

Race Of Champions Snow + Ice: a spectacular start to a new era

19/02/2022 The biggest names in motorsport gathered in northern Sweden to crown a new Champion of Champions – and to celebrate the beginning of a fresh era of racing on ice, in close collaboration with Porsche Sweden.

The legendary Race Of Champions (ROC) was created back in 1988 by Fredrik Johnsson, President of ROC, together with Michèle Mouton, the most successful female rally driver of all time. It's an event where world-class drivers from across the different disciplines of motorsport compete in identical cars for the glory of being crowned the Champion of Champions. The first edition was held in Paris on the 10th anniversary of the inaugural World Rally Drivers Championship. It was also a celebration of the late Henri Toivonen, who died at the Tour de Corse while leading the 1986 World Championship. Since then, the unforgiving knockout competition has thrilled competitors and followers, staking its claim as an end-of-season thriller that aims to answer a never-ending debate: who really is the undisputed master of motorsport.

A new ROC era is born

This year marked the beginning of a new era for Race Of Champions. A new location was chosen near Piteå, in the north of Johnsson's home country of Sweden, and a deal with the Pite Havsbad coastal resort will see the event take place on the frozen Baltic Sea for the next five years.

Porsche Sweden also played an active part in developing and planning the 2022 event, which took place in early February. The importer supplied a fleet of vehicles, racing cars and hosted the Porsche Race of Champions Snow + Ice Challenge – a special racing event with an all-star grid.

“We were connected to Fredrik Johnsson who wanted to involve Porsche, and we have obviously worked a lot with racing events in the past couple of years,” explains Raine Wermelin, Director, Porsche Sweden. “Right away it felt like a perfect match and we are very proud of the event. Despite the challenges we faced with COVID-19 and the weather, it turned out great. To have all these legendary drivers compete here in Sweden was very emotional.”

"The Porsche Race of Champions Snow + Ice Challenge kick-started this year's ROC festival. We are honoured that Porsche, as one of the most successful manufacturers in motorsport history, is contributing official courtesy cars, racing cars, star power and excitement to this year's races," Johnsson said before the event.

Among the motorsport greats taking part in the Porsche event were 2016 FIA WEC Champion and Le Mans winner Marc Lieb and former Formula One driver, four-time Le Mans class winner, and double ALMS and IMSA Champion, Jan Magnussen. However, the early favourites fell thick and fast and the final of the Porsche Race of Champions Snow + Ice Challenge proved to be an all-Swedish affair. Pontus Fredricsson, a regular podium challenger in the Porsche Carrera Cup Scandinavia, claimed the win after a masterclass performance on the ice in a Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport.

All drama, all the way

It wasn't just the Porsche competition that provided big drama in the run up to the main ROC race: a spell of mild weather almost put an end to the whole event. First, a huge ice floe, on which a big part of the arena had been built, broke off and drifted out to sea. Then, on the night before the first day of racing a powerful snow blizzard flooded the venue with seawater, forcing another major re-build. It was only thanks to a team of staff who worked tirelessly around the clock, in freezing conditions, that the track was ready for action on time.

ROC Celebrity Challenge with superstar skiers

The main Race Of Champions event is a two-day all-out speed fest. The team competition, the ROC

Nations Cup to crown the 'World's Fastest Nation', took place on the Saturday, followed by an individual shoot-out the following day to decide the 'Champion of Champions'.

Of course, it wouldn't be a real festival without a stellar crowd filling up the VIP-lounge. But rather than just observing the action, stars from other sporting disciplines were invited by Porsche to participate in a competition of their own, to warm up the crowd. The ROC Celebrity Challenge grid consisted of superstar skiers Ingemar Stenmark, Aksel Lund Svindal and Anja Pärson together with Jonas Björkman, a former tennis-doubles world number one.

With helmets and suits on and strapped into their racing cars with six-point-harnesses, these world class competitors put on a spectacular show. The final was won by Svindal after a sensational battle with fellow ski star Stenmark, against whom he will compete head-to-head in a full season of Porsche Sprint Challenge Scandinavia this summer.

A star-studded and surreal main event

The calibre of the competition at ROC 2022 was particularly noteworthy, with drivers like the nine-time WRC Champion Sebastien Loeb, seven-time NASCAR Champion Jimmie Johnson, four-time Indy 500 winner Helio Castroneves, and four-time Formula One World Champion Sebastian Vettel chatting casually between heats.

The ROC Nations Cup is considered by some to be the warm-up for the individual Race Of Champions, but this year the crowds witnessed fierce competition from the start. After three hours of intense competition Petter Solberg, the rally and rallycross World Champion, together with his son and WRC star Oliver Solberg, were announced the winners, having beaten Team USA's Jimmie Johnson and Colton Herta in the final.

The 'Champion of Champions' was the next to be crowned, in a spectacular finale. As the competition commenced, just 60 miles from the Arctic Circle, motorsport's kings and queens fell one by one, until just two legends remained in the game. The final showdown, between Sebastien Loeb and Sebastian Vettel, was one for the history books as Loeb proved, that in the right mood and car, he not only cannot be beaten, but is one of the greatest drivers of all time. And without doubt, the 2022 ROC Champion Of Champions.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



Julian B. Hoffmann

Managing Editor Porsche Newsroom
+49 (0) 170 / 911 2771
julian.hoffmann@porsche.de

Consumption data

911 Carrera GTS (Predecessor model)

*Further information on the official fuel consumption and the official specific CO_2 emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the "Leitfaden über den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO_2-Emissionen und den Stromverbrauch neuer Personenkraftwagen" (Fuel Consumption, CO_2Emissions and Electricity Consumption Guide for New Passenger Cars), which is available free of charge at all sales outlets and from DAT (Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH, Helmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen, www.dat.de).

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Title: Raine Wermelin, Director Porsche Sweden, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Raine Wermelin, Director Porsche Sweden

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Title: Jonas Björkman, Anja Pärson, Aksel Lund Svindal, Porsche Brand Ambassador, Ingemar Stenmark, l-r, Race of Champions, Sweden, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Jonas Björkman, Anja Pärson, Porsche Brand Ambassador Aksel Lund Svindal and Ingemar Stenmark (l-r)

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Title: Jimmie Johnson, Race of Champions, Sweden, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Jimmie Johnson

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Title: Tobias Lindfors, Sebastian Loeb, Fredrik Johnsson, Aksel Johnsson, Sebastian Vettel, l-r, Race of Champions, Sweden, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Tobias Lindfors, Sebastien Loeb, Fredrik Johnsson, Aksel Johnsson and Sebastian Vettel (l-r)

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Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Aktiengesellschaft
Porscheplatz 1
70435 Stuttgart