Second overall and four class wins

05/02/2017 Porsche customer teams achieved excellent results in Bathurst on Sunday. At the wheel of the 911 GT3 R fielded by Competition Motorsports Long, Campbell as well as Lieb and Calvert-Jones finished second overall.

In addition the Porsche works driver Patrick Long (USA), Porsche Junior Matt Campbell (Australia) as well as Marc Lieb (Germany) and David Calvert-Jones (Australia) won the Class A-GT3 Pro-Am after a spirited chase through the field on the spectacular Mount Panorama Circuit. Other class victories at the prestigious race, which was contested by 14 automobile manufacturers, went to the 911 GT3 R of Walkinshaw GT3, the 911 GT3 Cup of Steve Richards Motorsport as well as the Cayman of PROsport Performance.

For the 911 GT3 R, the third major long distance race of the year after the 24-hour classics of Dubai and Daytona also concluded with a success. In Dubai, Herberth Motorsport had notched up a sensational overall victory; in Daytona Alegra Motorsports won the GTD class: It was a perfect start to the season for the customer sports racer featuring the new ultra-modern four-litre flat-six engine with direct fuel injection.

It was 5:45am on Sunday morning and still dark when the 52-strong field took off into the season-opening round of the Intercontinental GT Challenge on the 6.213-kilometre-long storied racetrack in the state of New South Wales. The early race start and the extraordinary combination of 23 fast and slow corners, which put incredible demands on drivers, are typical for the rollercoaster circuit in Bathurst in the foothills of the Blue Mountains.

For the #911 vehicle the race came to an abrupt end after just two hours

The Australian Porsche Junior Matt Campbell knows the selective racetrack well. Driving the 911 GT3 R run by Competition Motorsports, he put in an immaculate first stint. Although he was relegated down the field to rank 18th after one of the 16 safety car phases, he kept a cool head. With an inspired performance he made up nine positions before handing the #12 vehicle off to David Calvert-Jones, who subsequently swapped the cockpit with Marc Lieb, the overall Le Mans winner and reigning World Endurance Champion, as well as Patrick Long. They not only caught up the front runners but took the lead of the pack over long stretches. Matt Campbell then took the wheel again for the final stint and, despite a drive-through penalty, put in a convincing final dash to the flag to achieve second overall for his team as well as the class victory.

However, for the 911 GT3 R fielded by the Walkinshaw GT3 customer team with factory support, the race came to an abrupt end after just two hours. Initially, things looked very promising for the #911 vehicle. As a newcomer to the Porsche factory squad, Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) was the traditional start driver and in the dark kept out of any trouble on this difficult racetrack to edge his way forward lap by lap. After one hour he was running in second place. His teammate Earl Bamber (New Zealand) continued the charge and swept into the lead. But while attempting to lap a slower competitor, he collided, damaging the steering of the 911 GT3 R. Repairs would have taken too long and the dream of a Bathurst victory for the 2015 outright Le Mans winner and his teammates was dashed. The third driver Kévin Estre (France) did not get a chance to drive.

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