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Porsche Motorsport Weekly Event Notes

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Detroit Pole and Podium. Park Place Motorsports Shows Well on Belle Isle.

Park Place Motorsports scored the first IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GTD class pole position for the 2019 Porsche 911 GT3 R on May 31 at the Detroit Grand Prix. The following day, in the 100-minute race for prototypes and GTD class cars, the Dallas, Texas-area program followed with the first class podium finish, a second-place, for the No. 73 Porsche in the 2019 season with Patrick Long (Manhattan Beach, California) and Zach Robichon (Canada). The finishing position for the team matched its career best on the 2.3-mile track that runs through the roads of the city-owned island in the Detroit River.

The close runner-up result on the Raceway at Belle Isle Park circuit came after a stellar drive at the hands of 2018 IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Canada by Yokohama series champion Robichon in the first half of the event. The young Canadian joined the Porsche factory driver for the first time in Detroit and, having inherited the pole position after a competitor failed post-qualifying technical inspection, led from the drop of the green flag. Following a pit stop with nearly one-hour remaining in the race, the Patrick Lindsey-led team got Long out of the pits with a narrow lead. However, after a strong defense, the veteran Porsche driver was passed for the lead.

Despite attacking to regain the top-spot until the end, Long was unable to recapture first-place. The podium finish allows Park Place to close on the WeatherTech GTD Sprint Championship points lead entering the second-half of the race season.

With all focus now turning to the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the IMSA WeatherTech Championship will go on a short hiatus. All classes return for the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen at Watkins Glen International on June 30.

Patrick Long, Driver, No. 73 Park Place Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"I'm really proud of the whole Park Place Motorsports organization. We were at the sharp end of the field all weekend. The racer in me is disappointed and wants a victory for the team but the realists understands this is where championships are made or lost. The second yellow is ultimately where the plot twisted. The Lexus was able to drive by me on the back straightaway on that restart. We were better on the long run but a little bit low on pace on the short run. It was a great job by Zach and the whole team today."

Zach Robichon, Driver, No. 73 Park Place Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R.

"It was a fantastic weekend with Park Place Motorsports. I've never raced with Park Place before or raced at Belle Isle Raceway, so it was a weekend of firsts for me. Luckily this wasn't my first street track and I was able to settle in pretty quickly.

"It was great working with Patrick Long and the whole Park Place Team. We were able to meld very easily and get up to speed in the car. It was a great race where we held the lead for a long time, we just missed out a little bit at the end and brought it home in second which was still exciting. This was my first time on the IMSA WeatherTech Sportscar Championship podium and my first podium with the Porsche 911 GT3 R. I'm glad we were able to be competitive and help Park Place move up in the championship."

Brumos Debut. Legendary Team Colors to Fly for First Time at Le Mans. The legendary red, white and blue of Brumos Racing will, for the first time in history, fight for victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The "retro livery" was first run on the Porsche GT Team factory Porsche 911 RSRs at the Rolex 24 At Daytona in January and scored its first victory one race later at the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring. For the June 15 – 16 running of the grandfather of all endurance races, the iconic colors will fly on the pair of "works" entries prepared by the North American arm of the race team in honor of three-time Le Mans and 2019 Grand Marshall Hurley Haywood.

The Nos. 93 and 94 race cars will carry the blue and red stripes and "sweeps" made famous by the Jacksonville, Florida-based team with drivers familiar to the North American fans. IMSA GTLM class points leading driver Earl Bamber (New Zealand) will be joined by Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring-winning drivers Patrick Pilet (France) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) in the No. 93. Mathieu Jaminet (France), Sven Müller (Germany) and Dennis Olsen (Norway) will pilot the No. 94 Porsche 911 RSR.

The livery, designed in-house at Porsche, pulls directly from decades of Brumos Racing competition. The blue and red stripes running from nose-to-tail are easily spotted from a distance but, upon closer examination, reveal the familiar solid stripes are actually comprised of a closely laid grid of the number 59. The "sweeps" down the sides from headlight to taillight, draw directly from the team's historic livery.

The No. 59 is representative of both Brumos and Haywood. In fact, no entry number is more closely aligned with sports car racing than "59". It and the Brumos paintwork became so synonymous with the sport that, despite never racing outside of North America, it remains instantly recognizable worldwide still today. The livery made its European debut in the Le Mans Test on June 2.

Over the course of its life and through five dedicated owners, Brumos Porsche remained a stalwart in sports car racing, its prime era coinciding with the growth of IMSA. The immediately recognizable color scheme identified Brumos through to its final GT championship in 2011 with Andrew Davis and Leh Keen behind the wheel of a Porsche 911. Brumos won the Rolex 24 four-times (1973, '75, '78, 2009) with both Porsche GT and prototype entries. The final Brumos Daytona victory came with a Porsche-powered Daytona Prototype shared by David Donohue, Darren Law, Buddy Rice and Antonio García.

The race program closed in 2013. The Brumos Porsche dealership was sold in 2015, changing its name to Porsche Jacksonville in April 2016. The Brumos Collection – one of the premier gatherings of classic automobiles and race cars in the world – has been moved from its private location and will open its new doors in January 2020.

Fritz Enzinger, Vice President, Motorsport.

"The Brumos design is one of the most famous and popular vehicle liveries in motor racing. This year this finish celebrates its Le Mans debut. In 2018, our cars sported a special design and yielded us a brilliant victory at Le Mans. We hope to achieve a similar result this year."

Pure Gold. Porsche WEC Entries Celebrate Super Season Success with Special Livery.

The pair of World Endurance Championship (WEC)-focused Porsche 911 RSR factory cars will have special livery at the 24 Hours of Le Mans on June 15 – 16. To celebrate the 2018/2019 "Super Season" Manufacturer Championship won by Porsche at the WEC's most recent round at Spa-Francorchamps, a gold trim will replace red on the traditional corporate livery of the LMGTE-Pro class cars.

The No. 91 of Richard Lietz (Austria), Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) and Sebring-winner Frédéric Makowiecki (France) make-up the first half of

the two-car team while the No. 92 driver pairing of Michael Christensen (Denmark), Kévin Estre and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) come to Le Mans to defend their class win. Vanthoor – who has won the last two IMSA events with Earl Bamber (New Zealand) – will support Christensen and Estre in their attempt to lockdown the LMGTE-Pro Drivers' title when the teams return for the race.

Fritz Enzinger, Vice President, Motorsport.

"The gold paintwork on the two 911 RSR racers from the WEC symbolizes the early win of the world title for manufacturers, which is something we're very proud of."

Defense Test. Porsche Teams Ready to Defend Le Mans Titles Following Pre-Test.

At the official pre-test for the 2019 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Porsche GT Team confidently prepared itself for the legendary event that also acts as the finale for the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) Super Season. In bright sunshine and temperatures approaching 90-degrees Fahrenheit, the four Porsche 911 RSR factory cars covered a distance of 2,659-miles (4279 kilometers) over 314 laps of the Circuit de la Sarthe without any technical problems. With a time of three-minutes, 54.233-seconds, the North American-prepared Brumos Racing-themed No. 93 RSR was the fastest 911 on the only test day in the lead-up to the 24-hour race in France on June 15 – 16.

The focus of the test work for the two factory teams from the FIA WEC and the North American IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship was on vehicle setup, pit stop practice and tire comparisons. The six works drivers also had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the upgrades made to the 8.47-mile (13.626-kilometer) circuit that combines bespoke race course and public roads. The primary modification to the track for 2019 comes at the exit of the "Porsche Curves" where the run-off area has been changed. Other changes include the movement of the tire barrier at the famous Arnage corner and the Ford chicane now has new curbing to prevent shortcutting the track.

During the two, four-hour test sessions, the six Porsche 911 RSR race cars run by the customer teams Dempsey Proton Racing, Team Project 1 and Gulf Racing covered a total distance of 3,547-miles (5,709 kilometers) – 419 laps. The best lap time of the Porsche partner teams in the LMGTE-Am class was turned by the No. 86 Gulf Racing Porsche 911 RSR with a 3:57.749.

Pascal Zurlinden, Director GT Factory Motorsport.

"For the test day we had an extensive to-do list. We divided up the work on our four cars and managed to tick off all the tasks as planned. The focus wasn't on simulating qualification conditions, but on preparing for the 24-hour race. We have a bunch of new drivers in our customer teams who were impressively quick in familiarizing themselves with the Porsche 911 RSR. It's a pleasure to see so many strong drivers sharing the ten cars."

Steffen Höllwarth, Program Manager, IMSA SportsCar Championship

"Because the IMSA championship has different rules, it was important for our crew and drivers to familiarize themselves with the procedures of the FIA WEC and especially to Le Mans. For example, the pit stops run quite differently to the North American racing series. The most important thing for our two rookies in the No. 94 car was to gain experience on the track."

Alexander Stehlig, Program Manager, FIA WEC.

"We turned many laps in the best conditions and continued to prepare for the most important race of the year. We had a great setup for Le Mans in 2018. Over the course of the season, we continually worked out new details in the setup of the Porsche 911 RSR and we evaluated these during the test day. We're happy with the results."

Richard Lietz, Driver, No. 91 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"Aside from the normal setup work and tire tests, there was an additional item on the list. Several areas of the track have undergone some modifications. Above all, a new, very high curb in the Ford corner has an impact on the racing line choice. You have to tackle this passage a little differently now and you can't take a shortcut. It was important to check out these changes during the test."

Laurens Vanthoor, Driver, No. 92 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"This test brought back the wonderful memories of our 2018 victory – a great feeling. At the test drive, we wanted to setup our Porsche 911 RSR as optimally as possible for the special challenges of the high-speed racetrack of Le Mans. We succeeded. We're heading into the race week at least as well prepared as we were last year."

Nick Tandy, Driver, No. 93 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"The impressions from the test are somewhat difficult to gauge. The dirty track offered very little grip throughout the morning. In the afternoon the temperatures were unusually high – much higher than we expect for the race weekend. Our car is fully developed, the setup is good. Now we just have to wait for the first sessions in just under two weeks where we can make realistic conclusions about the balance of power."

Mathieu Jaminet, Driver, No. 94 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"For me as a rookie the main goal was to familiarize myself with the track. I was immediately impressed by the Circuit des 24 Heures.

Driving through the Porsche curves in the Porsche 911 RSR is truly a very special experience. I gradually pushed my way to the limit and quickly clocked up some decent lap times. After this critical test, the excitement for this race is huge.”

Jörg Bergmeister, Driver, No. 56 Team Project 1 Porsche 911 RSR.

“As always at the Le Mans pre-test, the track was very dirty compared to the upcoming race weekend. There was little grip, so it didn’t make sense to simulate a qualifying session. We collected important data during the test day to be as well prepared as possible for the season finale. There’s always something new to learn at Le Mans. We learned a lot – especially that our Art Car is a real head-turner and the astonished fans kept taking a lot of photos.”

Going Back to Cali. Porsche Customer Teams Take SRO Machines to Sonoma.

For the third time this season, the Porsche customer teams involved in the SRO will travel to California to compete. Over the weekend of June 7 – 9, Sonoma Raceway will see the SRO Blancpain GT World Challenge America and both the Pirelli GT4 America Sprint and SprintX Championships programs contend for victories on the 2.52-mile, 12-turn road course in the “wine country” of California. Previous trips to “The Golden State” were the SRO Intercontinental GT Challenge round at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca and the Grand Prix of Long Beach. A total of 14 Porsche-built race cars are entered across the three series.

GT World Challenge America.

Six Porsche 911 GT3 R racers are on the entry list for the pair of 90-minute GT World Challenge events. The two-driver format GT3-spec races will be held on Saturday and Sunday with three combinations each in the Pro and Pro-Am categories. Season-regulars Alegra Motorsports maintains its two Pro class cars with the No. 22 being piloted by Porsche Young Driver Academy graduates Daniel Morad (Canada) and Michael De Quesada (Tampa, Florida). German Porsche hot shoes Wolf Henzler and Marco Holzer wheel the No. 24 for the Tampa, Florida-based team.

Wright Motorsports continues its Pro championship pursuit with the No. 58 Porsche Consulting Porsche 911 GT3 R and the Pro-Am chase with the No. 91 Henry Rifle machine. North America’s only Porsche factory driver Patrick Long (Manhattan Beach, California) and Porsche Selected Driver Scott Hargrove (Canada) share the all-pro No. 58 while Anthony Imperato (Brooklyn, New York) and Porsche Young Profession Matt Campbell (Australia) will be in the No. 91.

K2R Motorsports continues its rookie season with Kevin Millstein and Indy car veteran Alex Barron sharing the No. 38 in the Pro-Am class. GMG Racing will make its return to Porsche GT3 racing at Sonoma with team owner James Sofronas being joined by Porsche “works” driver Dirk Werner (Germany) in the No. 14 Porsche 911 GT3 R.

Race 1 of the GT World Challenge America will take the green flag at 2:10 p.m. Pacific Time (PT)/ 5:10 p.m. ET on Saturday, June 8. The second 90-minute race will start at 11:15 a.m. PT/2:15 p.m. ET on Sunday, June 9.

Pirelli GT4 America Sprint.

Four Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport race cars will take to the grid in the two 50-minute, single driver Pirelli GT4 America Sprint Championship races at Sonoma. Races will be run Saturday, June 8 at 12:10 p.m. PT/3:10 p.m. ET and Sunday, June 9 at 8:40 a.m. PT/11:40 a.m. ET.

The chief protagonists for Porsche in the GT4 Sprint Championship will be multi-time race winner Spencer Pumpelly (Atlanta, Georgia) in the No. 66 TRG 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport and Alan Brynjolfsson in the Park Place Motorsports Porsche. GMG Racing will have Jason Bell behind the wheel of the No. 2 Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport in the Sprint races while CRP Racing brings Matt Brabham into their No. 20.

Pirelli GT4 America SprintX.

While the Pirelli GT4 America SprintX Championship runs identical cars to the Sprint series, the two races are 60-minutes in length and have two drivers assigned to each car. Races will be run at 4:50 p.m. PT/7:50 p.m. ET on Saturday and 2:30 p.m. PT/5:30 p.m. ET on Sunday.

Of the four Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport racers entered in the SprintX, TRG is the only team with entries in both GT4-spec series events. The local team has brought a pair of the mid-engined Porsche race car down the road from its Petaluma-based race shop with experienced driver Derek DeBoer and James Rappaport sharing the No. 17. The Kevin Buckler-owned program also has Chris Bellomo and Kevin Woods in the traditionally numbered No. 67 TRG machine.

NOLASPORT has already proven its expertise with multiple wins in the 2019 championship and has two entries to add to the tally at Sonoma. Mike Vess and John Capestro-Dubets will split driving duties in the No. 46 while Matt Travis and Jason Hart will look for additional trips to the top step of the podium in the No. 47.



Frank Wiesmann - Motorsports and Brand Heritage

Manager, Product Communications

770-290-3414

frank.wiesmann@porsche.us

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