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Ideal start to the season for Porsche at the WEC Prologue

The Porsche GT Team is well prepared for the first race of the FIA Sports Car World Endurance Championship WEC a month from now at Spa-Francorchamps on May 5.



At the season opener, the official Prologue in Le Castellet, France, the two Porsche 911 RSR were put through a comprehensive test programme under dry conditions. The new driver pairing in the #91 Porsche 911 RSR, the Italian Gianmaria Bruni and Richard Lietz from Austria, covered 2051 kilometres over two days on the Circuit Paul Ricard. Their team colleagues in the #92 911 RSR, Kévin Estre from France and the Dane Michael Christensen, lapped the 5.861-kilometre racetrack a total of 288 times, clocking up 1688 kilometres.

Twenty-two teams with 35 vehicles capitalised on the final shakedown for the WEC Super Season. The racetrack with its 13 corners in Southern France offered teams perfect conditions for extensive setup work. Both 911 RSR wrapped up a trouble free test programme and impressed with a commanding performance. Several times, the two GT racers turned the fastest time in the GTE-Pro category.

The Porsche customer teams, Project 1, Dempsey Proton Racing and Gulf Racing, also used the two-day Prologue in the South of France for extensive tests. These four Porsche 911 RSR will contest the GTE-Am class of the FIA WEC.

Comments on the Prologue

Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser, Vice President Motorsport and GT Cars: "The focus of the WEC Prologue was very clearly on our customer teams, who brought four new cars to the start. It was all about familiarising themselves with the new car and adapting the driving styles. The feedback from drivers and teams has been outstanding. They all managed to complete the test without problems and gain important insights. Overall, the performance is difficult to assess. But the most important feedback is that everything feels good and the drivers have a great deal of confidence in the car. And this is always an indication of good lap times. In the Pro category the focus was on trying out the various suspension setups and evaluating the tyres. That, too, ran perfectly. We were able to complete our test programme as planned and we're feeling very confident for both categories as we look ahead to the first race in Spa."

Pascal Zurlinden, Director GT Factory Motorsports: "It was a perfect test for Porsche. We simulated an entire race weekend and completed the final preparations for our start in Spa. We were able to test different setups and trial all available tyre modifications. Everything went without the slightest hitch. The customer teams also undertook a similar programme. We're ready and eager for the Super Season to begin."

Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "I'm absolutely thrilled to return to the WEC after a year's break. I feel very comfortable in my team. The entire squad is great. I get on very well with Richard and we enjoy our work. We were able to analyse a lot and work intensively. Now I can hardly wait to travel to Spa to compete."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "The tests proved very positive. The whole team has familiarised themselves again with the WEC regulations and we're totally motivated. We've perfected all the processes – now the season can start. Working with Gianmaria is fantastic. I've known and valued him for a long time. He's incredibly quick. I'd definitely prefer to race with him in a car than against him."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "I'm very pleased with the two days, I got a lot of track time and we collected a great deal of information. The tests were good and it's always fun to work with my crew and my teammate Michael Christensen. The new asphalt on the track provides plenty of grip, but it causes a lot of tyre wear, especially in the long right-hander."

Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "We had a lot planned for these two days and we managed to tick everything off our list. The car ran very well, the tyres worked and the weather played along, as well. I'm satisfied because everything ran smoothly and now I'm looking forward to the first race."

Jörg Bergmeister (Porsche 911 RSR #56): "Endurance racing is, of course, completely new ground for our team. So, the main thing was to work out a routine in the procedures, such as pit stops and general organisation. This all worked excellently and we're well prepared for the first race."

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 911 RSR #77): "A dream has come true for me over these two days. I was hoping to race at Le Mans and now I've been given the chance to contest the entire Super Season. I never expected this. First and foremost, the Porsche 911 RSR is a dream car. The power, the balance, it's all new and I find it very impressive. The whole ambience in the WEC is thrilling. What's more, I'm with the best team I could ever wish for. I'm really excited about the season."

Ben Barker (Porsche 911 RSR #86): "Since this was the first major test for us, we conducted a lot of checks with the brand new Porsche 911 RSR. The vehicle has loads of downforce and feels really good. Given that we have a lot of new faces in the team, it was also very important to analyse all the internal procedures during the tests. We feel good and we're heading to Spa feeling confident."

[#WEC](#) - Goodbye [@PaulRicardTrack!](#) It was a great [#Prologue2018](#), both [#Porsche #911RSR](#) did 3739 kilometres in total [@PorscheNewsroom @FIAWEC pic.twitter.com/pjPgjoepjA](#)
—Porsche Motorsport (@PorscheRaces) [7. April 2018](#)

The Sports Car World Endurance Championship

Sports prototypes and GT vehicles contest the 2012-launched Sports Car World Endurance Championship (WEC) in four classes: LMP1, LMP2, GTE-Pro and GTE-Am. They all compete together in one race but are classified separately. The Porsche GT Team contests the GTE-Pro class, with customer teams fighting for honours in the GTE-Am class.

The race calendar

6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps: 3-5 May 2018

24 Hours of Le Mans: 13-17 June 2018

6 Hours of Silverstone: 17-19 August 2018

6 Hours of Fuji: 12-14 October 2018
6 Hours of Shanghai: 16-18 November 2018
1500 Miles of Sebring: 14-16 March 2019
6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps: 2-4 May 2019
24 Hours of Le Mans: 12-16 June 2019

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Media Package

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Downloads

Ideal start to the season for Porsche at the WEC Prologue in France, press release, 04/07/2018, Porsche AG

Videos

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