

Porsche Penske Motorsport achieves positions five and six in Mosport

10/07/2023 Porsche Penske Motorsport finished round six of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship in positions five and six. In the 2:40-hour race at Mosport, Canada, Englishman Nick Tandy and Mathieu Jaminet from France crossed the finish line in the No. 6 Porsche 963 just ahead of the sister car.

Race

Their works driver colleagues Felipe Nasr from Brazil and Matt Campbell from Australia were at times on course for a podium result but ultimately had to settle for sixth place. The customer car fielded by JDC-Miller MotorSports was the best-placed Porsche 963 in fourth place. In the GTD-Pro class, Pfaff Motorsports' Porsche 911 GT3 R finished on the podium.

In cloudy conditions and air temperatures of around 24 degrees Celsius, Felipe Nasr and Mathieu Jaminet launched a major pursuit in the initial phase, with the Frenchman attempting some particularly impressive overtaking moves. Within just 30 minutes, the No. 6 Porsche 963 had worked its way up the order from ninth to fifth position and loomed large in the rear-view mirror of the sister car. A clever strategy during several caution periods subsequently saw the No. 7 Porsche Penske Motorsport car advance to second place. The final pit stop during the third of the four full course yellow phases resulted in three rival cars overtaking. Afterwards, no further progress was possible in the final 30-minute dash – especially as the last four laps were again spent behind the safety car following an incident.

“Our cars are in one piece and the performance was there today,” sums up Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. “The caution periods didn’t help, because they put other cars in front of us. That translated into a mediocre result. However, everything has become closer in the championship. The top four crews are within 60 points of one another. I’m sure the title fight will come to a head between now and the season finale at Road Atlanta. If we do everything right from now on and score decent points, we can finish the year on a high note.”

In the overall standings, Tandy and Jaminet rank fourth place after round six of the season, with the driver duo Nasr and Campbell in sixth position. Porsche currently lies fourth in the manufacturers’ championship.

The customer team JDC-Miller MotorSports delivered an impeccable performance on race day in Mosport. The season specialist from Germany Mike Rockenfeller drove a strong first stint at the wheel of the No. 5 Porsche 963 and handed the bright yellow prototype off to his teammate Tijmen van der Helm in eighth place. Implementing a strategic gamble in the penultimate safety car phase, the Dutchman advanced to fourth and successfully fended off all attacks from the Porsche Penske Motorsport cars.

GTD classes: Perfect strategy puts Pfaff Motorsports on the podium

In the GTD-Pro class, the Pfaff Motorsports customer squad gave an impressive performance at its home race thanks to an optimal strategy and strong drives by drivers Klaus Bachler and Patrick Pilet. The Austrian’s first stint at the wheel of the No. 9 Porsche 911 GT3 R was considerably longer than the rest of the field, which laid the foundation for success. His French teammate, famed for his incomparable fuel-efficient driving style, then brought second place safely home for the team.

The three customer teams in the GTD class were less lucky. After mediocre qualifying performances on Saturday, things barely improved on race day. The four Porsche 911 GT3 R cars fielded by Wright Motorsports, AO Racing and Kellymoss with Riley finished the race in positions seven, eight, nine and twelve respectively.

Round seven of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will be contested on 22 July at Lime

Rock Park. Only the two GT classes contest the so-called Northeast Grand Prix. The next outing for the Porsche 963 in North America is on the first weekend in August at Road America.

Drivers' comments on the race

Nick Tandy (Porsche 963 #6): "It definitely wasn't our best race ever, but at least we're in the top six with both cars. Our Porsche 963 racers went the distance without any technical problems. With a little more luck on our side, we could've been on the podium. Unfortunately, that didn't work out. That's a pity because we were doing well in terms of performance. We dropped one position in the championship standings, but the gaps are small. Now, the show goes on at Road America."

Matt Campbell (Porsche 963 #7): "I'm a bit frustrated. Our car was fast over the whole distance. I was fighting at the front for quite a while. Some other teams took a risk during the penultimate caution phase which ultimately turned out to be the better strategy. That's why we only finished sixth behind the sister car. We'll be back in full force for the next race."

Mike Rockenfeller (Porsche 963 #5): "At our third outing, we finished fourth for the second time in a row – we can live with that. We took small steps again and were in the midfield with our performance. Of course, we were also a bit lucky. We have to be satisfied with that. The team did a great job and Tijmen put up a strong defence at the end. We were the best Porsche. Not bad!"

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "First and foremost, a massive thanks to the team. The fact that we were even in contention for the class win here all boils down to the great strategy. It was very difficult for me at the final restart. I was in front but unfortunately lost the lead. The competition was simply faster. They would have overtaken me anyway. As a team, we squeezed the absolute maximum out of it. We want to get back on top of the podium as soon as possible."

Race results

GTP class:
1. Blomqvist/Braun (UK/USA), Acura #60, 120 laps
2. Taylor/Albuquerque (USA/P), Acura #10, 120 laps
3. De Phillippi/Yelloly (USA/UK), BMW #25, 120 laps
4. Rockenfeller/van der Helm (D/NL), Porsche 963 #5, 120 laps
5. Tandy/Jaminet (UK/F), Porsche 963 #6, 120 laps
6. Campbell/Nasr (AUS/BR), Porsche 963 #7, 120 laps

GTD-Pro class:
1. Garcia/Taylor (E/USA), Corvette #3, 111 laps
2. Bachler/Pilet (A/F), Porsche 911 GT3 R #9, 111 laps
3. Juncadella/Gounon (E/F), Mercedes-AMG #79, 111 laps

GTD class:
1. Sellers/Snow (USA/USA), BMW #1, 111 laps
2. Schandorff/Iribe (DK/USA), McLaren #70, 111 laps
3. Skeen/Grenier (USA/CDN), Mercedes-AMG #32, 111 laps
7. Brynjolfsson/Hindman (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #77, 110 laps
8. Hyett/Priaulx (USA/UK), Porsche 911 GT3 R #80, 110 laps
9. Metni/van Berlo (USA/NL), Porsche 911 GT3 R #91, 110 laps
12. Brule/Udell (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 103 laps

Qualifying

Works driver Felipe Nasr has qualified in fifth for round six of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. In the hunt for top times in Mosport, Canada, the Brazilian was the fastest driver at the wheel of a Porsche 963. The sister car fielded by the Porsche Penske Motorsport factory team will tackle the race over 2:40 hours from ninth position. The hybrid prototype campaigned by JDC-Miller MotorSports turned the eighth fastest time in qualifying. In the two GT classes, the five Porsche 911 GT3 R cars fielded by four customer teams lagged behind, in some cases considerably.

The conditions for the qualifying of round six of the 2023 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season were perfect. With a pleasant air temperature of 23 degrees Celsius, the sun warmed the asphalt to around 30 degrees Celsius. Accordingly, the nine cars in the top GTP started category went out on the track early to hunt for top times. Felipe Nasr spent three laps warming the tyres on his No. 7 car to get them into the optimum operating window. Then the Brazilian went full throttle for ten laps. Posting a time of 1:06.521 minutes, Nasr qualified fifth, almost nine-tenths of a second off pole position.

Mathieu Jaminet did everything he could over eleven laps in the No. 6 car however, the Frenchman never came close to the times of the sister car. With a gap of 1.676 seconds to the top, he only managed ninth place. “We couldn’t do anything about the two Acuras today, but we had an outside chance for third place with the No. 7,” said Jonathan Diuguid. The Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport adds: “The balance of the sister car was completely off in qualifying. Mathieu had no tyre grip at all on the front axle. We’ll take a good look at that. Right now though, we’ll put this disappointing day behind us and concentrate fully on the race.”

Mike Rockenfeller tackled the qualifying in the Porsche 963 fielded by the customer team JDC-Miller MotorSports. The seasoned specialist from Germany gradually improved over the 13 laps and netted eighth on the grid with a time of 1:06.946 minutes. For the race, Rockenfeller shares the cockpit of the No. 5 car with Dutchman Tijmen van der Helm.

GTD classes: Porsche's customer teams among backmarkers

In the two GT categories, the four customer teams were far off achieving top results with their five Porsche 911 GT3 R. Klaus Bachler turned the fifth fastest time in Pfaff Motorsports' 911. The Austrian shares the No. 9 car at the home race of the Canadian team Pfaff Motorsports with Patrick Pilet from France. The identical GT3 cars run by AO Racing, Wright Motorsports and Kellymoss with Riley head into the race from positions ten, eleven, twelve and 14 respectively.

Round six of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship at Bowmanville gets underway on Sunday, 9 July, at 12:05 pm local time (6:05 pm CEST). Outside the USA and Canada, the six-hour race can be watched via a free live stream on imsa.tv.

Drivers' comments on the qualifying

Felipe Nasr (Porsche 963 #7): "We did what we could today. We had no chance at all compared to some of our rivals, especially in the first sector. This section of the track actually only consists of two very fast corners. Apart from these passages, we were doing quite well. We made noticeable progress in the practice sessions and qualifying. Now we start from the midfield. Everything is still possible. The race day forecast is for hot weather. So it's a matter of conserving the tyres over the distance without deterioration at the end of a stint."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 963 #6): "Something was very wrong with our car. We don't yet know exactly what caused the balance problems. It's very strange: the car's behaviour was completely different in left and right-hand corners. There was a lack of grip and downforce on the front axle, and also a lot of vibration and understeer in right-hand corners. I tried to ignore the problem and go all-out but that had its limitations – so it's ninth place on the grid."

Mike Rockenfeller (Porsche 963 #5): "The timesheets show that the Porsche 963 was a bit behind in qualifying. I hope that the situation will be somewhat different in the race. For us, it was the first time that we made a serious qualifying attempt. Unfortunately, the pressure in the tyres was a little low. With more air pressure and a bit more experience, maybe I could have gone three or four-tenths of a second faster. But my fastest lap was basically okay. It's huge fun driving on this racetrack. Hopefully, we can advance up the field a bit more tomorrow."

Klaus Bachler (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "Fifth place on the grid is what we ended up with, but what's more important is the fact that we've significantly improved our car setup after the free practice sessions. We'll now take another close look at our data and hopefully make further progress until the start of the race. If everything runs smoothly, we should hopefully be able to make up a few positions over the 2:40-hour race on Sunday."

Qualifying result

GTP class:
1. Blomqvist/Braun (UK/USA), Acura #60, 1:05.563 minutes
2. Taylor/Albuquerque (USA/P), Acura #10, 1:05.734 minutes
3. Derani/Sims (BR/UK), Cadillac #31, 1:05.829 minutes
5. Campbell/Nasr (AUS/BR), Porsche 963 #7, 1:06.521 minutes
8. Rockenfeller/van der Helm (D/NL), Porsche 963 #5, 1:06.946 minutes
9. Tandy/Jaminet (UK/F), Porsche 963 #6, 1:07.329 minutes

GTD-Pro class:
1. Hawksworth/Barnicoat (UK/UK), Lexus #14, 1:15.029 minutes
2. Gounon/Juncadella (F/E), Mercedes-AMG #79, 1:15.103 minutes
3. Gunn/Riberas (UK/E), Aston Martin #23, 1:15.341 minutes
5. Bachler/Pilet (A/F), Porsche 911 GT3 R #9, 1:15.584 minutes

GTD class:
1. De Angelis/Sörensen (CDN/DK), Aston Martin #27, 1:15.478 minutes
2. Montecalvo/Telitz (USA/USA), Lexus #12, 1:15.508 minutes
3. Sellers/Snow (USA/USA), BMW #1, 1:15.595 minutes
10. Hyett/Priaulx (USA/UK), Porsche 911 GT3 R #80, 1:16.983 minutes
11. Brynjolfsson/Hindman (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #77, 1:17.028 minutes
12. Metni/van Berlo (USA/NL), Porsche 911 GT3 R #91, 1:17.126 minutes
14. Brule/Udell (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #92, 1:20.469 minutes

Full results.

Preview

At the only IMSA race of the season in Canada, the works squad is determined to bring home a top result with the Porsche 963 and at the same time aims to reclaim the championship lead as quickly as possible. Porsche Penske Motorsport tackles the 2:40-hour race with two hybrid prototypes in the GTP category. The customer team JDC-Miller MotorSports runs another identical Porsche prototype. In the two GTD classes, four partner teams will compete with a total of five Porsche 911 GT3 R cars.

At the previous race in Watkins Glen, Porsche Penske Motorsport put in a strong performance: For the second time this season, a Porsche 963 crossed the finish line in first place. However, a minor deviation during the technical post-race inspection resulted in the team losing its victory in the 6-hour race – as well as the lead in the standings. As a result, the highly motivated team travels to the Canadian race next weekend with a score to settle. On the 3.957-kilometre former Grand Prix circuit near the metropolis of Toronto, the team wants to contest a flawless 2:40-hour race and reap the rewards for

the hard work and consistent progress in the past weeks with a top result.

“Even though we ultimately went home from Watkins Glen empty-handed because of an error, the previous race gave our team an enormous boost,” reports Thomas Laudenbach. The Vice President Porsche Motorsport explains: “The performance was there. We made it to the top fair and square, the competition was extremely balanced – that's how it should be! On this basis, I'm also expecting a strong performance from our Porsche Penske Motorsport works team and the two Porsche 963 entries at the event in Canada. I hope that our partner teams in the GT classes can perform at the same level as their rivals with the 911 GT3 R.”

“After we were denied our second win of the season at Watkins Glen, we're attacking just as hard in Mosport,” emphasises Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. “The track in Canada is very fluid and ultra-fast. The strengths of our Porsche 963 should come into their own there. In the IMSA series, every manufacturer in the GTP class gets a chance at top positions in every race. With steady, strong performances as well as improved reliability, we want to recoup our second victory as soon as possible.”

“The final result in Watkins Glen was disappointing for us all,” says Jonathan Diuguid, retrospectively. “But now, we must look ahead. The fact is that our team did a fantastic job, the car was strong and the drivers are doing everything to win races. The competition in the IMSA series this year is very exciting, it's close at every turn. The track at the Canadian Tire Motorsport Park is a favourite among many drivers, plus the course is enormously challenging. We're expecting another spectacular and open race. Our goal is to win. We want to get back to the top of the standings,” asserts Porsche Penske Motorsport's Managing Director.

The race

The Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, more commonly known as Mosport, was opened in 1961 near the metropolis of Toronto. A total of eight Formula 1 Grands Prix were held here on the 3.957-kilometre circuit between 1967 and 1977. An IMSA race has been contested here every season since 1999, except for 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. The flowing layout with many crests, dips and just ten corners allows a high average speed. Porsche has a long tradition in the Sportscar Grand Prix at this racetrack, previously known as the Grand Prix of Mosport. The sports car manufacturer from Weissach has notched up seven overall victories and 19 class wins. Last year, Pfaff Motorsports' Porsche 911 GT3 R won the GTD Pro category.

The works drivers

In the GTP class, four regular IMSA drivers helm the two Porsche 963 fielded by the Porsche Penske Motorsport works team. Mathieu Jaminet from France and Englishman Nick Tandy share driving duties in the No. 6 car fielded by Porsche Penske Motorsport. The pair notched up the Porsche 963's maiden victory on the streets of Long Beach in April and heads to round six of the season in Canada ranking

third in the championship. The crew of the sister car currently occupy sixth place. Felipe Nasr from Brazil and Matt Campbell from Australia share the No. 7 cockpit.

The customer teams

The Porsche 963 fielded by the customer team JDC-Miller MotorSports tackles the top GTP class for the third time. The experienced German driver Mike Rockenfeller and the 19-year-old Dutchman Tijmen van der Helm share driving duties in the yellow No. 5 hybrid prototype. The squad from Minneapolis put in a strong drive at its debut in Laguna Seca and crossed the finish line in seventh place. At its second outing in Watkins Glen, the team placed fourth.

In the GTD Pro class, Pfaff Motorsports fields one Porsche 911 GT3 R at its home race. The customer team from Canada travels to Bowmanville as the defending champions of the top GT category and last year's winners. The No. 9 racer is helmed by Austrian Klaus Bachler and Patrick Pilet from France. The pair won in Sebring and achieved podium finishes in Long Beach and Laguna Seca.

In the GTD category, three customer teams field a total of four GT3 cars from Weissach. The Laguna Seca class winners Kellymoss with Riley fields two vehicles, with Wright Motorsports and AO Racing running one 911 GT3 R each.

Drivers' comments ahead of the race

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 963 #6): "We've lost our lead in the championship, so we're not where we want to be. We're significantly behind but we're definitely not about to give up. It's important that we immediately fight back. We haven't yet done any testing with the Porsche 963 at Mosport so we have to learn quickly and figure out a good setup during the free practices. Our team and drivers need a good result - urgently."

Matt Campbell (Porsche 963 #7):"I'm really looking forward to the race in Mosport this weekend. Last year, we achieved a brilliant GT class win with the Porsche 911 GT3 R with Pfaff Motorsports – that was a fantastic experience. Now, I'm competing there for the first time at the helm of a prototype. The track is fast and fluid. It's bound to be one of the biggest challenges of the whole year. We drive there at very high speeds and there's no margin for error. We're in for a really tough weekend, but at the same time it promises exciting and spectacular motor racing."

Klaus Bachler (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "Mosport is the home race for our Pfaff Motorsports team. Of all the tracks I know in America, it is a very special one: extremely fast and mega-challenging. Mosport is one of the few tracks where we've been able to test this year. The circuit is great fun. Watkins Glen proved to be a difficult weekend for us. Now we want to compete at the front again in Canada."

Overview of vehicles and drivers

GTP class (Porsche 963):
JDC-Miller MotorSports #5: Mike Rockenfeller (D) / Tijmen van der Helm (NL)
Porsche Penske Motorsport #6: Mathieu Jaminet (F) / Nick Tandy (UK)
Porsche Penske Motorsport #7: Matt Campbell (AUS) / Felipe Nasr (BR)

GTD-Pro class (Porsche 911 GT3 R):
Pfaff Motorsports #9: Klaus Bachler (A) / Patrick Pilet (F)

GTD class (Porsche 911 GT3 R):
Wright Motorsports #77: Alan Brynjolfsson (USA) / Trent Hindman (USA)
AO Racing #80: PJ Hyett (USA) / Sebastian Priaulx (UK)
Kellymoss with Riley #91: Alan Metni (USA) / Kay van Berlo (NL)
Kellymoss with Riley #92: David Brule (USA) / Alec Udell (USA)

The schedule (local time, CEST -6)

Friday, 7 July
2:50 pm – 4:20 pm: Free practice 1

Saturday, 8 July
8:00 am – 9:45 am: Free practice 2
12:45 pm – 1:00 pm: Qualifying GTD Pro/GTD
1:35 pm – 1:55 pm: Qualifying GTP

Sunday, 9 July
8:15 am – 8:35 am: Warm-up
12:05 pm – 14:45 pm: Race (2:40 hours)

Image Sublines

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Title: Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh, 2023, Porsche AG
Subline: Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh

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