

Motorsports Mar 18, 2018

Victory and third place for Porsche at Sebring

The Porsche 911 RSR has scored its first win of the IMSA SportsCar Championship season at the Sebring International Raceway in Florida.



At the 12 Hours of Sebring, the oldest and toughest sports car race in the USA, Patrick Pilet (France), Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) won the GTLM class with the race car from Weissach after a heart-stopping finale on Saturday. At the wheel of the second 911 RSR fielded by the Porsche GT Team, Earl Bamber (New Zealand), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) swept over the finish line in third place after 328 laps on the famously bumpy airfield circuit. Thus, they crowned Porsche's success in the race that also counts towards the North American Endurance Cup. Florida proves to be a good hunting ground for the iconic 911 sports car: Only a week ago, the 911 GT3 R won both rounds of the World Challenge season-opener on the St. Petersburg street circuit.

In glorious spring weather, a total of 43 vehicles headed off on Saturday morning into the 66th edition of the tradition-steeped race, in which Porsche has made history since 1960 as the most successful manufacturer with 18 outright victories and now 71 class wins. In the cockpit of the #912 Porsche 911 RSR, Laurens Vanthoor took up the race from sixth place on the third grid row and promptly picked up two positions in the first lap. His teammate Nick Tandy, who lined up on the grid directly behind the Belgian in the second 911 RSR (#911), managed to make up three positions: An exemplary start in a hotly contested race that was interrupted in the 14th lap by the first of eleven safety car phases.

Porsche settled in amongst the frontrunners

Thanks to perfect pit stops from the Porsche GT Team and a flawless performance from drivers, the 911 RSR was able to hold its own against tough competition from BMW, Chevrolet, Ferrari and Ford and settle in amongst the frontrunners. In lap 40, Laurens Vanthoor moved into the lead for the first time. After 2:30 hours, his teammate Gianmaria Bruni was running at the front of the GT field. Shortly before halftime, Nick Tandy also joined the list of frontrunners with his 911 RSR. During the second half of the race, his teammate Frédéric Makowiecki dominated the GT field for two hours, only relinquishing the lead spot when he came in for a scheduled pit stop

after dark. However, the 911 RSR continued to put the leaders under pressure. Even a torn-off rear diffuser caused by a minor off-track excursion was replaced in record time, and the lost time was quickly regained.

The suspense at the Sebring International Raceway continued from the first to the last minute. Fans from all over the country were treated to plenty of gripping race action in all classes, with many fierce battles for positions and constant changes at the front. And the Porsche pilots continued to dazzle: After 10 hours and 10 minutes, in the 279th lap, Patrick Pilet took the lead for the first time in the #911 Porsche 911 RSR. Nick Tandy then defended this position with an inspired drive to the flag.

Porsche moves up in the manufacturer's championship

Thanks to this victory, Nick Tandy, Patrick Pilet and Frédéric Makowiecki move up to second place in the driver's classification. Porsche also advances to second in the manufacturer's championship.

Round three of the IMSA SportsCar Championship is the Long Beach street race in the US state of California on 14 April.

Comments on the race

Pascal Zurlinden, Director GT Factory Motorsports: "It's a great achievement to score two podium spots at Sebring. The secret was our consistency and the fact that we didn't make one mistake. We may not have been the fastest over a lap, but over the distance the drivers and the entire team put in a perfect performance. Even when we had to repair the #912 car in the pits, we pulled out all stops to get the car back up the front. Today was a great day for Porsche. Thank you to all the employees at Weissach. They contributed as much to this success as our team here in Sebring."

Patrick Pilet (911 RSR #911): "This win was missing from my collection. It was a great team effort. The pit crew didn't make one mistake and our strategy was perfect. To celebrate this achievement with my friends Nick and Fred is incredible. After the qualifying, victory seemed a long way off. But when you're determined to achieve something and you go for it, you can do it. This race is proof of that."

More quotes in the press release (see downloads).

[#IMSA](#) Great effort by the whole Porsche GT Team. Great driving, super fast pitstops, clever strategy. Now it's time to celebrate this sweet [#sebring12](#) [#imsa](#) victory pic.twitter.com/Fy7473Yzqt

—Porsche Motorsport (@PorscheRaces) [18. März 2018](#)

Race result

GTLM class

1. Tandy/Pilet/Makowiecki (GB/F/F), Porsche 911 RSR, 328 laps
2. Sims/de Phillippi/Auberlen (GB/USA/USA), BMW M8, 328
3. Vanthoor/Bamber/Bruni (B/NZ/I), Porsche 911 RSR, 328
4. Westbrook/Briscoe/Dixon (GB/USA/NZL), Ford GT, 328
5. Vilander/Pier Guidi/Calado (SF/I/I), Ferrari 488, 327
6. Gavin/Milner/Fässler (GB/USA/CH), Chevrolet Corvette, 327
7. Krohn/Edwards/Catsburg (SF/USA/NL), BMW M8, 296
8. Magnussen/Garcia/Rockenfeller (DK/E/D), Chevrolet Corvette, 283
9. Hand/Müller/Bourdais (USA/D/F), Ford GT, 277

GTD class

1. Sellers/Snow/Lewis (USA/USA/USA), Lamborghini, 321 laps
2. Balzan/McNeil/Jeanette (I/USA/USA), Ferrari 488, 321
3. Keating/Bleekemolen/Stolz (USA/NL/D), Mercedes, 321
6. Long/Nielsen/Jaminet/Renauer (USA/DK/F/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 321
9. Bergmeister/Lindsey/Pappas (D/USA/A/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 321

The two 911 RSR racers fielded by the Porsche GT Team have completed the first half of the race without any problems. In the #911 cockpit, Patrick Pilet (France), Nick Tandy (Great Britain) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) are fighting for the lead against four other automobile manufacturers in the famously cutthroat GTLM class. After 163 laps on the 5.954-kilometre Sebring International Raceway, they currently rank third, only four seconds behind the leaders. Their teammates Earl Bamber (New Zealand), Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) and Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) sit fourth at halftime on the notoriously bumpy airfield circuit in Florida.

In glorious spring weather, a total of 43 vehicles took up the 66th running of the endurance classic in Florida on Saturday at 10.40 hrs local time (15:40 hrs CET). With 18 overall victories and 70 class wins, Porsche is the most successful manufacturer in the history of the race.

The IMSA SportsCar Championship

The IMSA SportsCar Championship is a sports car race series contested in the USA and Canada, which was run in 2014 for the first time. The series was formed from the merger of the American Le Mans Series and the Grand-Am Series. Sports prototypes and sports cars start in three different classes: GTLM (GT Le Mans), GTD (GT Daytona) and P (Prototype). The Porsche 911 RSR runs in the GTLM class, with the Porsche 911 GT3 R contesting the GTD class.

Info

All results and points standings for the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and the North American Endurance Cup can be found on results.imsa.com.

Link Collection

Link to this article

<https://newsroom.porsche.com/en/motorsports/porsche-sebring-race-imsa-weathertech-sportscar-championship-2018-911-rsr-gt3-r-15065.html>

Media Package

<https://newsroom.porsche.com/media-package/porsche-sebring-race-imsa-weathertech-sportscar-championship-2018-911-rsr-gt3-r>

Downloads

Victory and third place for Porsche at Sebring, press release, 03/18/2018, Porsche AG

Best 911 RSR on third grid row, press release, 03/16/2018, Porsche AG

Porsche takes on the sports car classic in Florida as the record winner, press release, 03/08/2018, Porsche AG

External Links

<http://www.porsche.com/germany/sportandevents/motorsport/>