Consistent development makes the Porsche 963 a serial winner

09/04/2026 The Porsche 963 has further cemented its status as the most successful racing car under the LMDh regulations. Its third consecutive victory at the 24 Hours of Daytona and another one-two finish at the 12 Hours of Sebring are proof of this. As a result, the sports car manufacturer, factory drivers Felipe Nasr, Julien Andlauer and Laurin Heinrich, and the Porsche Penske Motorsport team lead all classifications in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. The key to success: the tireless work of the developers in Weissach, who are consistently optimising the Porsche 963 following the title wins in 2024 and 2025.

Ahead of the first sprint race of the IMSA season on the streets of Long Beach (18 April), the Porsche Penske Motorsport factory team can once again boast an impeccable record: The Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG leads all IMSA standings. This means Porsche can once again set its sights on defending its title. There are still seven more races to go before then, each with a very different character and durations ranging from 100 minutes to ten hours.

The foundation for these successes lies in the perfectly coordinated work of the Porsche Penske

Motorsport team, strong performances by the factory drivers in the cockpits, sophisticated race strategies and, last but not least, the hybrid prototype itself. Porsche has consistently improved the 963 since its rollout in Weissach in January 2022, although the participating manufacturers in the American IMSA series – as in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) – are only permitted to use five so-called development jokers during the current homologation phase, which runs until the end of 2027.

Development to the very limits of physics

“Porsche has always used motorsport to test technologies and redefine limits. It is precisely this approach that has made the Porsche 963 what it is today,” explains Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. The further development of the hybrid prototype, which delivers up to 520 kW (707 hp), spanned over three stages. In the winter of 2023, Porsche implemented key improvements regarding durability for the following year. For 2025, optimisations were made to the chassis, amongst other areas. And at the start of this season, the team from Weissach focused on aerodynamic developments.

“We agreed on a development roadmap very early on and implemented it consistently and very successfully,” explains Stefan Moser, Technical Director LMDh project. The success proves the engineer and his tireless team in Weissach right: In 2024, the Porsche 963 won every title in the IMSA Championship; the following season, the sports car manufacturer repeated this triumph across the board; and Porsche Penske Motorsport has started the current year just as it did twelve months ago: with overall victory at the 24 Hours of Daytona and a one-two finish at the 12 Hours of Sebring.

Given the limited number of development jokers available, the car updates had to be carefully planned and chosen with great care. “Under these circumstances, we always look to see where we have the greatest potential for improvement,” explains Urs Kuratle, adding: “The drivers play a key role in this. Their candid feedback helps us identify these areas of potential. We then have to counteract this as best we can with technical developments.” There is a consensus among the Porsche factory drivers: the 963 has improved noticeably year on year.

Drivers praise improved 963

“If I were to do a comparison drive today between the 2023 Porsche and today’s 963 race car, it would feel like two completely different vehicles,” says Matt Campbell, reigning IMSA champion. “The progress since the car's debut has been truly massive: first in terms of reliability, then in the area of kinematics, and most recently in aerodynamics. Added to this are optimisations to the many control systems, which have a direct impact on, amongst other things, braking behaviour, traction and the power management of the drivetrain.”

“We really felt the progress, particularly on the way to victory at Sebring,” reports fellow factory driver

Julien Andlauer, who won the first two races of the season at the wheel of the number 7 car. “The car is much more pleasant to drive, we’re making better use of the tyres, and the Porsche is far more predictable in fast sections and over bumps. That should benefit us later in the year, for example at Watkins Glen and Road Atlanta.”

New ideas in Weissach: There’s even more to come from the 963

Whilst the team and drivers are celebrating major successes in the North American championship, the development engineers in Weissach are not resting on their laurels. “Sitting back and relaxing isn’t our style,” laughs Stefan Moser. “We don’t focus on results, but maintain a purely engineering perspective. We are driven by the desire to push the physical limits. Accordingly, there is still potential. It’s like the 911, which Porsche has been continuously improving for over 60 years. There’s still more to come from the 963 too.”

“We’ve still got a development ace up our sleeve,” says Urs Kuratle with a smile. “We’ll be giving careful thought to how we can make the most of it for the 2027 season.” The Swiss executive adds with a grin: “Our team in Weissach already has a few ideas on that…”

Standing still is going backwards: true to this motto, the developers in Weissach will continue to work on improvements for the Porsche 963 in the best “#Raceborn” spirit – because the Stuttgart-based sports car manufacturer’s hybrid prototype is set to remain the benchmark.

Further information

Season 2023: The technology of the new Porsche 963 hypercar/GTP prototype in detail

Season 2024: Porsche celebrates nine championship titles at the finale

Season 2025: Porsche defends all titles in the 2025 IMSA Championship

Daytona 2026: Another victory for Porsche Penske Motorsport at the 24 Hours of Daytona

Sebring 2026:Porsche scores 20th outright victory at the 12 Hours of Sebring

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