



PORSCHE

Press Release

May 4, 2018

Qualifying, World Endurance Championship WEC, Round 1 in Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium

Porsche GT Team starts Spa season-opener from second grid row

Stuttgart. Porsche heads into the opening round of the Sports Car FIA World Endurance Championship on the Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps on Saturday from the second grid row. In a breathtakingly close qualifying, Gianmaria Bruni (Italy) and Richard Lietz (Austria) set the third quickest time with their 911 RSR, just 87-thousandths of a second off pole position. Directly behind them, Kévin Estre (France) and Michael Christensen (Denmark) take off into the 15-month 2018/2019 Super Season in the sister car.

In the GTE-Am class, the three customer teams Gulf Racing, Team Project 1 and Dempsey Proton Racing put in an impressive show during the qualifying session in a clear blue sky and temperatures of 19-degrees Celsius. At the first customer outing of the latest 911 RSR, all four cars qualified in the top five. Pole position went to Dempsey Proton Racing with drivers Porsche Young Professional Matt Campbell (AUS), Christian Ried (Germany) and the Porsche Junior Julien Andlauer (F). The #88 sister car with pilots Khaled Al Qubaisi (UAE), Porsche Young Professional Matteo Cairoli (I) and Giorgio Roda (I) was fifth. The third best qualifying time was posted by Porsche works driver Jörg Bergmeister from Germany, Patrick Lindsey (USA) and Egidio Perfetti (N) for Team Project 1. Gulf Racing lines up on the grid on fourth with drivers Michael Wainwright (GB), Ben Barker (GB) and Alex Davison (AUS).

Qualifying quotes

Pascal Zurlinden (Director GT Factory Motorsport): “A very close qualifying. We

were only four-thousandths of a second off pole. That's a very good start to the season. Of course P1 and P2 was our dream, but we're right up there. We're on pole in the GTE-Am class and four vehicles are in the top five. This promises to be a very exciting race in both classes."

Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "The car felt very good, I was surprised how much grip we had. The team and our engineer did a perfect job. The tyres provided the right grip at the right time. Our lap was good. Gianmaria did a great job, too, we both drove the same times. Position three is a great start to the new season."

Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 911 RSR #91): "Unfortunately I made a minor mistake in the first lap and lost a little time between sectors one and two. But that's how it goes when you push. In the two remaining laps, faster times were no longer possible unfortunately."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "Michael turned a fantastic lap. The setup of our 911 RSR was perfect. Unfortunately I had to overtake a slower GTE-Am car on every lap and that cost valuable time."

Michael Christensen (Porsche 911 RSR #92): "My qualifying lap makes me feel positive. Our Porsche 911 RSR is very fast on this racetrack. We're looking forward to the race. Our setup is good and the tyres are working well. The race is long, so we have to remain totally focussed and avoid making any mistakes."

Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 RSR #77): "The qualifying ran brilliantly. We were already amongst the frontrunners during free practice and we tackled the session feeling very confident, despite not knowing what level the other teams were at. Clinching pole is, of course, a perfect start to the new season. I'm looking forward to the race but we also know that a lot can happen in six hours."

Jörg Bergmeister (Porsche 911 RSR #56): "Our Porsche 911 RSR ran very well, the tyre has a good peak on this circuit. Unfortunately during my fast lap another car

came out of the pit lane and hampered my run. That caused us to lose a lot of time, otherwise we would have landed further up the field. Right now, we're learning a lot about the setup of the 911 RSR and we're optimistic that we're the right track."

Ben Barker (Porsche 911 RSR #86): "We adjusted the setup before the qualifying, and the changes made us faster than in the previous sessions. We've taken a big step forward. Our bronze driver Mike drove superbly. The field is very close, the race will be extremely exciting. We'll fight for a podium spot."

Khaled Al Qubaisi (Porsche 911 RSR #88): "The Porsche 911 RSR ran very well. The top group were very close together, only tenths of seconds separated the cars. It shows how fiercely competitive the GTE-Am class is. This makes it all the more wonderful that five Porsche made it into the top five. The conditions were good, the tyres had decent grip. With such a large grid, we have to try and stay out of any turmoil in the race."

The six-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps starts on Saturday, 5 May, at 13.30 hours and can be seen as a free live stream from 13:00 to 20:00 hrs on www.sport1.de. Sport 1 broadcasts the start, the action from 14:25 to 15:25 hrs as well as the finish live on TV. Eurosport 1 broadcasts live from 18:15 to 19:40 hrs and shows paid content of the entire race from 13:00 to 20:05 hrs on Eurosport Player. For a fee, the FIA WEC app offers a live stream of the entire race plus live timing.

All results: <http://fiawec.alkamelsystems.com>

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