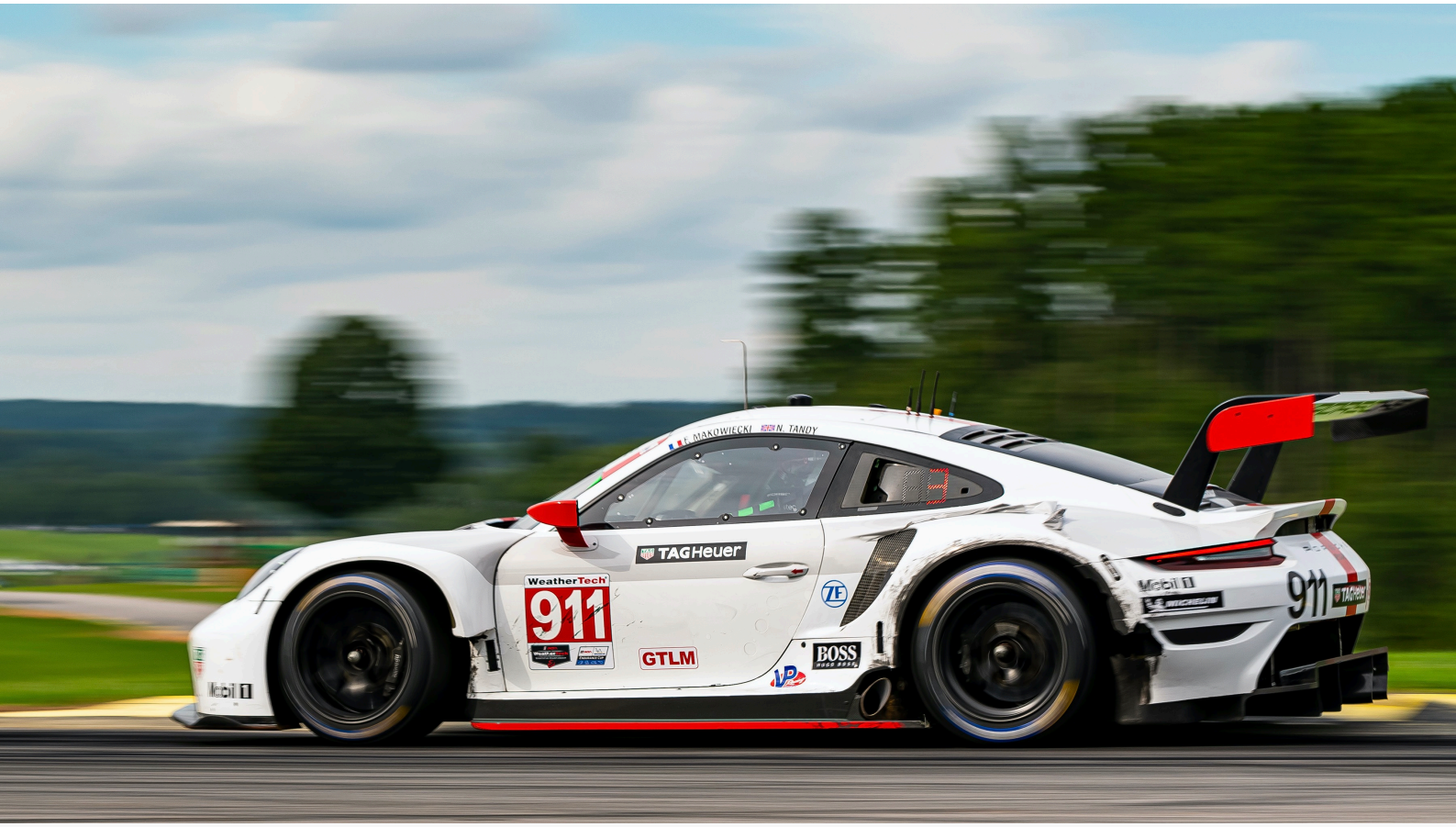


Podium instead of victory for the Porsche 911 RSR in North America

23/08/2020 The Porsche GT Team has concluded round five of this season's IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship on positions three and five. In an eventful race at the Virginia International Raceway in the east of the USA, Britain's Nick Tandy and his French teammate Frédéric Makowiecki scored a podium result instead of the deserved victory in their No. 911 racing car.

The race

Bad luck plagued the sister car of reigning champions Earl Bamber from New Zealand and Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium. Midway through the race, a damaged diffuser threw them far down the field. The No. 912 car took the flag in the GTLM class in fifth. As at the previous two races, the 2019-generation Porsche 911 RSR was the fastest vehicle in the fierce GTLM-class competition among manufacturers. Once again, however, fortune did not shine on the North American factory squad. In the GTD category, the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by the customer squad Wright Motorsports finished on sixth.

While in the lead, a puncture saw polesitter Frédéric Makowiecki pit early after just eleven laps. As part of a safety car phase, the No. 911 managed to work its way back up the order to the front and pull clear. However, the gap of up to 18 seconds was not enough to secure the long-awaited maiden victory for the new Porsche 911 RSR in the USA. Shortly before the end of the 2:40-hour race, the vehicle sustained another tyre puncture. The pit stop for repairs threw Tandy back to third place. In a last-ditch effort over the final laps, the British racer turned the fastest lap of the race in 1:41.333 minutes, but was unable to make any significant progress to the top.

While in the lead, the works cars from Weissach were able to pull clear of the field several times. Thanks to their incredible consistency at the highest level, both vehicles were good for victory, however the No. 912 car driven by defending GTLM-class champions Bamber and Vanthoor was hampered by bad luck. During a fierce duel with a BMW, the diffuser at the rear sustained damage at the restart after a safety car phase. The ensuing repairs over two pit stops threw the vehicle three laps down the field. Under the conditions, fifth place was the best possible result.

In the GTD class for vehicle complying with the FIA GT3 regulations, the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by the Wright Motorsports customer team achieved sixth place. The American factory pilot Patrick Long and his compatriot Ryan Hardwick put in an impressive charge in the car with the starting number 16. After taking up the race from the twelfth grid spot, the pair steadily worked their way through the field over the course of the race. The team ranks sixth in the overall standings.

In the manufacturer's classification, Porsche heads to round six of the season at Road Atlanta of 6 September ranking third. In the driver's classification, Bamber and Vanthoor retain second place. Their team colleagues Makowiecki and Tandy have advanced to position four.

Comments on the race

Steffen Höllwarth (Head of Operations IMSA Championship): "Both cars started the race from the first grid row, we were leading with both vehicles and ultimately finished on third and fifth. That's bitterly disappointing. Two punctures on our number 911 car, extensive repairs on 912 – that was the end of our winning chances. Our pace was great, and the team worked perfectly. For the upcoming race at Road Atlanta we want to finally get through a race without hiccups and claim the first win of the year with the new Porsche 911 RSR."

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #911): "I'm absolutely gutted. To be honest, this third place is the saddest podium of my career. We were so strong this weekend. In fact, our team dominated the weekend. It's just terrible that third was the best we could do. This result is so unjust for the team, the car and us drivers. And it also makes me sad that we're falling further and further down the rankings in the championship. We really don't deserve that."

Nick Tandy (Porsche 911 RSR #911): "Our car was truly perfect and the team did a flawless job. We

can be proud of that. If you can make it to the podium against such tough competition despite two punctures, then that's a good indication of the strength. And that's precisely what makes me optimistic for the future."

Further comments to the race you can find in the press release.

Race result

Result GTLM class
1. Garcia/Taylor (E/USA), Chevrolet Corvette C8.R #3, 85 laps
2. Spengler/De Phillippi (CDN/USA), BMW M8 GTE #25, 85 laps
3. Tandy/Makowiecki (GB/F), Porsche 911 RSR #911, 85 laps
4. Gavin/Milner (GB/USA), Chevrolet Corvette C8.R #4, 85 laps
5. Vanthoor/Bamber (B/NZ), Porsche 911 RSR #912, 83 laps
6. Krohn/Edwards (FIN/USA), BMW M8 GTE #24, 66 laps

Result GTD class
1. Auberlen/Foley (USA/USA), BMW M6 GT3 #96, 83 laps
2. Farnbacher/McMurry (D/USA), Acura NSX GT3 #86, 83 laps
3. Sellers/Snow (USA/USA), Lamborghini Huracan GT3 #48, 83 laps
6. Long/Hardwick (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #16, 83 laps

Full results and championship standings at imsa.alkamelsystems.com.

The Qualifying

The two Porsche 911 RSR will take up round five of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship from the first grid row. During the qualifying on the Virginia International Raceway, Frenchman Frédéric Makowiecki clocked the best time in the No. 911 car. His works driver teammate Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium planted the No. 912 vehicle on the second grid spot. The Porsche GT Team gave an all-round impressive performance. In the notoriously competitive GTLM class (GT Le Mans), the racers from Weissach held a lead of more than half a second over their strong rivals. At this IMSA event, only the two GT classes are contested. The faster prototypes do not race at Virginia this weekend.

The seasoned Porsche factory squad chose the best tactic for the qualifying. At the beginning of the 15-minute session, Makowiecki and Vanthoor initially waited for a minute so that they would have a free run without traffic in the final attempt over six laps. During the qualifying, both works drivers pushed ever closer to the limit and made optimal use of the relatively poor grip level after the rain downpour. With a lap time of 1:40.389 seconds, Makowiecki was around three-tenths of a second faster than last year's pole-setting time set by Vanthoor – a clear sign of the strength of the latest-generation 911 RSR. This is Porsche's third pole position from five qualifying sessions so far this

season. For the race, Makowiecki shares driving duties with Britain's Nick Tandy. Vanthoor shares the cockpit of the No. 912 car with Earl Bamber from New Zealand.

In the GTD class, the American Ryan Hardwick posted the twelfth quickest time in the No. 16 Porsche 911 GT3 R. In Saturday's race over two hours and forty minutes (start 2 pm local time, 8 pm CEST), the ambitious amateur driver shares the cockpit of the vehicle fielded by the Wright Motorsports customer squad with Porsche works driver Patrick Long (USA).

Qualifying quotes

Steffen Höllwarth (Head of Operations IMSA Championship): "It's an incredible result. I congratulate our entire crew. Because of the heavy rain in the second free practice, we didn't have as much track time as we wanted. With this in mind, there are still a couple of questions about our race pace. Still, the starting position is ideal and Porsche has always been particularly strong at the Virginia International Raceway. We're looking forward to a fair and close race tomorrow."

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #911): "I last drove here in 2016 and I first had to familiarise myself again with the terrific layout and the special rollercoaster character of the track. It's simply great fun! There's no tolerance for errors on this circuit, so I was careful in gauging the limits at first and I seemed to have got it right on my flying lap. We've now done one session in the rain and two practices on a dry track, so we now know all the conditions that might be thrown at us in the race. We're well prepared."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "This is a perfect result for Porsche. I was very happy with my fastest lap and I actually thought it was worth pole position. It felt absolutely flawless, but Fred was faster – not bad. Perhaps we were a little too cautious with the setup of our car. We should've been a little more aggressive then more would've been possible. Our advantage in qualifying was pretty big. Let's see how the competition looks in the race."

Qualifying result

GTLM class
1. Tandy/Makowiecki (GB/F), Porsche 911 RSR #911, 1:40.389 minutes
2. Vanthoor/Bamber (B/NZ), Porsche 911 RSR #912, + 0.130 seconds
3. Spengler/De Phillippi (CDN/USA), BMW M8 GTE #25, + 0.706 seconds
4. Garcia/Taylor (E/USA), Chevrolet Corvette C8.R #3, + 0.839 seconds
5. Gavin/Milner (GB/USA), Chevrolet Corvette C8.R #4, + 1.273 seconds
6. Krohn/Edwards (FIN/USA), BMW M8 GTE #24, + 1.327 seconds

GTD class
1. Fergus/Holton (USA/USA), McLaren 720S GT3, 1:45.236 minutes

2. Foley/Auberlen (USA/USA), BMW M6 GT3, + 0.074 seconds
3. Montecalvo/Bell (USA/USA), Lexus RC F GT3, + 0.161 seconds
12. Long/Hardwick (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #16, + 1.223 seconds

Full results and championship standings at imsa.alkamelsystems.com.

The preview

At round five of the IMSA SportsCar Championship at the Virginia International Raceway, the Porsche GT Team will field two 911 RSR in the GTLM class. As the two faster prototype classes will not be contested on the 5.263-kilometre racetrack, the sports car manufacturer will fight for overall victory for the first time in this IMSA season. Last year, Porsche scored a one-two result on the tradition-steeped North American circuit. One customer squad joins the two factory-run RSR racers from Weissach on the grid for the race over two hours and 40 minutes: Wright Motorsports campaigns a Porsche 911 GT3 R in the GTD category.

The race

The Virginia International Raceway is located near the town of Alton in southern Virginia close to the border of the neighbouring state of North Carolina. The circuit, which was opened in 1957, can look back on an eventful history and has evolved from a straightforward circuit for road vehicles to a modern motorsport resort with hotels and leisure activities. In 1971, Porsche legends Hurley Haywood and Peter Gregg won the inaugural IMSA GT event there at the wheel of a Porsche 914/6 GT. Last year, works drivers Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Patrick Pilet (France) took the flag as the overall winner in the 2017-generation Porsche 911 RSR ahead of their brand colleagues Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium).

The Porsche GT Team drivers

Works drivers Earl Bamber and Laurens Vanthoor share driving duties in the No. 912 Porsche 911 RSR. The reigning GTLM-class champions scored second place at the first two rounds of the season in Daytona. At Sebring, the pair claimed the third podium step after a spirited performance. After the spectacular rain race at Road America, Bamber and Vanthoor retain second place in the drivers' championship with 120 points. Their team colleagues Nick Tandy and Frenchman Frédéric Makowiecki concluded the 24-hour race at the end of January and the race over 2:40 hours in Daytona on 4 July in third place. With 113 points, they currently rank fifth in the drivers' classification. In the manufacturer's classification, Porsche sits third, nine points behind the leader.

The customer team

At the first GT-only round of the year in the North American sports car series, the seasoned customer squad Wright Motorsports fields a Porsche 911 GT3 R in the GTD category. The squad from the U.S. state of Ohio entrusts the cockpit of the No. 16 car to the American works driver Patrick Long and his compatriot Ryan Hardwick.

Comments prior to the race

Pascal Zurlinden (Director Factory Motorsport):"Over the past weeks we've managed to underline the potential of the Porsche 911 RSR at all times, but we were always hampered by incidents that prevented us from claiming the rewards. Now we want to put our bad luck behind us and build on last year's strong performance here. The ingredients for big success are definitely there. In Virginia, the vehicles contesting the GTLM class are going for overall victory – ideal for a Porsche comeback."

Steffen Höllwarth (Head of Operations IMSA Championship):"After a short break with two race-free weekends, Virginia is next up on the IMSA calendar. In the past, this circuit has proved to be very good turf for Porsche. We have fond memories of our one-two results last year. We're optimistic that the track layout will also suit our latest-generation 911 RSR. We want to attack again in Virginia and reduce the gap to the top."

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #911):"We have two difficult races behind us, where we didn't score the results we were aiming for. In Virginia, we definitely want to finish on the podium. That's one of the key factors in the fight for the title. We're aiming to secure our first IMSA win of the season. I think we've earned it after the last few races."

Live streaming of the race

Round five of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship at the Virginia International Raceway takes off on Saturday, 22 August, at 02:00 pm local time (8:00 pm CEST). The race over 2:40 hours can be viewed outside the USA and Canada on www.imsa.com.

The schedule (local time, CEST: -6 hours)

Friday, 21 August
8.00 - 9:00 am – Free practice 1
12.00 - 1:15 pm – Free practice 2
5:35 - 5:50 pm – Qualifying GTD
6:00 - 6:15 pm – Qualifying GTLM

Saturday, 22 August
2:00 - 4:40 pm – Race

The Porsche 911 RSR

The Porsche 911 RSR (2019 model year) celebrated its debut in the IMSA SportsCar Championship at the 24 Hours of Daytona in January. Compared to its extremely successful predecessor model, the car received improvements, most notably to areas such as drivability, efficiency, ergonomics and serviceability. About 95 percent of all components are new. The 911 RSR is powered by a 4.2-litre, six-cylinder boxer engine.

This is the IMSA SportsCar Championship

The IMSA SportsCar Championship was founded in the USA and Canada in 2013 after the merger of the American Le Mans Series and the Grand-Am Series. A year later the new sports car race series, which is organised by the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA), was contested for the first time. Sports prototypes and sports cars start in four different classes: GTLM (GT Le Mans), GTD (GT Daytona), Dpi (Daytona Prototype international) and LMP2 (Le Mans Prototype 2). The new Porsche 911 RSR is fielded in the GTLM class, and the Porsche 911 GT3 R contests the GTD class. The Porsche GT Team tackles the 2020 season in North America as the title defenders in the manufacturers', drivers' and team classifications.

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Image Sublines

Path: Podium instead of victory for the Porsche 911 RSR in North America/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: 911 GT3 R, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 5, Alton, USA, Race, 2020, Porsche AG
Subline: In the GTD class, the 911 GT3 R fielded by the Wright Motorsports customer team achieved sixth place

Path: Podium instead of victory for the Porsche 911 RSR in North America/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: 911 RSR, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race, Round 3, Sebring, USA, 2020, Porsche AG
Subline: Porsche 911 RSR

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