


# Two Porsche victories in Fuji

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11/10/2015 Porsche has celebrated two victories at the WEC in Fuji. The 919 Hybrids claimed another double victory in the LMP1 class while Patrick Dempsey and his team were successful in the GTE-Am class.

By winning the fourth race in a row with the Porsche 919 Hybrid, the Porsche Team took an important step forward in the battle for the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC), and now leads both the manufacturers' and the drivers' standings. Today Timo Bernhard (DE), Brendon Hartley (NZ) and Mark Webber (AU) won on the 4.549 kilometre long Fuji Speedway in the Japanese Alps under tricky weather conditions. Romain Dumas (FR), Neel Jani (CH) and Marc Lieb (DE) came second in the six-hour race. With this one-two result – the third one including the Le Mans 24 Hours – Porsche significantly extended its lead in the manufacturers' standings. Porsche now has 264 points to its tally, with Audi following with 211 points and Toyota having 119. In the drivers' championship the Porsche trio of Bernhard/Hartley/Webber is now leading by one point.

## How the race went for car number 17:

After almost 40 minutes behind the safety car and with light rain still falling, finally the race goes green. Mark Webber starts on full wet tyres from pole position, but goes off the track in turn three, re-joining the race in P4. An issue with the hybrid system causes a lack of boost, so the sister car overtakes on lap 23 and Webber drops back to fifth. From lap 31 until the number 1 Toyota pits after lap 42, the spectators see a great battle between the Toyota and the Porsche. After 43 laps Mark comes in for fuel only. Meanwhile the car lies third behind the leading number 7 Audi and the Porsche sister car. During the second part of his double stint Mark catches up on the still wet track. After the sister Porsche manages to take the lead, from lap 72 onwards Mark is trying to get by the number 7 Audi.

After several changes of positions, both cars are due for their pit stops. Mark hands over the car to Brendon Hartley after 81 laps. It is also the first tyre change, and Brendon gets intermediate slicks. On lap 86 he loses P2 again to the number 7 Audi but takes revenge on lap 108. Still in second, Brendon comes in after 121 laps for fuel only. After 160 laps he hands over to Timo Bernhard, who continues on slick tyres. He picks up a set of new ones and more fuel at his final pit stop after 193 laps. At the end of lap 209 Timo takes the lead.

## How the race went for car number 18:

As the long period behind the safety car finally is over, Romain Dumas starts on full wet tyres from P2, but immediately loses positions because the pit limiter comes on. When the sister car is in trouble with an hybrid issue, Romain improves to P4 and then gets past the number 1 Toyota on lap 25 to take P3. On lap 36 Romain overtakes the number 8 Audi and is now in second. After 44 laps the number 18 Porsche is the last one of the LMP1 cars to come in to refuel. Romain stays in the car and keeps his tyres.

On lap 71 he manages to overtake the number 7 Audi and takes the lead. Just when Romain is due to pit after 82 laps, there is a full course yellow. He hands over to Marc Lieb, who gets intermediate slicks and continues in the lead. Still leading, Marc comes in after 122 laps for fuel only. After 159 laps Neel Jani jumps in the leading car and gets slick tyres. After 192 laps he comes in for his final pit stop for fuel and fresh slick tyres. After changing positions at the end of lap 209, Neel finishes the race in second position.

Andreas Seidl, Team Principal: “Despite extremely challenging conditions, we strategically got everything right today. Every single decision by the team proved to be the right one. All six drivers did a great and completely errorless job. In the end of the race they showed true teamwork. Although we are a very young team, we also proved that we are able to manage and win a difficult race. Audi did put us under pressure right from the start. Many thanks to all the employees and team members here on site and back home in Weissach for the perfect preparation which was the base for our success."

## How the race went for the GTE classes:

After clinching two double victories at the Nürburgring and at Austin, the 911 RSR fielded by the Porsche Manthey squad earned important points towards the championship at the Japanese round in Fuji. With the winning racer from Weissach, the fastest racing version of the iconic 911 sports car, French pilots Frédéric Makowiecki and Patrick Pilet scored second place in front of 52,000 spectators at the six-hour race on the Fuji Speedway. Their team colleagues Richard Lietz (Austria) and Michael Christensen (Denmark) took the flag in fourth. After the sixth of eight WEC rounds, one of the most important motorsport championships aside from Formula 1, Richard Lietz still holds the lead of the GT drivers' championship.

In the GTE-Am class, Hollywood star and race driver Patrick Dempsey ("Grey's Anatomy") notched up his first victory in the WEC. Facing extreme weather conditions, the American won the race in the 911 RSR campaigned by the Dempsey Proton Racing customer team with Patrick Long (USA) and Marco Seefried (Austria). With his teammates, Patrick Dempsey has already netted second place at the Le Mans 24 Hour classic this season.

## 17 laps behind the safety car

Mount Fuji was hidden by a curtain of dark clouds when the 31-strong field took off on the formation lap. Because the 4.563-kilometre tradition-steeped race track at the foot of Japan's sacred mountain was still under water after rainfall overnight, the field spent 17 laps under yellow behind the safety car. When the race was finally given the green flag, Patrick Pilet made the cleanest getaway of all Porsche GT pilots.

After six race laps, the Frenchman, who had clinched the championship title in the United SportsCar Championship in torrential rain a week prior, swept past three rivals in his 911 RSR (#92) and was running in second. Following in the slipstream, the number 91 911 RSR with Michael Christensen at the wheel also reeled in the field: Taking off from ninth on the grid, he overtook his team colleagues after nine race laps to snatch the lead ten laps later.

By this time, the race, which had been stopped under full yellow due to torrential rain after several laps, was just an hour old. On the rain-drenched circuit, the 911 RSR benefited from its excellent traction thanks to its rear engine concept and ran at the front of the GT field over long distances. When Michael Christensen handed the 911 RSR off to Richard Lietz in the 43rd lap, the Austrian, who was the last Porsche GT winner at Fuji in 2012, needed just six laps to retake the lead. Even as the rain slowly eased after almost two hours of racing and fans could pack away their umbrellas, the conditions remained tricky.

However, the adverse weather conditions failed to dampen their spirits. As compensation, they were treated to spectacular duels and overtaking manoeuvres, for instance when Patrick Pilet set out in

pursuit of the leading Ferrari in the second half of the race, and with an inspired performance, gradually ate away at the gap to finally snatch the lead at the end of the long finish straight early in the 105th lap.

## Patrick Pilet brings home second place in the GTE-Pro class

Only when the circuit slowly dried with two hours to the flag and the teams switched to slicks did the two 911 RSR lose ground to the front. The reason for this was not least due to the extra pit stop for the necessary change to dry tyres. Launching a second stunning chase through the field, Patrick Pilet managed to bring home second place for the Porsche Manthey team.

In the World Endurance Cup for GT Drivers, Richard Lietz defended his lead. Porsche Manthey also holds the lead in the GTE-Pro overall standings for teams. Amongst the manufacturers, Porsche currently ranks second with two remaining races still to go at Shanghai/China and Sakhir/Bahrain.

In the GTE-Am class, Le Mans outright winner Earl Bamber (New Zealand) delighted fans with a spectacular recovery. With just a few laps remaining, he charged through from the back of the pack on a drying track at the wheel of the 911 RSR run by the Porsche customer squad Abu Dhabi Proton Racing. As he settled into third place, he was hit by an overtaking LMP1 sports prototype. The ensuing pit stop to change a damaged rim threw him and his teammates Christian Ried (Germany) and Khaled Al Qubaisi (Abu Dhabi) back to fifth place.

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