



Porsche Carrera Cup North America celebrates 50th race at Sebring season opener

19/03/2024 The Porsche Carrera Cup North America celebrated its 50th event with the premier one-make series' first twilight to dark race at Sebring International Raceway.

Sebring, Florida. The March 15 race, the second 40-minute feature of the weekend for the all-Porsche championship, witnessed 43 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race cars battle for supremacy on the 3.74-mile Sebring International Raceway. Rounds one and two were split by two first-time race winners in the top Pro class and familiar faces returning victory lane for the Pro-Am and Masters categories. It was the fourth consecutive year that championship opened at the legendary Sebring, Florida race track in support of the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring.

Round 1. Thursday. March 14, 2024.

Thursday's first round of the 16 race, eight weekend support series was run near the heat of the day on March 14. The full field charged into turn one of the 17-turn circuit with fender-to-fender battles

raging throughout the three-class race. At the sharp end of the grid, the Pro class for aspiring young racers, first time Porsche Carrera Cup North America participant Loek Hartog (Netherlands) pushed the No. 24 Kellymoss machine to the front of the field just ahead of fellow newcomer Gustav Burton (United Kingdom) in the No. 20 MDK Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car. The Dutchman was able to carry the Kellymoss entry to the checkered flag despite a mid-race caution that slowed the field. In the late going, Burton, who was passed by second-year driver Ryan Yardley (New Zealand) early, was able to repass in the No. 78 Topp Racing Performance Porsche to secure second place in the Pro class. Yardley took third.

The Pro-Am class was won by James Sofronas (Villa Park, California) in the No. 14 GMG Racing Porsche. It was the veteran Porsche racer's third consecutive class win in the series dating back to the 2023 season finale. Newly re-named for 2024, the Masters class (for drivers 50 years-old or older) saw another familiar face return to the paddock and victory lane. Having won the retired Pro-Am 991 class in the 2021 inaugural season, Matt Halcome (Dallas, Georgia) brought the popular Scooby Doo "Mystery Machine" livery back to the Porsche Carrera Cup North America for the first time since this event in 2023. Halcome charged hard in the ACI Motorsports No. 55 to win the 40-minute event.

Round 2. Friday. March 15, 2024.

The golden celebration race was highlighted by another early battle in the quickly growing rivalry between newcomers Hartog and Burton. Unlike race one where Hartog started from pole position, it was Burton who took the top spot on Friday by virtue of setting the second fastest lap in Thursday morning's 30-minute qualifying session. The Brit used it to his advantage to fend off Hartog who went wide into turn one at the start and fell to third place in the running order behind Yardley.

Behind the leading contingent, the battles also raged with several cars making contact. New Zealand's Madeline Stewart in the No. 82 JDX Racing Porsche was eliminated in the first lap with damage to the rear of her car while a first lap yellow flag slowed the field. Several more incidents ensued following the race's restart which would eventually impede the efforts of 2022 and 2023 Masters – then known as Am class – champion Mark Kvamme (Columbus, Ohio).

Ten second penalties for restart violations hampered several more competitors including Hartog, Halcome and Chris Bellomo (Portola Valley, California).

Ultimately, it was Burton who would score his first victory overall for MDK Motorsports. 2022 Pro-Am champion Alan Metni (Austin, Texas) was back to his winning ways in the No. 99 Kellymoss Porsche while Carlos De Quesada (Tampa, Florida) returned to the series in strong fashion with a Masters class win in the No. 22 Alegria Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car.

- **Pro class winners. Race 1.**Loek Hartog (No. 24 Kellymoss Porsche 911 GT3 Cup). **Race 2.**Gustav Burton (No. 20 MDK Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Pro-Am class winners. Race 1.**James Sofronas (No. 14 GMG Porsche 911 GT3 Cup). **Race 2.**Alan

Metni (No. 99 Kellymoss Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).

- **Masters class winners. Race 1.** Matt Halcome (No. 55 ACI Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
Race 2. Carlos De Quesada (No. 22 Alegria Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Race 1.** Loek Hartog (No. 24 Kellymoss Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Race 2.** Gustav Burton (No. 20 MDK Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Race 1.** James Sofronas (No. 14 GMG Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Race 2.** Alan Metni (No. 99 Kellymoss Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Race 1.** Matt Halcome (No. 55 ACI Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).
- **Race 2.** Carlos De Quesada (No. 22 Alegria Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup).

Highlights

50th round

March 18 and 19, 2021, a new era of Porsche one-make racing came to the United States and Canada: the Porsche Carrera Cup North America. The series was the international debut of the type 992 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car and the first time a Carrera Cup had been sanctioned on the continent. After three seasons of intense competition that has seen all three of its champions – Seb Priaulx (2021), Parker Thompson (2022) and Riley Dickinson (2023) – move up to and win in open competition series, the premier one-make race championship in North America ran its 50th race. Of those original starters, two drivers, Efrin Castro and John Goetz, have raced in every Carrera Cup round while race entrants Kellymoss, JDX Racing and Topp Racing Performance have entered at least one car of all 50 rounds.

Night moves

Round two of the 2024 season marked the first time the Porsche Carrera Cup North America has competed at night. The race started at 7:15 p.m. ET and ended 40minutes later under a blanket of darkness. Based on the Porsche 911 GT3 road car, the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car has completely functioning headlights and taillights. Drivers found the dark Sebring International Raceway a pleasant trade-off to the hot, near-90 F temperatures they faced in round one of the championship at 5:00 p.m. ET the day before.

Burton call

The arrangement for Gustav Burton to drive the No. 20 MDK Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car in the Pro class came late. The veteran one-make racers from the United Kingdom finalized the arrangement to pilot the car with the Mark Kvamme-owned race team within the last week; too late for

him to participate in the pre-season test here on March 4 and 5. The first session on Wednesday was his first time racing at Sebring, in the United States and outside of the UK – with the exception of limited runs on the European continent.

Yokohama debut

Porsche Motorsport North America and Yokohama Tire Corporation began their multiyear partnership of supplying the Porsche Carrera Cup North America at Sebring. The premier one-make championship joins fellow Porsche Motorsport Pyramid North America programs, Porsche Sprint Challenge North America and Porsche Sprint Challenge USA West exclusively utilizing the Yokohama tire. The agreement gives Yokohama exclusive rights to market and sell competition tires on-site at all Porsche one-make championships in North America. Yokohama will provide the ADVAN® A005 racing slick and ADVAN® A006 tire for wet conditions on all Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race cars in the Pro, Pro-Am and Masters classes of Carrera Cup North America.

Quotes

Loek Hartog, No. 24 Kellymoss Porsche 911 GT3 Cup. Pro Winner, Race 1:

"I had to manage the gap in the last ten [to] 20 minutes. I was really happy. The team did such a great job. That really showed our potential. I hope this is a strong message for the year. Everything was new for me. There are still things for me to improve."

Gustav Burton, No. 20 MDK Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup. Pro Winner, Race 2:

"Happy with the race. We sacrificed using two sets [of tires] in quali [qualifying] to save one new set for race two. I had the pace midrace, over the last few laps I was pushing but Hartog was still catching, but he had the penalty, so I knew I had the race anyway. We have some work to do. We have the quali pace but not the race pace just yet. We will have a debrief and come back stronger. I loved the night race. I've never done one before. It was nice because it was not quite as hot in the evening. It was a really cool experience. I am very grateful to Mark [Kvamme] at MDK for helping me here. The goal is the championship. I think we have put ourselves pretty equal up at the top."

James Sofronas, No. 14 GMG Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup. Pro-Am Winner, Race 1:

"I had a really good start. I laid back and timed the green flag just right and picked up about six spots. There was a little bumping and banging but we settled in the top 10. I thought I had a gap but Marco [Cirone] was closing. I knew where I was quick, and he would catch me in other places but he raced us really clean. It was a great race for us at GMG for our first race here at Sebring; it was my first time here in eight years. I am glad it worked out the way it did."

Alan Metni, No. 99 Kellymoss Porsche 911 GT3 Cup. Pro-Am Winner. Race 2:

"It was an awesome race. It is great to be back here. I think this is some of the best, closest racing in motorsports. I think it is just awesome. I am happy to be here."

Matt Halcome, ACI Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup. Masters Winner, Race 1:

"Just glad I got through the start. It was crazy. I lost a few positions, got them back. It was just real hard, intense racing. I had out of class guys, in class guys in front of me, behind me, I was keeping my head on a swivel. The Masters class top five are right there together. I think it is going to be a great year with a lot of tough competition."

Entry list

The full Porsche Carrera Cup North America entry list can be found at: https://www.imsa.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2023/08/14/2024_PCCNA_Sebring_PreRace_EntryList.pdf

Current Porsche Carrera Cup North America Championship Point Standings

http://results.imsa.com/?season=24_2024

Broadcast

All races air on the Peacock streaming app, IMSA.tv and PorscheCarreraCup.us and are archived at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/PorscheMotorsportNorthAmerica>.

On the web: www.PorscheCarreraCup.us

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Video

https://newstv.porsche.com/porschevideos/170338_en_3000000.mp4

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