

The Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East kicked off its 15th season of one-make Porsche racing in the region as the major support act to the World Endurance Championship (WEC) finale wherethree Porsche works drivers, Kévin Estre, André Lotterer, and Laurens Vanthoor, secured the drivers´ title for the Porsche Penske Motorsport Team

Young guns Stiak and Boenighausen dominate Rd 1 of the Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East in Bahrain

04/11/2024 The Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East kicked off its 15th season of one-make Porsche racing in the region where three Porsche works drivers secured the drivers´ title for the Porsche Penske Motorsport Team.

As the perfect warm-up act to the Porsche Penske Motorsport Team claiming the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) under lights at the Bahrain International Circuit, Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East put on a sizzling show of close racing to open its season that saw German rookies Janne Stiak and Colin Boenighausen race their Porsche 911 GT3 Cup (type 992) cars wheel-to-wheel and take a win each to end the weekend tied for first place on 45 points.

Beginning its second season as the Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East after graduating from Porsche Sprint Challenge status at the end of 2022 and the Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge which began back in 2009, the new season delivered a grid of 15 identical cars with classes for Overall, ProAM, Rookie, GCC licenced drivers and a new Masters class tailored for amateur drivers over the age of 40.

Immediately though all eyes were on 17-year old Stiak and 19-year old Boenighausen as Stiak topped the first practice session by 4/10th of a second from Boenighausen who turned the tables and was quickest in FP2. Stiak eventually claimed Pole Position 0.047secs ahead of Boenighausen for Race 1. Saudi Arabia's Saud Al Saud put in a great performance to qualify third overall and take Pole in both the ProAM and GCC categories while Petr Brecka was fastest in Masters Class.

Race 1 was held under lights and it was the DHL car of Stiak who raced away from Pole, fending off Cartech Motorsport's Boenighausen the whole way to take the first race win of the season from his countryman with Porsche Junior Driver, 18-year old James Wallis from the UK in third making the combined age of the podium just 54 years old.

Germany's Soeren Spreng in ProAM for Team GP Elite had a great start from eighth, passing Al Saud to lead the class until lap nine before an error allowed the Saudi Racing driver to reclaim the class lead and take the win as well as fifth overall behind Britain's Angus Whiteside for Proton Huber and also first in the GCC class. Victory in the Masters Class went to GT Sports Technology's Petr Brecka from the Czech Republic in ninth overall.

With the second fastest Quali lap being the time used to determine the grid for Race 2, Boenighausen started from the good side of the track from Stiak but it wasn't enough as the DHL car slipped through on Lap 1. Boenighausen battled hard with Stiak to eventually get past on lap nine and give Cartech Motorsport a deserved win two laps later with Porsche young gun Wallis again rounding out the podium.

Al Saud repeated his Race 1 ProAM and GCC double win with victory in both classes in Race 2 while Bulgaria's Alexandra Vateva became the first female to stand on a podium in Porsche one-make racing in the Middle East after she nabbed third in ProAM following a Lap 2 crash for Spreng and Team GP Elite's Thomas Kiefer. Her AV Racing team mate and countryman Mike Mim surprised many after starting 14th to finish fifth and victory in the Masters Class.

"We had a great weekend at the Bahrain International Circuit as a support event to the FIA World Endurance Championship final and were able to provide great racing and entertainment to all our fans and partners," Series Head and Promoter Robert Lechner said.

- Round two begins on November 29 at the Lusail International Circuit as the major support race to the 23rd round of the FIA Formula One World Championship, the Qatar Grand Prix.

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