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## Porsche to fight for the drivers' title

After having won the world championship title for manufacturers, Porsche is determined to also take the drivers' title at the final round of the 2016 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) on November 19 in Bahrain.



This year's Le Mans winners, Romain Dumas (FR), Neel Jani (CH) and Marc Lieb (DE), have an advantage of 17 points ahead of the best placed Toyota. In other words: bringing home the 919 Hybrid in fifth place would be enough for the title win, even if the Toyota wins and also takes the one point for pole position. The basic requirement is a clean and error free six-hour race.

While the driving trio in the number 2 car fights for the title, the number 1 car's crew also faces an emotional weekend: Bahrain will see the trio of Timo Bernhard (DE), Brendon Hartley (NZ) and Mark Webber (AU) racing together for the very last time after the former Formula One driver announced his retirement at the end of the season. In the future he will join Porsche in his new role as special representative. The three drivers, who are still the reigning world champions, have won four races so far this season. However, after being unlucky earlier this year and in Le Mans, they still rank fourth in the standings.

### Slightly cooler tarmac is welcomed by the Porsche Team

The 5.412 kilometre long Formula One track in Sakhir will host the third WEC race of the year to be held partly in the dark – after Le Mans and Austin. The six-hour race will be green flagged at 16:00 hrs local time. This is actually an hour later than last year and means the drivers will have to deal with blinding from the setting sun right from the beginning. At 16:45 hrs the sun will disappear behind the horizon. Slightly cooler tarmac, however, is welcomed by the Porsche Team, because the competition benefits from the heat. In any case, the track has a rather poor grip level because the fine sand from the desert is continuously blown onto it.

"Six wins out of eight races, plus the early manufacturers' title win, this is a fantastic interim balance sheet," said Fritz Enzinger, the Vice President LMP1. "I'm incredibly proud of our team. Everybody gave everything and it was worth it. For the finale now we will again bundle up all our forces to win the drivers' crown again in Bahrain. It is not going to be easy, but surely exciting. I just hope it doesn't become such a nail-biter as it was in 2015. Thinking about this race being the last one for Mark as well as for our highly respected competitor Audi, I prefer to postpone until afterwards."

Team Principal Andreas Seidl added: "The Bahrain track itself, as well as the expected higher temperatures, are less suitable for our 919 Hybrid than the Shanghai circuit was, where we clearly had the fastest car on track. Even more important is a strong team effort for perfect preparation and set-up, continuing reliability, fast pit stops and right strategic calls. Of course we'd love to conclude the season with a race win together with the drivers' title. We will fight until the very last lap to fulfil that.

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#### Facts and Figures

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In 2015 Porsche concluded the season in Bahrain by taking the sixth consecutive race win and the drivers' title. A fifth place finish was enough to make Bernhard/Hartley/Webber world champions. Dumas/Jani/Lieb took their long awaited 2015 maiden race win.

The race turned into a thriller. Holding a 13-point advantage over the fastest Audi trio, Bernhard/Hartley/Webber started from pole position. But after 30 minutes, the three pitted for lengthy repairs and later the same happened again. The trio made up ground, charging from last to fifth place. One after the other, both barrel levers on the 919's combustion engine were broken. The mechanics found a solution for provisional repairs: by implementing pliers and cable ties into the engine, they fixed it at full throttle. In this condition, the 1000-HP prototype was operated by outstanding engineering performance and highest driver sensitivity. In the pit lane only electric drive was possible. In this situation the trio had no chance to improve to P4, that was necessary for the title win. It was the sister car with Marc Lieb at the wheel that grabbed the lead from the fast Audi in Bahrain, and thus snatched the decisive championship points.

Last year's qualifiers were Bernhard/Hartley and Dumas/Lieb. After dark and in a little cooler conditions, Bernhard set a new lap record for prototypes on the 5.412 km long F1 circuit. That was a lap in 1:39.670 minutes. The average time for him and Hartley was 1:39.736 minutes and put them on pole position. Dumas/Lieb came second on the grid with an average lap time of 1:40.100 minutes.

In the 2015 season, no other car managed to start from the front row of the grid than the 919.

The WEC efficiency regulations limit the amount of energy that can be used per lap. In Bahrain the Porsche 919 Hybrid can use 4.92 megajoule of electrical power from energy recovery systems and 1.385 kg/1.896 litres of petrol.

At normal race speed (no safety car) the Porsche 919 Hybrid is due for refuelling after every 32 laps at the latest.

Refuelling and changing tyres may only be done sequentially, not at the same time. Only four mechanics may work simultaneously when changing tyres and also may use only one wheel gun at a time. That takes a lot longer than in F1, for example.

The drivers are normally only changed when new tyres are needed.

A set of Michelin slick tyres should ideally last two fuel tank fills. However, in order to set the best lap times, it may be sensible to change tyres more often.

These different types of tyres can be used: three different compounds of slick tyres for dry conditions, a hybrid tyre (no profile either but softer cover) for mixed conditions and wet weather tyres. 6.5 sets of dry weather tyres are available per car for qualifying and the race.

A lap on the F1 track of the Bahrain International Circuit is 5.412 kilometres. It has eight right-handers and six left-handers. The longest straight is at the start-finish and measures 1.090 kilometres.

The circuit opened in 2004 and is located about 30 kilometres outside Bahrain's capital of Manama. Over 30 islands in the Persian Gulf belong to the Kingdom. Its size is around 750 square kilometres and has nearly 1.2 million inhabitants.

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#### Quotes before the race

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##### Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 1

Timo Bernhard (35, Germany): "Being the season's closing event and the last race for my team mate Mark, it definitely will be a highly emotional weekend. We will do everything that he can walk away with the best possible result for a nice farewell. Of course we'd love to finish the season with another victory. It wasn't always easy for us this year, but it paid off that we always stayed motivated and looked ahead. High temperatures and a sandy track make Bahrain a difficult race, so we have to get all the parameters right for that."

Brendon Hartley (27, New Zealand): "In one way I'm looking forward to Bahrain and in another it is sad, because it will be the last weekend with Mark. We are no longer fighting for the drivers' world championship in the number 1 car, but we will do all we can to make sure Mark ends his career on a high and also will support our sister car."

Mark Webber (40, Australia): "Bahrain is obviously not a normal race for me. It will be pretty emotional. To arrive there knowing it is the

last time I will compete seriously will be a big moment. I'm looking forward to the weekend. I've got a lot of friends coming from all around the world, especially from Australia and Europe, to watch me drive for the last time. Of course we would love to go out with a victory, but, irrespective of the result, I think it would be nice for me to have a smooth day and look back on a very, very long career of which I'm, of course, very proud. I thought about it a few times: I will walk away from the car just one more time – take the helmet and balaclava off and the ear plugs out, doing all these things for one last time. That will be very different, but I'm looking forward to not having to do this in the future."

Drivers Porsche 919 Hybrid number 2

Romain Dumas (38, France): "The race in Bahrain is going to be a big day like Le Mans, because there is so much at stake. We need to be one hundred per cent focused and cannot afford any mistakes. We have to get this world championship now."

Neel Jani (32, Switzerland): "The season ending is always special and this year it is even more so. For us it is all about the championship. Our position in the points is good. At the most recent race in Shanghai our pace was very good in the beginning, we were on track for the title win, but then we lost ground. This was analysed and we found the reason for it. This makes me very positive before the finale. After having secured the manufacturers' title, it would be the greatest joy to now seal the drivers' title as well."

Marc Lieb (36, Ludwigsburg): "A finale with an open title decision is extremely exciting for everyone, and I'm really looking forward to it. Coming fifth in the race would be enough to win the championship. So far we have had a very reliable car and we hope it just stays like that. Also at the finale we desperately want to show that we can do better than in the recent races."

On the day after the finale, on Sunday, testing is going on in Bahrain. This includes giving the US American driver Gustavo Menezes the opportunity to test the Porsche 919 Hybrid as an LMP1 rookie. The 22-year old has just won the 2016 FIA Endurance Trophy for LMP2 drivers in Shanghai.

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## The 919 Hybrid

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The Weissach developed Porsche 919 Hybrid produces a system power of over 662 kW (900 HP). Its combustion engine is a ground breaking downsizing motor: the compact two-litre V4 turbocharged petrol engine drives the rear axle with almost 368 kW (500 HP). Two different energy recovery systems – brake energy from the front and exhaust energy – feed a lithium ion battery that, on command, passes on the energy to an E machine to power the front axle with an extra boost of over 294 kW (400 HP).

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## Info

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The six-hour race on the Bahrain International Circuit is the ninth and final round of the 2016 FIA WEC and starts on November 19 at 16:00 hrs local time (14:00 hrs in Central Europe).

The official WEC App can be downloaded free of charge in its basic version and can be extended (not free of charge) by a live stream. Several live features, such as on-board cameras, timing and GPS tracking, are implemented in the Porsche Motorsport App (free of charge) and at [porsche.com/fiawec](http://porsche.com/fiawec).

All points' standings: <http://www.fiawec.com/courses/classification.html>

All results: <http://fiawec.alkamelsystems.com>

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### Media Package

<https://newsroom.porsche.com/media-package/porsche-motorsport-wec-lmp1-bahrain-919-hybrid>

### Downloads

World champions Porsche to fight for the drivers' title in the desert, Press release, 11/14/2016, Porsche AG

### **Videos**

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/160098933>

### **External Links**

<http://www.porsche.com/usa/eventsandracing/motorsport/>

[http://www.eurosport.de/wec/die-wec-rennen-live-bei-eurosport\\_sto5706038/story.shtml](http://www.eurosport.de/wec/die-wec-rennen-live-bei-eurosport_sto5706038/story.shtml)