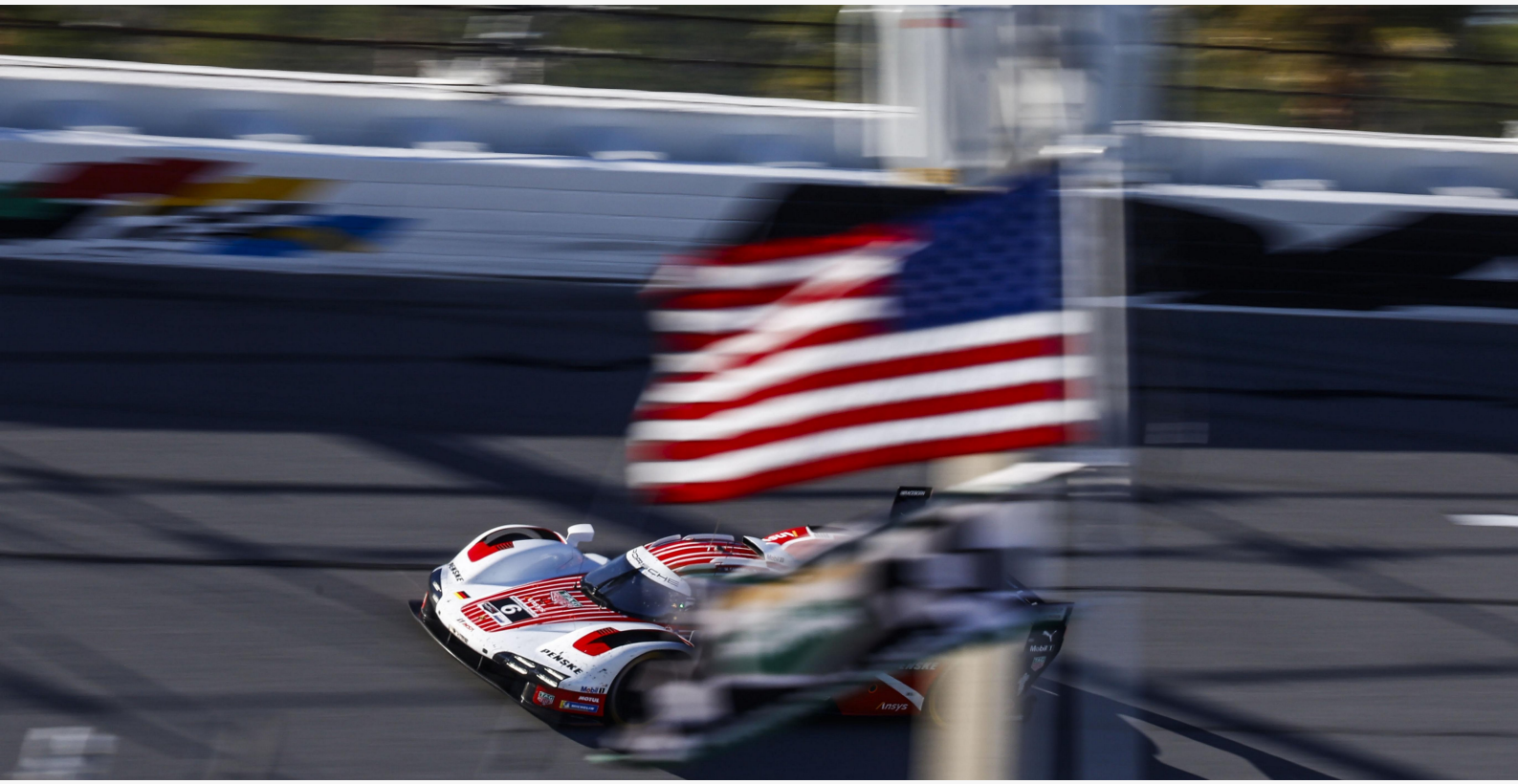


Porsche Penske Motorsport at the head of the leading pack after the opening phase at Daytona

25/01/2025 The number 7 Porsche 963 of Porsche Penske Motorsport leads the 24 Hours of Daytona. The car of the reigning champions and last year's winners consistently worked its way to the front during the first four hours. The sister car is in second place, with the identical hybrid prototype of customer team Proton Competition running sixth. In the GTD category, Wright Motorsports' Porsche 911 GT3 R initially led for many laps.

Under sunny skies but cool air temperatures of around 14 degrees Celsius, the four Porsche 963 cars initially struggled with grip. The hybrid prototypes needed time to bring their Michelin tyres into the optimal operating window. As the race progressed, the situation improved significantly: all Porsche 963 entries gained numerous positions and navigated cleanly through the dense and occasionally chaotic lapped traffic.

"Our goal was to make it through the opening laps unscathed – and we achieved that," summarized

Urs Kuratle. The Head of Factory Motorsport LMDh added: ⊠Initially, we struggled somewhat with the tires, reaching the optimal operating window late and losing some time. After that, things improved considerably. Our team and drivers have delivered strong performances so far. I am optimistic."

GT categories: Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R claims early lead in GTD

In the GTD classes, Wright Motorsports initially made a strong impression: American driver Elliott Skeer built a nearly 30-second lead from pole position in the number 120 Porsche 911 GT3 R. However, after handing over to teammate Adam Adelson, the car dropped back to the midfield due to a spin, among other issues. After four hours the nine-eleven with Ayhancan Güven at the wheel is running third in GTD class. The number 83 Iron Dames car steadily moved closer to the front during the early stages. In GTD-Pro class, the ⊠Rexy" 911 GT3 R of AO Racing fell back significantly due to a poorly timed yellow flag. The identical car from Proton Competition occupies a position in the lower midfield of the class.

Race progress overview

For up-to-date information on the Daytona action, visit Pitnotes.org.

The classic race streamed for free

IMSA.tv offers a free livestream of the 63rd edition of the 24 Hours of Daytona outside the USA and Canada. Live timing is available at scoring.imsa.com.

Drivers' comments after the opening phase

Matt Campbell (Porsche 963 #6):⊠We could not quite match the pace of the leaders early on. In the second stint, our performance improved significantly relative to the others. We managed the tires well over the distance. I stayed out of trouble during the hectic opening phase and handed the car over to Mathieu Jaminet without a scratch. That was the goal."

Felipe Nasr (Porsche 963 #7):⊠Despite the bright sunshine, track temperatures were quite low initially. Under these conditions, we were sliding around quite a bit – but that was probably the case for all GTP cars. The wind was stronger than before, making braking into Turn 1 tricky. Our car is intact and feels good. So far, everything is running as expected."

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 911 GT3 R #77): ⊠My first stint went well, but then a mistake during the pit stop involving the so-called virtual tank forced us to make another stop, leaving us almost at the back of the GTD-Pro field. In the second stint, I was lucky not to lose much time in traffic. Unfortunately, the

first yellow flag came at a bad time for us: the tank was empty, and the pit lane was closed. These circumstances cost us a lot of ground. But there's still plenty of time to fight back."

Elliott Skeer (Porsche 911 GT3 R #120): The opening laps at Daytona are always special. Everyone knows it's a very long race, and there's nothing to win early on, yet everyone tries to make an impression right away – it's kind of amusing. I was lucky to overtake several GTD-Pro cars on the first lap, giving me a cushion to maintain the lead."

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