

WEC-Preview Fuji: season-final starts

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09/10/2015 At the foot of Mount Fuji the 2015 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) enters its critical phase on October 11.

Preview LMP1:

Featuring the longest straight on the calendar – 1,500 metres – but also 16 corners that are relatively tight on a lap of only 4.549 kilometers, the Fuji Speedway is extremely demanding when it comes to set-up work. The Speedway in the Japanese Alps welcomed the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) in bright sunshine with temperatures of over 20 degrees Celsius. The Porsche Team had two positive free practice sessions, each 90 minutes long, in preparation for the sixth of eight World Championship rounds. The two Porsche 919 Hybrids with the driver trios of Timo Bernhard

(DE)/Brendon Hartley (NZ)/Mark Webber (AU) and Romain Dumas (FR)/Neel Jani (CH)/Marc Lieb (DE) were fourth and second in the morning and first and third in the afternoon.

Thirty one racing cars with 86 drivers from 19 different nations are divided into four classes in the WEC. The Porsche 919 Hybrid competes in the top LMP1 class (class one Le Mans Prototypes) and is a research laboratory for future sports car technology. It is powered by a downsizing two-litre V4-cylinder turbo charged petrol engine and an electric engine, which is fed by two energy recovery systems (brake energy from the front axle and exhaust energy). This unique and ground-breaking powertrain temporarily turns the 919 into a four-wheel drive car with a performance of around 1,000 hp.

Since the 919's debut back in 2014, it has won four races: Interlagos 2014, Le Mans, the Nürburgring and Austin in 2015. The car has entered 13 races in total and started from pole position nine times. To date, in 2015 no car other than a 919 has made it onto pole position, or for that matter the front row of the grid.

Last year in Fuji, the two Porsche 919s started from P2 and P3. In the race Bernhard/Hartley/Webber came third, despite a puncture early in the race. Back then this was the second podium finish for the 919. Mark Webber's fastest race lap of 1:27.759 minutes was the icing on the cake. Dumas/Jani/Lieb finished fourth.

Preview GT:

The Porsche Team Manthey also starts in Fuji. After clinching two double victories on the Nürburgring and at Austin, the squad under Olaf Manthey travels as the new series leader to the six-hour race on the tradition-steeped circuit at the foot of Mount Fuji. A pair of 470 hp 911 RSR will be fielded in the GTE-Pro class. Porsche works driver Richard Lietz (Austria) drives the winning racer from Weissach as the frontrunner of the hotly-contested World Endurance Cup for GT pilots. He shares the cockpit of the number 91 Porsche 911 RSR with Michael Christensen (Denmark). So far this season, the duo has scored victory at the Nürburgring and Austin rounds. Their French teammates Frédéric Makowiecki and Patrick Pilet crew the sister 911 RSR (#92).

Two customer teams campaign the 911 RSR in the GTE-Am class, where 2014-homologated GT vehicles compete: Taking up the challenge for Dempsey Proton Racing, the US actor and race driver Patrick Dempsey joins forces once again with Patrick Long (USA) and Marco Seefried. Scoring second at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, they celebrated their greatest success as a team until now. Le Mans outright winner Earl Bamber (New Zealand) again drives for Abu Dhabi Proton Racing, which secured its best result of the season at Austin with second place.

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