Porsche Penske Motorsport is stripped of race win at Watkins Glen

26/06/2023 Mathieu Jaminet and Nick Tandy had finished the dramatic 6-hour race in the lead. But the No. 6 Porsche 963 was penalized after technical inspection. Porsche Penske Motorsport considers protesting the decision.

The race

The Porsche Penske Motorsport works team crossed the finish line in first place for the second time in the current IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season. The post-race technical inspection of the No. 6 Porsche 963 revealed minimal discrepancies. The hybrid prototype driven by Briton Nick Tandy and Frenchman Mathieu Jaminet was subsequently moved to the rear of the top GTP class. The sister car shared by Felipe Nasr from Brazil and Australian Matt Campbell took the flag in eighth after technical problems and lengthy repairs.

In dry conditions and watched by large crowds in the US state of New York, Porsche Penske

Motorsport's two Porsche 963 dominated the race from the outset. Heading into the race from pole position, Nick Tandy defended his position at the front of the field, with Matt Campbell coming from second place to snatch the lead after 30 minutes. While the No. 6 car maintained its lead position, the sister car suffered a major setback after approximately two hours. The repairs to a defect in the hybrid system took two hours and threw the crew back significantly.

Due to different pit stop and tyre strategies, the LMDh vehicles from the manufacturers Porsche, Cadillac, BMW and Acura took turns at the front of the field in the second half of the race. In the last hour, the suspense continued to mount: After the final pit stop, the leading cars bunched closer together. Jaminet was in second after the last stop, eight seconds behind the leading car and just four seconds ahead of the third-placed rival. In heavy slower traffic, the Frenchman put in a flawless drive under immense pressure. With about ten minutes left on the clock, he catapulted his Porsche 963 past the BMW helmed by the American Connor de Phillippi but was unable to shake off his opponent. A late caution phase brought some relief: Since overtaking is not permitted behind the safety car during the last two laps, the second win of the season for the Tandy/Jaminet duo was initially certain.

Inspection after the race

Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh describes the current situation: "Following post-race inspection at Watkins Glen International, IMSA has penalized the No. 6 entry in the Sahlen's Six Hours of the Glen citing that the front skid wear of the No. 6 Porsche 963 was less than one millimeter outside the legal tolerance. The rear skid wear was noted to be well within the legal tolerance. This skid wear is an anti-skid made of wood placed in the middle of the underbody and required by the regulations. Porsche Penske Motorsport plans to collect all of the data and follow the protest procedures."

The No. 7 sister car also spent time at the head of the field during the first two hours of racing. Thanks to a strong drive and clever team strategy, Matt Campbell from Australia swept into the lead for the first time after 30 minutes. Shortly after swapping with teammate Felipe Nasr from Brazil, a fault in a hybrid system hampered the car's charge. Extensive repairs and the replacement of numerous high-voltage components took almost two hours. Ultimately, Campbell/Nasr crossed the finish line eighth in the GTP class. The Porsche 963 campaigned by the customer team JDC-Miller MotorSports with drivers Mike Rockenfeller (Germany) and Tijmen van der Helm (Netherlands) finished fifth after a flawless drive.

Info

Round six the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will be held in Canada on 9 July, with the Canadian Tire Motorsport Park near the metropolis of Toronto hosting the 2:40-hour race. In Europe, the racetrack is known as Mosport.

Full results: imsa.alkamelsystems.com

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