

Porsche Penske Motorsport's two Porsche 963 lock out the second grid row

14/03/2025 Porsche Penske Motorsport's pair of Porsche 963 will tackle the 73rd running of the 12 Hours of Sebring from the second grid row. Factory drivers Felipe Nasr from Brazil and Frenchman Mathieu Jaminet wrapped up the qualifying on positions three and four.

The two identical hybrid prototypes fielded by the customer teams Proton Competition and JDC-Miller MotorSports will tackle the second round of the North American IMSA championship from fifth and ninth on the grid. In the GTD Pro class, AO Racing secured a commendable starting position with the Porsche 911 GT3 R and will start the endurance classic in second place.

Under blue skies and temperatures of around 25 degrees Celsius in Central Florida, fans experienced a curtailed qualifying session in the top GTP class. The reason: a Cadillac stopped on track about four minutes into the session, causing the session to be red-flagged. As a result, the top grid positions for round two of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season were then decided in the four

remaining minutes.

Daytona winner Felipe Nasr turned just one flying lap in the brief battle for pole position. With a time of 1:47.522 minutes, the Brazilian secured the third-fastest time in Porsche Penske Motorsport's No. 7 car. Teammate Mathieu Jaminet from France attempted a second hot lap in the short time available but was still 0.076 seconds shy of Nasr in the sister car.

"That qualifying was a little unusual. The interruption threw a spanner into our entire strategic plan for our laps and warming the tyres and brakes," explains Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. "We did a great job considering the unusual circumstances. Mathieu Jaminet and Felipe Nasr were under enormous pressure to get everything right in the shortened session. They both did very well. The result is okay and gives us every chance for the 12-hour race. We're feeling confident."

"We're happy with our grid positions," states Jonathan Diuguid. The Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport adds: "Qualifying was a bit disjointed due to the red flags and pretty chaotic at the end. It was tricky for the drivers to get a reasonably clear lap in the heavy traffic. Mathieu Jaminet and Felipe Nasr managed this well and brought home a promising grid position for the race."

For round two of the season, Nasr shares the No. 7 Porsche 963 with Nick Tandy from Great Britain and Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium. Jaminet shares the cockpit of the sister car with Matt Campbell from Australia and Frenchman Kévin Estre.

At the wheel of the Porsche 963 fielded by the Proton Competition customer team, Neel Jani emerged as the hottest pursuer of the two Porsche Penske Motorsport factory cars. Thanks to a strong lap, the Swiss driver claimed P5 on the grid. Gianmaria Bruni planted JDC-Miller MotorSports' car on ninth. In the race, the Italian will share the No. 85 car with Nico Müller, among others. The Porsche factory driver from Switzerland celebrates his race debut in the Porsche 963 at Sebring.

GT classes: AO Racing's Porsche 911 GT3 R on the first grid row

In the GTD Pro class, the AO Racing team once again showcased its strength. Reigning champion Laurin Heinrich posted the second-fastest lap at the wheel of the Porsche 911 GT3 R dubbed 'Rexy'. In the race, the German joins forces with Klaus Bachler from Austria and Belgian Alessio Picariello. Austrian Porsche factory driver Richard Lietz achieved P11 in Proton Competition's No. 20 entry.

Porsche's customer teams struggled in the GTD category, which is reserved for cockpit combinations of professionals and ambitious amateur drivers. Michelle Gatting from Denmark qualified the No. 83 Porsche 911 GT3 R of the Iron Dames squad on eleventh. American Adam Adelson concluded the session on P13 with the identical No. 120 nine-eleven from Wright Motorsports.

Free live stream of the 12 Hours of Sebring

The 73rd edition of the 12 Hours of Sebring gets the green light on Saturday, 15 March, at 10:10 am local time (3:10 pm CET). imsa.tv broadcasts the entire race in a free live stream outside the US and Canada. The website scoring.imsa.com offers live timing.

Drivers' comments on the qualifying

Felipe Nasr (Porsche 963 #7): ☒After the session went green and we got the chance to drive again, things turned pretty wild out there. There was a lot of pushing and shoving. I think we made the most of our opportunities under the circumstances and achieved a decent grid position with third place – still, it only really counts on race day. Our car should perform well in the early stages in the intense heat, and during the final hours in the dark and cooler temperatures. I'm looking forward to the race.\"

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 963 #6): ☒That was chaotic. I had to get the very cold brakes and tyres up to the right temperature on my first lap. That worked well. On my first attempt at a top time, another car blocked me – precisely at the point where all the parameters were within the optimal window. On the second flying lap, a car in front of me slid off the track, and I had to take evasive action. That cost me at least three-tenths of a second. It's such a shame because we could've made it to the front row. Now we need to fight our way forward in the long race."

Neel Jani (Porsche 963 #5): ☒I'm thrilled with fifth place. We didn't do any testing here so we're lacking experience. So that makes our result today all the more remarkable. We tried out a few things in qualifying. During my fastest lap, I had to tweak several things. Now we have a long race ahead of us – anything can happen. As always, the decision will be made in the last two or three hours. We know that from Sebring.\"

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 911 GT3 R #77): ☒I'm satisfied. At midday, when the sun was at its zenith, the track temperature soared, making conditions difficult. It's something we managed to prepare for very well during the free practice sessions on Thursday. The team did a great job, and my fastest lap was okay. Qualifying second may not seem important in a twelve-hour race but don't forget, your grid position is worth a lot of championship points. Things can get pretty wild at the start, so a front-row position at least gives us some security in the early stages."

Michelle Gatting (Porsche 911 GT3 R #83): ☒Everyone heads into the qualifying session determined to turn the fastest lap. At the moment, other teams have a slight edge over us in this regard. I did everything I could, and pushed it to the limit, but more wasn't within reach. So far, the car isn't giving us maximum feedback and sufficient confidence. On a track like Sebring, something like that has a huge impact. We'll readjust the setup for the race and hope for a good result on Saturday."

Qualifying result

GTP class:
1. Eng/D. Vanthoor/Magnussen (AUT/BEL/DNK), BMW #24, 1:47.091 minutes
2. Blomqvist/Braun/Dixon (GBR/USA/NZL), Acura #60, 1:47.116 minutes
3. Nasr/Tandy/L. Vanthoor (BRA/GBR/BEL), Porsche 963 #7, 1:47.522 minutes
4. Jaminet/Campbell/Estre (FRA/AUS/FRA), Porsche 963 #6, 1:47.598 minutes
5. Jani/Pino/Vautier (SUI/CHL/FRA), Porsche 963 #5, 1:48.074 minutes
9. Van der Helm/Bruni/Müller (NLD/ITA/SUI), Porsche 963 #85, 1:48.228 minutes

GTD Pro class:
1. Costa/Rigon/Altoe (ESP/ITA/ITA), Ferrari #81, 1:59.225 minutes
2. Heinrich/Bachler/Picariello (DEU/AUT/BEL), Porsche 911 GT3 R #77, 1:59.397 minutes
3. Snow/Verhagen/De Phillippi (USA/USA/USA), BMW #1, 1:59.666 minutes
11. Schiavoni/Cressoni/Lietz (ITA/ITA/AUT), Porsche 911 GT3 R #20, 2:00.814 minutes

GTD class:
1. Mann/Wadoux/Pier Guidi (USA/FRA/ITA), Ferrari #21, 1:59.131 minutes
2. Lucas/Koch/Götz (USA/USA/DEU), Mercedes-AMG #32, 1:59.513 minutes
3. Hawksworth/Thompson/Montecalvo (GBR/CAN/USA), Lexus #12, 1:59.518 minutes
11. Bovy/Frey/Gatting (BEL/SUI/DNK), Porsche 911 GT3 R #83, 2:00.843 minutes
13. Adelson/Skeer/Sargent (USA/USA/AUS), Porsche 911 GT3 R #120, 2:01.206 minutes

Full results and championship standings: https://results.imsa.com.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Subline: Urs Kuratle

Path: Porsche Penske Motorsport's two Porsche 963 lock out the second grid row/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport, IMSA, Sebring, USA, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: Jonathan Diuguid

Path: Porsche Penske Motorsport's two Porsche 963 lock out the second grid row/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Felipe Nasr (BRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#5), IMSA, Sebring, USA, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: Felipe Nasr

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Title: Mathieu Jaminet (FRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6), IMSA, Sebring, USA, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: Mathieu Jaminet

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Title: Neel Jani (SUI), Proton Competition (#5), IMSA, Sebring, USA, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: Neel Jani

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