

Porsche Motorsport Weekly Event Notes: Monday, February 18, 2019

18/02/2019 911 RSR. Record Number of Premier Porsche to Race On Sebring Weekend. Longtime Porsche Program Returns to SRO with 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport.

Porsche Profile. Event Story Lines. 911 RSR. Record Number of Premier Porsche to Race On Sebring Weekend.

The joint IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) weekend at Sebring International Raceway, March 14 – 16, will see the single largest gathering of Porsche 911 RSRs assembled in North America to race. Eight of the third-year 911-based race cars will contest three classes across Friday's 1,000-miles of Sebring WEC race and Saturday's headlining 67th Annual Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring. With the addition of the Porsche 911 GT3 R in the Pro-Am style GTD class of the WeatherTech Championship in the 12-Hours, the German-brand will have eleven opportunities to add to its record-setting career tally of class victories on the iconic 3.74-mile race course.

In its unprecedented 65-consecutive starts in the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring, Porsche has earned 89 victories – 56 more than its nearest rival – including a record 18-overall wins and 71 class titles. This year, eleven Porsche 911-based race cars will contest four different classes in the two separate endurance events, by far the largest number of entries of any manufacturer contesting the two major enduros.

Friday, March 15, will see the WEC's first appearance at Sebring since it shared the track with IMSA's top race in 2012. This will be the only stop for the WEC in the United States this season. The sixth-round of the eight-race "Super Season" will see two Porsche 911 RSR "works" cars in the LMGTE-Pro class (Nos. 91 and 92) carrying the traditional corporate red and black markings on a white-base. The No. 92 of Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Kévin Estre (France) currently lead the Driver, Team and Manufacturer standings in the GTE-Pro category. The No. 91 of Richard Lietz (Austria) and Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) find themselves in third-place in the title chase which will end at the 24 Hours of Le Mans on June 15 - 16. Four of the mid-engine 911s are also in the LMGTE-Am category. Leading the way in the Pro-Am style class is the current championship-leading Team Project 1 Porsche with Santa Barbara, California's Patrick Lindsey, factory driver Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) and Norway's Egidio Perfetti racing the No. 56. The Nos. 77 and 88 entered by Dempsey-Proton Racing and the No. 86 Gulf Racing car fill-out the category.

Saturday's classic Sebring event will see Porsche with five opportunities to pad the 12-Hours' record book. Two Porsche 911 RSR are entered in the WeatherTech GTLM class. The pair of Porsche GT Team factory cars will carry the same retro Brumos Racing commemorative liveries they did at the IMSA

season-opening Rolex 24 At Daytona in January where the No. 912 of Earl Bamber (New Zealand), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Mathieu Jaminet (France) took a third-place finish. The No. 911 team car will be shared by 2018 Sebring GTLM class winners Patrick Pilet (France), Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France).

The three remaining Porsche customer entries will be the GTD class 911 GT3 Rs. The No. 9 PFAFF Motorsports entry has been readied to continue its rookie IMSA season after a race-ending accident in the rain at Daytona. The No. 73 Park Place Motorsports car – the highest finishing 911 GT3 R at Daytona – continues its full-season assault on the class while the No. 99 Via Italia Racing machine will again be fielded in conjunction with NGT Motorsports.

The World Endurance Championship makes its return to Florida with a Friday, March 15 start at 4:00 p.m. ET. The 1,000-mile race is expected to take the checkered flag before midnight. The Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring will take the green flag at 10:40 a.m. ET start on Saturday, March 16.

TRG to SRO. Longtime Porsche Program Returns to SRO with 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport. Longtime Porsche entrant The Racers Group (TRG) will return to SRO Pirelli GT4 America competition in 2019 with a multi-car effort campaigning the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport. The three-entries will race across two classes of the series formerly known as the Pirelli World Challenge with veteran drivers Spencer Pumpelly, Chris Bellomo, Dr. Jim Rappaport, Derek DeBoer, Sean Gibbons and newcomer Kevin Woods.

Pumpelly will run the No. 66 Porsche in the SRO Pirelli GT4 America Sprint Championship. The resident of Atlanta, Georgia is a two-time Rolex 24 At Daytona class champion and multi-time World Challenge series winner. The Sprint Championship will cover eight races across the country beginning with the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg, March 8 - 10 on the Streets of St. Petersburg circuit in Florida.

Bellomo and Woods will share the wheel of the No. 67 Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport in the Pirelli GT4 America SprintX West Championship – a five-race championship that will open March 1 – 3 at the Circuit of the Americas (COTA) in Austin, Texas. Derek DeBoer has maintained a close working relationship with TRG for years and returns for a full season of Pirelli GT4 America SprintX in the No. 17 Porsche. Co-driving duties with DeBoer for the SprintX East and West Championships will be split with Dr. Jim Rappaport piloting the car in the West while Sean Gibbons will race the machine in the five rounds on the East Coast.

Kevin Buckler, Team Principal, TRG.

"We are all very excited to be racing the entire season with Pirelli GT4 America. The Series has put together an awesome schedule that makes it's easy for us to compete and to put together the budget. The series has really grown through the acquisition and vision of Stéphane Ratel and SRO, and with Greg Gill's leadership and tenacity, these guys are here to stay and are only going up. I really respect what the Series is doing and will make my home there this year."

Derek DeBoer, Driver, No. 17 TRG Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport.

"I am beyond excited to be moving into the start of my fifth season with TRG. Every part and person involved with this program really feels like family. It is a year that feels like things are clicking and going the right direction. Porsche has delivered us a beautiful new machine. I just love it and can't wait for things to kick off in March."

Spencer Pumpelly, Driver, No. 66 TRG Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport.

"The upcoming Pirelli season should be a fun challenge in the brand-new Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport. The field will be strong and the short races make for an intense on-track battle every time we take the green flag. The schedule takes us to some exciting venues and, with the support of The Racers Group, we are positioned for a great 2019."

Chris Bellomo, Driver, No. 67 TRG Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport.

"I'm really excited to be co-driving with Kevin Woods. Kevin is an extremely talented and well-respected driver who has had a lot of success behind the wheel over the past few seasons. I am looking forward to an amazing year of racing with Kevin as my teammate and the excellent support crew the TRG team has assembled."

Kevin Wood, Driver, No. 67 TRG Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport.

"I am really excited to be joining Chris Bellomo and TRG for the 2019 Pirelli GT4 America West series. Chris is a driver I've watched win a Pirelli Trophy West USA Championship in his first attempt. He's fast, competitive and a great person to be around. TRG is a team that I have admired for many years, it will be an honor to finally work with them. The level of professionalism that I've witnessed from the team in preparation for the season is as high as it gets."

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