

De Phillippi on pole position

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20/06/2015 Porsche Junior Connor de Phillippi has pocketed his first pole position in the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup.

At Spielberg, Austria, the 22-year-old American (VERVA Lechner Racing Team) coped best with the difficult qualifying conditions and on the wet track relegated Austria's Philipp Eng (Market Leader Team by Project 1) and Michael Ammermüller (Lechner Racing Middle East) from Germany to grid positions two and three. "My first Supercup pole is great, of course. It takes a little luck too, but I experienced quite a lot of bad luck in the first two races. I'm totally happy to start from the front of the field," said de Phillippi.

Qualifying was cancelled due to a vehicle recovery in the gravel

When the rain began in the late morning on the Red Bull Ring, the track conditions for the 28-strong

Supercup field changed rapidly. Even the tarmac in the paddock became slippery as did the track in qualifying. The session was red-flagged twice when cars slid off the track and had to be salvaged.

“Initially it rained quite hard, but the track then gradually dried up and we could pick up the pace. Because we expected the red flag to come out at any time, the qualifying became extremely tactical,” explained Eng, who managed to plant his Porsche 911 GT3 Cup on pole several times over the 30-minute session. With three minutes left, the Porsche Junior de Phillippi topped the time sheets and just 30 seconds later the qualifying was cancelled due to a vehicle recovery in the gravel.

Championship leader Ammermüller clinched position three on the 4.326-kilometre track, putting him in a position to take a top placing. Taking up the race alongside him is Porsche Junior Sven Müller (D/Lechner Racing Middle East): “It was a difficult qualifying with the circuit covered in water. In two of the three sectors I managed to turn an absolute best time and fourth on the grid is okay. I’m now looking forward to the race.”

16-year-old Pedro Piquet celebrated his debut as a guest driver

Christopher Zöchling, who comes from Styria and had been signed on to contend the race for the Fach Auto Tech squad, claimed the fifth spot in front of Spain’s Alex Riberas (The Heart of Racing by Lechner). In a field of identical, near-standard sports cars, the Supercup newcomer from Austria Luca Rettenbacher achieved an impressive eleventh in qualifying. Amateur pilot Rolf Ineichen (CH/Konrad Motorsport) appeared very pleased with his maiden Supercup outing this year. He takes up the race from twelfth position.

Porsche Junior Matteo Cairoli (Market Leader Team by Project 1) had hoped for a better qualifying position than thirteenth, but the 18-year-old is feeling optimistic for the third championship round on Sunday. “My plan is to go all out tomorrow and work my way through the field,” claims Cairoli. 16-year-old Pedro Piquet celebrated his debut as a guest driver in the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup. The son of three-time Formula 1 world champion Nelson Piquet occupies the 14th grid spot.

Three Austrian drivers contest the race

The Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup has plenty of local representation at the Spielberg weekend: With Philipp Eng from Salzburg, Luca Rettenbacher from Eugendorf and Christopher Zöchling from Bruck an der Murr, three Austrian drivers contest the race. In addition, there are several top teams with Austrians: The squad under Walter Lechner Senior with the teams Lechner Racing Middle East and The Heart of Racing by Lechner, as well as his young offspring Walter Lechner Junior as the team boss of VERVA Lechner Racing Team. Franz Konrad, the team principal of Konrad Motorsport, was born very close to the Red Bull Ring in Graz.

Sky Deutschland broadcasts a live preliminary report of the 16-lap race on Sunday from 11.30 hours.

Eurosport 2 televises the race live on Sunday from 11.45 hours.

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