

The fight for Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup grid spots is on

22/09/2023 The qualifying heats for the 2024 Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup (PESC) begin this Saturday. In the so-called Contender Series, 34 sim racers go head-to-head in six racing events to secure the available grid positions in the popular esports one-make cup.

Contested on the iRacing simulation platform, the PESC is one of the most demanding and respected online racing series in the world. Fans can follow the individual races live and free of charge on the sports car manufacturer's Twitch channel. The sixth season of the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup gets underway at the beginning of February 2024.

The Contender Series is the second and decisive stage of the demanding selection process for the 2024 Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup. 219 sim racers from around the world took part in the qualifying series between 22 July and 26 August. The top 21 with the most points now advance to the next round. In the Contender Series, they will go up against 13 other online drivers: nine PESC participants who finished the previous season in positions 16 to 30 as well as four winners of national Porsche Esports competitions who will tackle the event as wild cards. After six races, the top 15

finishers to claim a place in the 30-strong PESC field will be decided on 4 November – the top 15 gamers from last season have automatically qualified for the sixth season of the virtual one-make cup.

Wild card drivers advance from Porsche's national esports competitions

Like last year, Porsche Motorsport has once again invited four wild card drivers who have previously won one of the sports car manufacturer's national esports competitions to take part in the Contender Series. William Chadwick returns to the PESC from the Esports Carrera Cup Great Britain. The Porsche Esports Sprint Challenge Canada nominates Antoine Lacharite and the Esports Carrera Cup Denmark will be represented by Lucas Daugaard. The Esports Carrera Cup Brazil sends a familiar face: Jeff Giassi was one of the regular drivers in the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup from 2020 to 2022. During this time, the Brazilian underlined his skill with several top-10 results.

They face tough competition in the Contender Series. Most notably, the nine drivers from this year's Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup who want to return to the international one-make cup will benefit from their wealth of experience. These include Kevin Nielsen and Mathias Stokbaek Jensen from Denmark, Belgian Julien Soenen, Simone Maria Marcenó from Italy, the Frenchman Quentiin Vialatte, Alexey Nesov from Hungary, the American Bobby Zalenski as well as the Dutchman Sam Kuitert and Bryn Collins from the UK. Soenen, Vialatte and Kuitert made their PESC debut in 2022. Jensen, Nesov and Collins – the younger brother of Porsche Coanda works driver Charlie Collins – celebrated their rookie season this year.

Race day follows the same format as the Porsche TAG Heuer Supercup

The format of the Contender Series is the same as the race days of the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup. This means that in the 18 minutes of free practice, the participants get a chance to familiarise themselves with the track and weather conditions before attempting a flying lap in the eight-minute qualifying session to secure the best starting positions and up to ten points for the overall standings.

This is followed by a sprint race over approximately 15 minutes. The winner receives 25 points, with P20 earning one point. After a five-minute warm-up, the feature race gets underway over a virtual distance of around 80 kilometres. The grid is based on the result of the sprint event however with the eight first-placed sim racers lining up on the grid in reverse order – hence, eighth place qualifies for pole position. In this race, the winner receives 50 points, with the remaining points awarded on a sliding scale to P25. The maximum points tally for a race day is 85 points. All six races of the season count towards the championship ranking.

Porsche's Twitch channel broadcasts all events live

Fans can follow all races of the Contender Series for the 2024 PESC live from 8:45 pm CEST via Porsche's Twitch channel (www.twitch.tv/porsche). Further information about the Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup is available from the Porsche Motorsport Hub, the Porsche Newsroom and the "X" account (formerly Twitter) @PorscheRaces.

The full regulations for the two-stage qualification programme for the 2024 Porsche TAG Heuer Esports Supercup are available to download free of charge on the iRacing website.

Racing calendar for the second qualifying round of the 2024 PESC

23.09.2023 – Hockenheimring (Germany)
30.09.2023 – Laguna Seca (USA)
07.10.2023 – Red Bull Ring (Austria)
14.10.2023 – Road Atlanta (USA)
28.10.2023 – Long Beach Street Circuit (USA)
04.11.2023 – Nürburgring Grand Prix circuit (Germany)

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