The Porsche Museum adds the brand's first DTM winner to its collection

28/03/2023 When Thomas Preining crossed the finish line at the Norisring in Nuremberg in first place on 2 July, 2022, the victory went down in history: the first DTM triumph for Porsche in this legendary series, and for KÜS Team Bernhard.

In the past few weeks, a team led by brand ambassador Timo Bernhard and the Porsche Heritage and Museum department have repaired the 991-generation 911 GT3 R and restored it to its original condition on the day of that 2022 victory. Following its restoration, the Porsche Museum is now including the winning car in the company's collection.

"A racing car is the ideal exhibit for us to show off the characteristic Porsche DNA," says Achim Stejskal, Head of Porsche Heritage and Museum. "This is why we always look for those cars that have achieved major milestones in the history of motorsport. It didn't take us long to home in on Timo Bernhard's team and its piece of Zuffenhausen history. We're adding an important contemporary witness to the

collection."

For Bernhard, Le Mans winner, team boss and Porsche brand ambassador, the car's inclusion in the museum's collection is an emotional moment, not least because he knows this racing car very well and has invested so much heart and soul in it. "In the past year I've completed tests in the DTM configuration so that I could inspire my team," says the 42-year-old. "The Porsche Museum is a very special place for me and it touches and fascinates many people. There they can experience the history of Porsche up close." Porsche won on the Norisring in the Stuttgart sports car manufacturer's first season in the DTM. "Winning like this is something that cannot be expressed in words," Bernhard remembers.

His KÜS Team Bernhard is a family operation through and through, with his sister, mother and father working at his side. The former racing driver describes the feeling of being a team boss: "As a driver you can do a lot on your own, for example with endurance and strength training. As team boss, you have to inspire and convince everyone if you want to make change happen. You can provide encouragement, but during the race you can't change anything if you've made the wrong decision."

Even in his new role, his pulse races when he remembers the many days on which he drove at the limit and made motorsport history on multiple occasions. Yet months later, the first DTM victory still brings a smile to his face. "That Saturday at the Norisring was a historic day for us in a wonderful setting. However, the significance only became clear to me the next day when legends Walter Röhrl, Hans-Joachim Stuck and commentator Rainer Braun all gathered together in our box," recalls the ambitious man from Saarpfalz – who even as a child was not a fan of losing. There followed races at the Nürburgring, Spa-Francorchamps, and a further victory in Spielberg, Austria, as well as the finale on the Hockenheimring, where the team started as a title contender.

An accident ended the dream of winning the championship and destroyed large sections of the car's body. This was no problem for the specialists in the historical motorsport workshop of Porsche Heritage and Museum. "Our requirement for the restoration of the car was to keep as many parts of the original material as possible," says Armin Burger, Coordinator of Historical Motorsport. For safety reasons, however, a number of new parts had to be used. "The restoration was a joint project to ensure that our car would take its place in history," says Bernhard. "It's not routine to rebuild a car in direct collaboration with the racing team," Burger adds.

Wherever possible, those involved used the original parts from the previous DTM season to make the 911 GT3 R driveable again. For example, they took the roof of the crashed car and integrated it into the new chassis. "It was important to us to keep the foil and the original acceptance stamp from the final race of the 2022 season at the Hockenheimring as a piece of the history," Burger explains. The restoration project started with the interiors of the two raw bodies that were standing side by side. The wiring harness, control units, fire extinguishing system and pedals were taken from the crashed car and installed in the new chassis, along with the dashboard. Then came the air-conditioning system, the chassis and body parts, and the car's fuel lines and other pipework. To finish, the specialists fitted the engine and gearbox of the racing car.

For the rollout, the commissioning after the restoration, the ignition was switched on for the first time and the fuel pump was activated. “Firing up the engine, the whole team had goosebumps,” says Bernhard, who was given the opportunity to drive the first lap following the restoration on the test track of the Development Centre in Weissach. “The drive felt really super. My faith in the 911 GT3 R was there from the very first moment. I’m proud to have driven the car in the same place where it was developed five years ago,” the team boss concludes.

At present, the Porsche Museum collection comprises 750 vehicles, including around 250 racing cars. In curating the collection, those responsible for it are careful to include not only pre-production models, but the whole spectrum from the first concepts, to a wide range of prototype stages, to the finished products. “We want our collection to recreate the motivation of the original developers and use their future-oriented thinking to explain the history of the cars for us today,” says Alexander Klein, Head of the Porsche Heritage Experience and the Company Collection.

The collection should not just be seen as a historical backbone, but also as a window into the rich knowledge of the past. “Our collection is a transparent arc of history right up to today – and tomorrow. It provides our developers and designers with a wealth of stimuli and inspiration,” Klein explains. The company collection also functions on various levels: as a means of comparison for journalistic work, providing spare parts for the after sales area, and for around 30 markets that want to tell the company’s story throughout the world. The collection houses not only cars, but also technical objects. These include cross-section models of engines or study objects from spoilers and brake systems that illustrate specific functions and underline the key statements relating to the car. To ensure that the racing cars can also be driven by future generations, the collection also contains historical motorsport parts.

This anniversary year is shaped by the success stories

To mark ‘75 Years of Porsche Sports Cars’, cars from the collection are travelling around the world for events and celebrations, some of them in a dedicated ‘heritage truck’. They will be telling the story of the company at the DRIVE Volkswagen Group Forum in Berlin, in the Museum of Transport in Lucerne, on the Grossglockner, at the Fuori Concorso on Lake Como, and at the Rennsport Reunion at the Weathertech Raceway Laguna Seca in California. Just as it was once Timo Bernhard’s dream as leader of a racing team to take the first DTM victory for Porsche, the history of the sports car manufacturer has been shaped by people whose dreams have driven them to achieve something very special. This anniversary year is shaped by the success stories of these people, who dared to dream. Of the people behind the brand and their ambition to make dreams come true.

In the past weeks, a camera team has followed the collaboration between Porsche Heritage and Museum and KÜS Team Bernhard. The documentaries give viewers exciting insights from behind the scenes as well as details of the restoration of the racing car. The episodes can be seen on the Porsche YouTube channel, with trailers being available on Facebook and Instagram @porsche.museum. Visitors to the Porsche Museum will also find the DTM race-winning car in the permanent exhibition.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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Video

https://newstv.porsche.com/porschevideos/238203_en_3000000.mp4

Image Sublines

Path: The Porsche Museum adds the brand's first DTM winner to its collection/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: 911 GT3 R, 2023, Porsche AG
Subline: Following its restoration, the Porsche Museum is now including the winning car in the company's collection. "We're adding an important contemporary witness to the collection," says Achim Stejskal.

Path: The Porsche Museum adds the brand's first DTM winner to its collection/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Timo Bernhard, Alexander E. Klein (l-r), 911 GT3, Porsche Museum, Stuttgart, 2023, Porsche AG
Subline: The official handover of the race car took place in the Porsche Museum workshop - standing next to the Porsche 911 GT3 R: Timo Bernhard and Alexander E. Klein (right).

Path: The Porsche Museum adds the brand's first DTM winner to its collection/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: 911 GT3 R, Team 75 Bernhard (#24), DTM 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Porsche has joined the list of winners in the tradition-steeped DTM racing series. Team 75 Bernhard, led by Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard, claimed the first DTM victory for Porsche in 2022.

Path: The Porsche Museum adds the brand's first DTM winner to its collection/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: Alexander E. Klein, Timo Bernhard, Laurin Heinrich, Armin Burger (l-r),Porsche Museum, Stuttgart, 2023, Porsche AG
Subline: From left to right: Alexander E. Klein, Timo Bernhard, Laurin Heinrich and Armin Burger.

Link Collection

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