

Season start in Daytona

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22/01/2016 The IMSA SportsCar Championship heads into the new season on 30/31 January with the 24 Hours of Daytona. Porsche celebrates a double debut at the 54th running of the sports car classic in Florida.

The new Porsche 911 RSR and the new Porsche 911 GT3 R contest their first races on the Daytona International Speedway. The Porsche North America works squad campaigns the 911 RSR in the GTLM class, with the 911 GT3 R fielded by customer teams in the GTD class. Porsche's track record at Daytona includes 22 overall and 76 class victories, making Porsche the most successful manufacturer in the history of this prestigious race.

The race

Next to Le Mans, Daytona is the greatest long distance classic in international motor racing. The 24-

hour event is held on the 5.729-kilometre Daytona International Speedway, one of the most famous racetracks in the world. Combining the original oval and the infield, the circuit includes twelve turns, two of them banked.

The Porsche drivers

Nine Porsche factory pilots and one Porsche Junior tackle Daytona. The reigning IMSA GT Champion Patrick Pilet (France) as well as Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Kévin Estre (France) take on the GTLM class in the number 911 vehicle of Porsche North America, the winner of all three GT titles in the 2015 IMSA SportsCar Championship. Sharing the cockpit of the number 912 contender for the legendary endurance race are their works driver colleagues Earl Bamber (New Zealand), Frédéric Makowiecki (France) and Michael Christensen (Denmark). Other Porsche works drivers contest the GTD class with the 911 GT3 R for customer teams: Wolf Henzler (Germany) drives for Seattle/Alex Job Racing, Patrick Long (USA) for Black Swan Racing and Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) for Park Place Motorsports. Porsche Junior Sven Müller (Germany) will also compete at Daytona in the 911 GT3 R fielded by Frikadelli Racing.

The Porsche vehicles

The 911 RSR received not only a new factory finish for the 2016 season. The 470 hp winning racer from Weissach, which is based on the seventh generation of the iconic 911 sports car, received modifications to the aerodynamics to comply with the new regulations. The position of the rear wing was moved further to the back, with the rear diffuser now considerably larger. Moreover, the 911 RSR received a modified front spoiler lip as well as wide side sills. The new 911 GT3 R celebrates its race debut at Daytona mounted with the new ultra-modern four-litre flat-six engine with direct fuel injection. Porsche built the 500 hp customer sport racer, based on the 911 GT3 RS production sports car, for GT3 series worldwide. In developing the vehicle, the engineers at Weissach paid special attention to lightweight design, better aerodynamic efficiency, reducing consumption as well as improved handling.

Porsche's successes

The first of 22 outright victories for Porsche at Daytona went to Vic Elford, Jochen Neerpasch, Rolf Stommelen, Jo Siffert and Hans Herrmann in 1968 with the Porsche 907. The most recent overall win in 2010 went to Joao Barbosa, Terry Borcheller, Ryan Dalziel and Mike Rockenfeller with the Porsche-Riley. In the traditionally very competitive GT classes, Porsche has notched up a record 76 wins. 2014 yielded the most recent victory with Richard Lietz, Nick Tandy and Patrick Pilet clinching GTLM class honours.

The schedule

The Daytona 24-hour race starts on Saturday, 30 January, at 14.40 hours local time (20.40 hours CET). Outside the USA, the race can be seen live on www.imsa.com.

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