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The best boxer in the motorsport ring

When a Porsche model receives the designation RSR, there is no doubt: this car is made for racing, maximum performance on the racetracks, and the best synthesis of performance, efficiency and driveability.



For the last 47 years, the nine-eleven, developed specifically for motor racing bearing the RSR badge on the rear, has competed for victories and titles at the world's greatest competitions – with huge success. The first racer of this series, the 911 Carrera RSR 2.8, celebrated an impeccable debut in 1973. The Americans Hurley Haywood and Peter Gregg clinched overall victory at the 24 Hours of Daytona. That same year, the version powered by a three-litre boxer engine scored a convincing class win at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The progenitor of all RSR models from Porsche is the 911 Carrera RSR 2.8, which was created for the 1973 season based on the Carrera RS 2.7 as a prototype to comply with the FIA Group 4 regulations. Compared to the already lightweight production model, the new features were modest. The rear wheels grew 50 millimetres in width, the capacity of the flat-six engine was enlarged through bigger bores, and the so-called "ducktail" on the engine lid gradually developed into a real rear wing. During its first racing season, Porsche launched a new version powered by a three-litre flat engine. This was followed by a 2.1-litre turbo. In 1974, the turbocharged RSR was the first turbo vehicle to write history at Le Mans. However, the large-capacity normally aspirated unit is still the preferred aggregate in GT racing today. The new Porsche 911 RSR (2019 model) is powered by a 4.2-litre six-cylinder unit – the largest boxer engine ever fitted in a racing 911 ex-works. In addition to sheer performance, efficiency, reliability and driveability have always been the development focus.



Daytona 1973: Porsche 911 Carrera RSR

In developing the 911 Carrera RSR 2.8 for the 1973 season, the Porsche engineers scored a real coup. Despite the integration of many safety features, including a steel roll cage and the installation of a large 120-litre fuel tank, the racing prototype still only tipped the scales at around 900 kilograms. This meant that the racer was a lightweight like the production model Carrera RS. The engineers achieved this goal because they were already using cutting-edge materials in the 1970s. Doors, front lids and side windows were made of plastic. The first RSR was not only light, but it was also slim and short. The latest generation is around 50 centimetres wider, 40 centimetres longer and with a 30-centimetre-longer wheelbase. Asterix became Obelix – but without forfeiting its nimbleness and punch. On the contrary: the extensive setting options on the kinematics of the Porsche 911 RSR-19 ensure the best possible adjustments for all racetrack characteristics and conditions. Moreover, the optimised weight distribution with the engine mounted in front of the rear axle yields noticeable advantages. “There’s always a lot of movement in the Porsche 911 Carrera RSR 2.8 from 1973. We no longer get those enormous rolling motions in the new cars, nor do we get hefty understeer. But such things are great fun,” says Richard Lietz. The experienced works driver from Austria adds: “When braking and turning in, you have to wait for the perfect moment during the load change to put your foot down again. If you don’t get it right, it gets tricky; a huge challenge for us drivers. The first RSR is my all-time favourite. It’s wonderful to drive this car at the limit. Such a car asks to be driven fast. With all RSR models, this is an approach appropriate to the species, so to speak.”

Le Mans lap times: 30 seconds faster despite the shortened straights

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