Root (San Diego, California) in the No. 7 Moorespeed-Wright Motorsports Porsche had contact early and finished 14th in the Pro class.

## **Pro-Am Class.**

Alan Metni (Austin, Texas) brought the familiar iFly No. 99 to the new Porsche Carrera Cup North America and, despite heated competition in the Pro-Am class – for drivers 40-years-old or older who do not consider motorsport their primary profession – continued his winning ways in Porsche one-make series. The Texan skillfully placed his Kelly-Moss Road & Race-prepared Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car throughout the 45-minute race to hold-off heavy pressure in a nip-and-tuck battle with Efrin Castro (Dominican Republic) who was driving the No. 65 Team Hardpoint-EBM machine. Charging hard behind the leading duo was Curt Swearingin (Chattanooga, Tennessee) in the No. 17 ACI Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car.

## **Pro-Am 991 Class.**

Kurt Hunt (Atlanta, Georgia) led start to finish in the Pro-Am 991 class. The Georgian opened the day with an impressive run to earn the pole position for the class dedicated to the previous generation Porsche 911 GT3 Cup 991.2 race car. In his first professionally sanctioned race, Hunt was able to stay ahead of the skilled drive of Matt Halcome (Dalls, Georgia) in the No. 55 and sports car veteran Grady Willingham (Birmingham, Alabama) piloting the No. 21 Porsche, both prepared by Goldcrest Motorsports.

## Info

Porsche Carrera Cup North America is the premier one-make race series in the United States and Canada utilizing a combination of the latest Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car, type 992, and MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport Cup N3 racing slick to challenge the best road and street race courses on the continent. As with all national Carrera Cups worldwide, the inaugural season of the championship is scheduled to host 16-rounds. Each 45-minute race counts toward a season-long driver and team championship in each of three classes: Pro, Pro-Am and Pro-Am 991.

Live timing and scoring of every session, a direct link to the live video feed, and more information on North America's first Porsche Carrera Cup can be found at [www.PorscheCarreraCup.us](http://www.PorscheCarreraCup.us).

## Sebring Porsche Carrera Cup North America Event Schedule. Round 2.

### Friday, March 19.

Race 2. Pre-Race. 10:05 a.m. – 10:10 a.m. ET – 5-minutes

Race 2. 10:10 a.m. – 10:55 a.m. ET – 45-minutes

# MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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