

Porsche Motorsport Weekly Event Notes: Monday, April 8, 2019

08/04/2019 Porsche Factory 911 RSR Switches from Endurance to Sprint Mode. De Angelis Opens GT3 Cup Challenge USA Year with Twin Wins.

Porsche Profile. Event Story Lines. Full Sprint. Porsche Factory 911 RSR Switches from Endurance to Sprint Mode.

Following a victory in the most recent round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, the Porsche GT Team is set to tackle the third round of the 2019 season on the streets of Long Beach, California as leaders of the GTLM manufacturer and team point standings. After a hard-fought victory at the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring in Florida, the two ca. 510 hp Porsche 911 RSR face very different conditions on the temporary street course in Southern California on April 13. After running 24-hours in Daytona and 12-hours in Sebring, the German manufacturer's factory program travels across the country for the shortest race of the season, the 100-minute Sports Car Grand Prix of Long Beach.

The 1.96-mile street circuit, regarded as the "Monaco Grand Prix of North America," will be the first "Sprint" event of the season and therefore the first IMSA race with only two drivers per car. The winners of the Sebring race, Patrick Pilet (France) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain) share the No. 911 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR. The pair won the twelve-hour race in Florida with their works driver colleague Frédéric Makowiecki (France). The sister car is driven by Earl Bamber (New Zealand) and Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium). At last year's Long Beach race, these two led the race for over half of the distance in the No. 912 car.

The Porsche 911 GT3 R vehicles fielded by customer teams Park Place Motorsports and Pfaff Motorsports will not compete at the Long Beach, as the GTD class takes a break. The Pro-Am class returns to the IMSA scheduled May 5 at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio.

For its third racing season in North America, the Porsche 911 RSR has undergone further optimization primarily in the setup. Depending on the size of the restrictor, the engine, positioned in front of the rear axle, puts out approximately 510 hp. The large rear diffuser combined with a top-mounted rear wing provides aerodynamic efficiency and significant downforce. The 911-based GT race car, celebrated its debut at the start of the 2017 season and has since scored significant endurance race victories, most notably at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in France, two consecutive times at Sebring and last year in the season-ending 10-hour Petit Le Mans.

The familiar black and red on white livery will return to the works team's 911 RSRs beginning at Long Beach. The fan favorite retro Brumos livery saw action at both Daytona and Sebring to open the season.

Klaus Zellmer, President and CEO of Porsche Cars North America.

"California has always been special for us. From Johnny von Neumann's Competition Motors of the early 1950s to our Porsche Experience Center [PEC] and home of Porsche Motorsport North America just down the road in Carson, the soul of Porsche has never been stronger than in Southern California. That Porsche passion is immediately visible during the Long Beach Grand Prix weekend, where IMSA competition captivates world-class teams and fans alike."

Pascal Zurlinden, Director GT Factory Motorsport.

"After our big win at Sebring the mood within the team couldn't be better. We're now feeling highly motivated as we switch from endurance to sprint mode. Right from the start, everything has to come together perfectly. Last year we held the lead over a long stretch, but ultimately missed out on the well-deserved rewards. We want to change that this year."

Steffen Höllwarth, Program Manager IMSA SportsCar Championship.

"After the two longest races of the season, now comes the shortest. Long Beach is another highlight, not only for the drivers but also for the fans. The backdrop is stunning and so is the racetrack. On this street circuit, durable brakes, an agile steering response and good traction are required. If you can get this right you have a good chance to post pole position – and that is hugely important. There are very few opportunities to overtake, which limits the tactical possibilities. So far this year we're unbeaten in qualifying. That makes me very confident for the Long Beach weekend."

Patrick Pilet, Driver, No. 911 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"Long Beach is one of my all-time favorite places. It's really like an American Monaco. The track barriers are really close and they leave no room for error. To be fast here you have to take calculated risks. In qualifying and with pit stops during the race, everything has to run like clockwork because you can't catch up in such a sprint race. We were fast there last year and we're travelling to Long Beach with the momentum of our Sebring win behind us. I'm feeling optimistic."

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

"After our victory in Florida we're feeling very confident and hence we're looking forward to the upcoming race. We head to Long Beach as the GTLM class points leaders and we're keen to defend this position. It's the only city race on the calendar. I really like such challenges. Driving between the concrete barriers is always like driving on the razor's edge. The field is often tight, and in a duel you have to stay cool at all times. That's how racing should be."

Earl Bamber, Driver, No. 912 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"I'm a big fan of street circuits so I'm looking forward to Long Beach. Last year we were super quick here, but we had really bad luck. We were leading and had to retire. We're looking for redemption this year. We have already switched to sprint mode in our minds and are excited for the shorter IMSA series races. We're aiming for a podium finish."

Laurens Vanthoor, Driver, No. 912 Porsche GT Team Porsche 911 RSR.

"When I think of Long Beach there are two things that stand out: a cool racetrack and a stunning event."

Every driver enjoys the special thrill of a tight street circuit. We've always been fast at Long Beach, but we've never had the necessary luck on our side. So we have a score that we're determined to settle. We want to win at long last."

Two to Open. De Angelis Opens GT3 Cup Challenge USA Year with Twin Wins.

Roman De Angelis opened the 2019 IMSA Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA by Yokohama season in impressive fashion with twin wins at Barber Motorsports Park. The Canadian drove the No. 79 Kelly-Moss Road & Race Porsche 911 GT3 Cup from pole position to victory lane on both Saturday, April 6 and Sunday, April 7. De Angelis was not the only connection between the two 45-minute races at the Birmingham, Alabama-area track. The overall podium for each race was identical with rookies Riley Dickinson (Austin, Texas) and Parker Thompson (Canada) taking a second- and third-place finishes respectively. Dickinson was making his first start in the series with Moorespeed Racing while Thompson stepped into the JDX Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car.

The Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA series travels next to the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio. Rounds Three and Four of the one-make championship will contest two 45-minute races on May 4 and 5, respectively.

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