

Le Mans: Porsche 919 Hybrids start from second row on the grid

16/06/2017 The two Porsche 919 Hybrids will start third and fourth on the grid in the 85th running of the Le Mans 24-hour race on Saturday at 3pm. The new 911 RSR takes up its Le Mans debut from fourth grid row.

Qualifying quotes

Dr. Frank-Steffen Walliser, Vice President Motorsport and GT Cars: “The qualifying is over and now it's time to go racing. We managed to improve from session to session, but so did our competition. In the end, the racetrack became significantly faster but unfortunately we couldn't make the most of it. Our main focus was on preparing for the race, especially on the tyres because, with such high temperatures, they play an important role. All the vehicles in the GT classes were very close, so in this respect we're sure to witness an extremely exciting race.”

Richard Lietz (911 RSR #91): “Our 911 RSR ran very well. I'm happy with it. The problem in the

qualifying was that we didn't get a clear lap without much traffic. Still, now we're concentrating on the race, where we'll have enough time to work our way further up the field."

Frédéric Makowiecki (911 RSR #91): "In today's qualifying sessions we tested various things to find a perfect race setup for our 911 RSR. We managed to improve the stability at the rear yesterday and hence made great progress with the setup. Our car is now excellently balanced and we're tackling the race feeling well prepared and confident."

Patrick Pilet (911 RSR #91): "At the beginning of the second qualifying I drove at race pace to test the tyres. That worked well and I was very happy. I then tried to turn a fast qualifying lap but I encountered too much traffic and returned to the pits. Compared to yesterday, we've taken a big step forward with our 911 RSR, but now we need to improve even more in the race if we want to match the pace of our strongest competitors."

Michael Christensen (911 RSR #92): "In the last qualifying session we were eager to put in a good lap and we managed that. We could have possibly done better here or there, but I'm satisfied with our time. The car felt very good, which means that we've found a good setup. After turning our quick laps we concentrated on long runs to see how the tyres would respond over the distance."

Kévin Estre (911 RSR #92): "Michael clocked a good time in qualifying with fresh tyres. Afterwards we concentrated on finding the best race setup. We improved again, and I was considerably faster than yesterday. This is something we can build on. Now we have to sit down together and talk about the best race strategy."

Dirk Werner (911 RSR #92): "In the second qualifying I drove a long run so that we could get an even better idea of our tyre situation. Despite the lengthy interruption, this worked very well. I had very little traffic and I got a good feel for the tyres. It was important for the race preparation to see how our tyres behaved over a stint. In this respect I'm actually quite pleased. After that I notched up a few more kilometres. For me personally this was very helpful to familiarise myself with the circuit even more. Now I feel ready and I'm looking forward to the race."

Patrick Long (911 RSR #93): "The first qualifying on Wednesday evening was very difficult because we simply didn't get a clear run. For this reason we took a gamble today and went out in the early evening on fresh tyres. That paid off. We encountered hardly any traffic for one lap and our pace was also really good. We're happy. The race can start."

Matteo Cairoli (911 RSR #77): "At my last attempt to turn a fast qualifying lap there were a lot of cars out on the track. On top of this, the yellow flag came out twice in the last sector. That's why it didn't work with pole position unfortunately. We're now facing a 24-hour race and we're very well prepared for it."

#LEMANS24 Some impressions from Qualifying 1 in the dark. #911RSR pic.twitter.com/15veuuvYuS

During the 1:40-hour night session in temperatures of just over 25 degrees Celsius, the quickest Porsche 911 RSR (#92) clocked the sixth fastest time in the GTE-Pro class. Michael Christensen (Denmark), Kévin Estre (France) and Dirk Werner (Germany) share the cockpit of the race car, which is based on the seventh generation of the iconic 911 sports car. It tackles the long-distance classic in France for the first time. The second 911 RSR (#91) fielded by the Porsche GT Team, with drivers Richard Lietz (Austria) as well as the Frenchmen Frédéric Makowiecki and Patrick Pilet, posted the eighth quickest time in this first showdown on the 13.629-kilometre Circuit des 24 Heures. The fastest Porsche 911 RSR in the GTE-Am class was the vehicle of the customer team Dempsey Proton Racing in second place, with the Porsche Young Professional Matteo Cairoli (Italy) as one of the pilots.

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