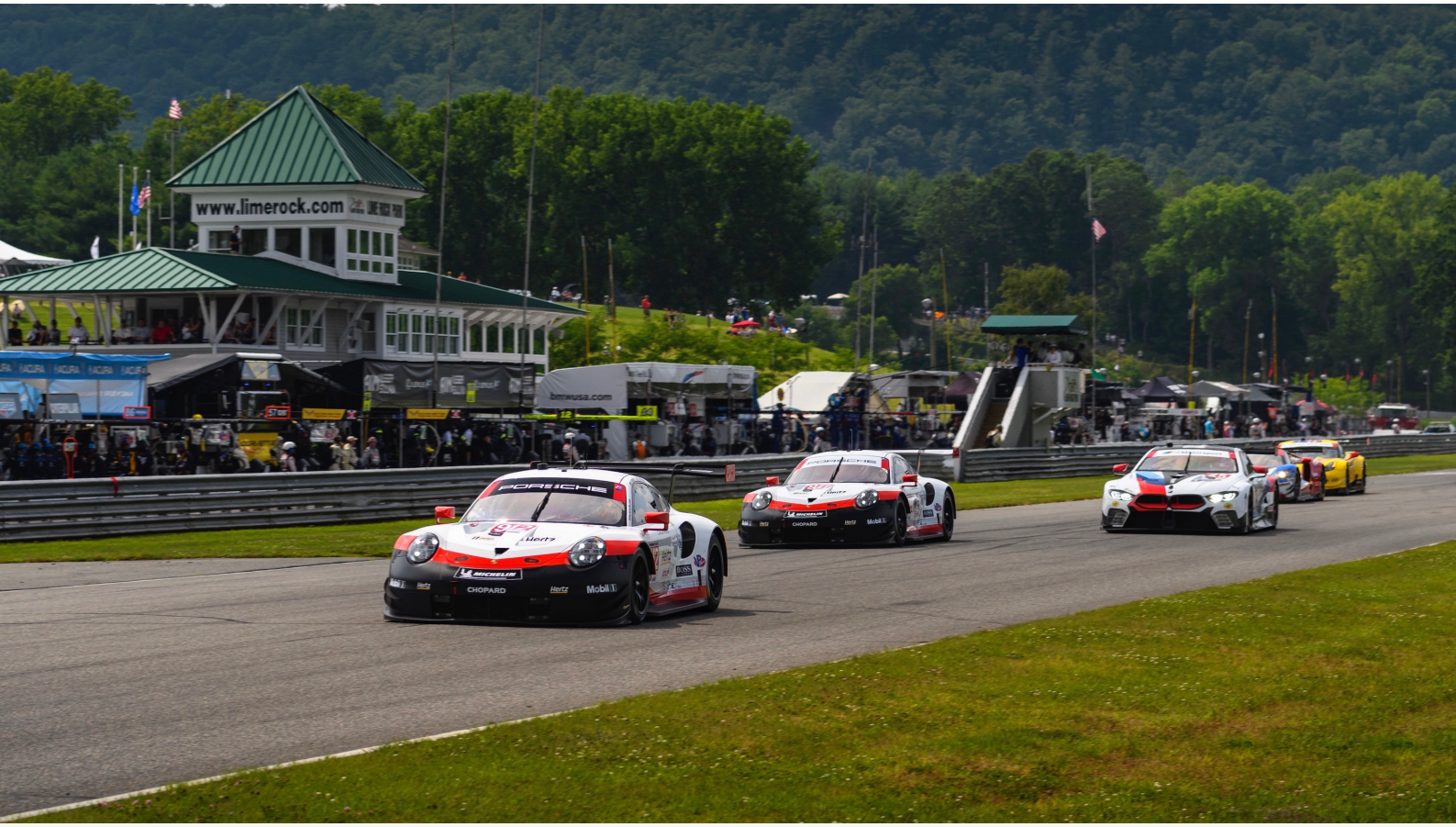


IMSA: Victory for the Porsche 911 GT3 R, Porsche GT Team on the podium

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21/07/2019 The Porsche GT Team has successfully defended its lead in the manufacturers' championship at round seven of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. Laurens Vanthoor and Earl Bamber secured second place at the wheel of their No. 912 Porsche 911 RSR at Lime Rock Park, USA.

The race

Their brand colleagues Patrick Pilet (France) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) claimed fourth place in the No. 911 sister car. In the GTD class, the customer team Pfaff Motorsports achieved their first class

victory in the North American championship with the Porsche 911 GT3 R.

The two Porsche 911 RSR fielded by the works team headed into the race sharing the first grid row after a strong qualifying performance. In the morning session, Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) had set pole position in a time of 49.133 seconds – a new record for the GTLM class at Lime Rock. Nick Tandy planted the No. 911 sister car on position two for round seven. At the start, both ca. 510 hp vehicles from Weissach defended their front spots, with the pair extending the gap until the first scheduled pit stop.

In the second half of the race, the two vehicles were repeatedly hampered by traffic. Moreover, with temperatures of around 33 degrees Celsius, by the end of a stint, the tyres had deteriorated more than the victorious Ford, which had opted for an additional pit stop. With 20 minutes left on the clock, Pilet was able to maintain the lead, but fell back due to lack of grip. In the final few minutes, Bamber (New Zealand) could no longer keep the No. 67 Ford at bay. Porsche still holds a 24-point lead in the manufacturers' championship. Bamber/Vanthoor have extended their lead in the drivers' championship, with Pilet/Tandy still on second.

The GTD class delivered suspense to the flag. The Porsche 911 GT3 R run by Pfaff Motorsports had taken up the race from fifth on the gird. Start driver Zacharie Robichon (Canada) gained one position during his stint, with Porsche Young Professional Dennis Olsen following up with an inspired drive. The Norwegian systematically worked his way up the field to second place. In the final two laps, he made repeated attempts to get past the leading Acura. He finally succeeded and won the class by a slim 0.01-second margin. The identical 500+hp car fielded by Park Place Motorsports and driven by works driver Patrick Long (USA) and Germany's Marco Seefried reached the flag in fourth place. Directly behind them, Porsche Young Professional Matt Campbell (Australia) and his American teammate Anthony Imperato crossed the finish line in the car campaigned by Wright Motorsports.

Comments on the race

Steffen Höllwarth (Programme Manager IMSA SportsCar Championship): "That was quite literally a hot contest. We opted for a different strategy than Ford. The difference was minimal over the total distance, but unfortunately we lost out this time. Congratulations to the winner for a clever performance. Second place for our number 912 car means we've managed to maintain our lead in the manufacturers' championship and further extend our top spot in the drivers' championship. All things considered, we're pleased. Congratulations to the Porsche customer team Pfaff Motorsports on their maiden win in the GTD class. It was fun to watch the gripping duel for victory."

Earl Bamber (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "Ford gambled with three pit stops and won this time. I can only congratulate them. We're satisfied with second place, because this position earns us critical points towards the championship. The race was fantastic, on the whole. There were fierce fights from start to finish, with several changes at the front and spectators were treated to a great show."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "Of course you're always wiser in hindsight. Had we adopted a different strategy perhaps we could have won. Still, our focus is on the championship and for this reason we didn't want to take any tactical risks. Based on this, we've achieved the maximum. We still lead all the classifications, and that's the most important thing."

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 RSR #911): "Ford had a slightly better strategy today. It was difficult for us to maintain the high pace over the long stints that would have been necessary to win. Porsche is leading all of the championship categories at the moment. With this in mind, it was a successful weekend."

Nick Tandy (Porsche 911 RSR #911): "Every fan would have loved watching this race. It was motor racing at its best. At times we were in the lead with our number 911 car – still we're satisfied with fourth. Porsche earned a lot of points again from this race. The championship continues. We'll produce better results again."

Dennis Olsen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "What an awesome race! I took over the car in fourth place and fought my way to the front. Our Porsche 911 GT3 R was fast over the entire event. Towards the end, the tyres were pretty worn, but I still managed to make the decisive move in the battle for first place. It was close, tough and successful – just the way I like it."

Zacharie Robichon (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "It was sensational how Dennis fought for the lead shortly before the end and defended it in the fierce duel to the flag. At long last, we've secured the first victory for Pfaff Motorsports. The entire team has been working hard for months to at least claim a podium spot. Something always hampered us, but not this time – we even finished on the top podium step. This achievement means a great deal to me."

Race result

GTLM class

1. Briscoe/Westbrook (AUS/GB), Ford GT, 182 laps
2. Bamber/Vanthoor (NZ/B), Porsche 911 RSR, 182 laps
3. Hand/Müller (USA/D), Ford GT, 182 laps
4. Pilet/Tandy (F/GB), Porsche 911 RSR, 182 laps

GTD class

1. Olsen/Robichon (N/CDN), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 178 laps
2. Farnbacher/Hindman (D/USA), Acura NSX GT3, 178 laps
3. Foley/Auberlen (USA/USA), BMW M6 GT3, 178 laps
4. Long/Seefried (USA/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 178 laps
5. Campbell/Imperato (AUS/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 178 laps

Full results: http://imsa.alkamelsystems.com

Preview

With the two prototype classes absent from the Lime Rock event on 19/20 July, the main focal point will be on the two Porsche 911 RSR fielded by the works team. In the GTD category, the customer squads Park Place Motorsports, Wright Motorsports and Pfaff Motorsports aim to claim a podium spot each with their Porsche 911 GT3 R racing cars.

The Porsche drivers

The winners of the Sebring and Watkins Glen races, Patrick Pilet (France) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain), share the No. 911 Porsche 911 RSR. The pair currently ranks second in the drivers' classification. Their works driver colleagues in the No. 912 sister car, Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium), lead the class after their victories at Long Beach, Mid-Ohio and most recently at Bowmanville, Canada. In the GTD class, three Porsche 911 GT3 R will compete. The customer team Pfaff Motorsports (No. 9) tackles the race with Porsche Young Professional Dennis Olsen (Norway) and Zacharie Robichon from Canada. Porsche works driver Patrick Long (USA) shares the cockpit of the No. 73 vehicle run by Park Place Motorsports with Germany's Marco Seefried. The No. 91 Porsche 911 GT3 R campaigned by Wright Motorsports is shared by Porsche Young Professional Matt Campbell (Australia) and Anthony Imperato (USA).

The Porsche vehicles

For its third racing season in North America, the Porsche 911 RSR has undergone further optimisation primarily in the setup. Depending on the size of the restrictor, the engine, which is positioned in front of the rear axle, puts out around 375 kW (510 hp). The large rear diffuser combined with a top-mounted rear wing provides aerodynamic efficiency and significant downforce. The 911 GT3 R was newly developed for the 2019 season. Improvements in the areas of aerodynamics and kinematics were systematically implemented from the insights garnered from the many race outings of its predecessor. The six-cylinder engine in the rear of the GT3 customer racer produces over 368 kW (500 hp).

The schedule

The race over 2:40 hours takes off on Saturday, 20 July, at 3:10pm local time (9:10pm CEST) and can be viewed live outside the USA and Canada on www.imsa.com.

Comments before the race

Pascal Zurlinden (Director GT Factory Motorsport): "We are determined to continue our sensational winning streak at Lime Rock. At this race on the small circuit in Connecticut, it would be particularly

important to finish in first place – because it's one of the very few chances in the IMSA series to celebrate overall victory. After our five straight wins, we're certainly not about to lean back. We're leading the championship, and it should remain like this to the end of the season."

Steffen Höllwarth (Programme Manager IMSA SportsCar Championship): "There is no time for drivers, strategists and the crew to catch their breath on this extremely short circuit. Another feature of the Lime Rock course is that there is only one left-hander. This has an impact on the cars' setup and tyre wear. We've always performed well there in past years. I expect we'll have good chances of continuing our great run over these intense weeks in North America."

More comments in the press release (downloads).

This is the IMSA SportsCar Championship

The IMSA SportsCar Championship is a sports car race series that has been contested in the USA and Canada since 2014. The series originated from the merger of the American Le Mans Series and the Grand-Am Series. Sports prototypes and sports cars start in four different classes: GTLM (GT Le Mans), GTD (GT Daytona), Dpi (Daytona Prototype international) and LMP2 (Le Mans Prototype 2). The Porsche 911 RSR runs in the GTLM class, and the Porsche 911 GT3 R contests the GTD class.

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