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Porsche GT Team names third drivers for Le Mans

Starting shot for the WEC with the Prologue on the Autodromo Nazionale Monza.



The Porsche GT Team works driver lineup for the Le Mans 24 Hours is complete: Patrick Pilet (France) will support Richard Lietz (Austria) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) as the third driver in the #91 Porsche 911 RSR at the world's most famous long distance race. Dirk Werner (Germany) shares driving duties with Michael Christensen (Denmark) and Kévin Estre (France) in the number 92 cockpit. "Choosing the drivers for the most important race of the year was actually easy," said Head of Porsche Motorsport Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser. "Our driver squad is so strong we basically couldn't make a mistake. Patrick Pilet and Dirk Werner are the perfect complement to our regular team members. It is definitely an advantage that they all know each other very well from the races in the USA. We're in an excellent position for Le Mans with these drivers."

At the beginning of the two-day Prologue on the storied racetrack in Lombardy, the Porsche 911 RSR fielded by the Porsche GT Team delivered a strong performance. During the morning session, Michael Christensen and Kévin Estre clocked the fastest time in the GTE-Pro class with the number 92 vehicle, and they were the quickest again in the afternoon. For their team colleagues, Frédéric Makowiecki and Richard Lietz, third place in the second session of the day was the best placing. The Porsche customer teams campaigning the 911 RSR in the GTE-Am class also did well. Gulf Racing with the all-British driver lineup of Michael Wainwright, Ben Barker and Nicholas Foster occupied first place in both sessions. Dempsey Proton Racing with Porsche Young Professional Matteo Cairoli (Italy), Christian Ried (Germany) and Marvin Dienst (Germany) set the second quickest time.

Quotes from Day 1

Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser, Head of Porsche Motorsport: "The WEC made a very good choice with Monza for the two-day Prologue tests. It's not just a racetrack rich in tradition but also perfectly suited to prepare for Le Mans. We were able to carry out our test schedule virtually unimpaired. We concentrated on the tyres and on working on the setup. There were no surprises, the 911 RSR behaved just as we'd expected. Of course, the performance is hard to assess. All the teams are still in the middle of preparations and will undoubtedly only show their cards at the first round in Silverstone."

Marco Ujhasi, Overall Project Manager GT Works Motorsport: "Monza is the dress rehearsal before the start of the WEC season. We

have our complete WEC squad here for the first time. Our first priority is to practice procedures that we devised over winter. It's not only about finding the perfect fit for the vehicle, driver and setup for the WEC, it's also about many other things, from the preparation of spare parts through to work in the back office. We are practicing here in a serious situation so that we line up in Silverstone as perfectly prepared as possible."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "It's wonderful to be back in Monza. It's just a shame that we're not contesting a race here because the atmosphere with all the enthusiastic Italian fans would definitely have been unique. We're all very pleased with our 911 RSR, our long runs today were very promising. We'll continue to focus on our test schedule and we look forward to Silverstone."

Frédéric Makowiecki (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "This prologue before the season starts is very important for us all. It's the first time that the entire team has come together at the racetrack and can work on our two 911 RSR. Monza is ideal for this. There are many things we can't try out for Le Mans, but we can certainly gain important insights with regard to other racetracks. The morning session didn't go so well for us; we had a few problems in finding the right balance. In the afternoon we concentrated on a long run and turned consistently fast laps."

Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "That was a good day for me, for Kévin and the whole team. This Prologue gives us the opportunity to get to know each other even better. Many of the mechanics and engineers are new to the team. We did a lot of work on the setup, especially after my three-hour stint in the morning. We gained critical experiences for the first race of the season at Silverstone. And the many fans who came out on this beautiful day certainly got a real treat."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "Michael did the long run this morning, I was only out on the track for four laps. In the afternoon session, while I was attempting to gauge the limits of the 911 RSR, I ended up in the gravel, but luckily there were no damages to the car. The 911 felt very good today. We can be really satisfied."

Matteo Cairoli (Porsche 911 RSR #77): "That was a good day. Our 911 RSR is well balanced and working with the team is great fun. We're also pleased with our placing. We don't know how hard our competitors pushed, we concentrated on ourselves and went through our test schedule. It's a great opportunity for me to contest the WEC."

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