



PORSCHE

Press Release

15 August 2021

Pre-test, FIA World Endurance Championship, Round 4, Le Mans (France)

### **Porsche concludes Le Mans preparations with best times in both GTE classes**

**Stuttgart.** After the pre-test at the Circuit des 24 Heures, Porsche heads to the 24-hour race feeling optimistic. With a lap time of 3:52.901 minutes, the ca. 515 PS 911 RSR driven by Kévin Estre (France), Neel Jani (Switzerland) and Michael Christensen (Denmark) set the best time in the GTE-Pro class during this morning's session. The No. 91 sister car shared by the works driver trio Gianmaria Bruni (Italy), Richard Lietz (Austria) and Frédéric Makowiecki (France) concluded the two sessions in second with 3:52.904 minutes – a time almost identical to their brand colleagues'. The two Porsche customer teams WeatherTech Racing and Hub Auto Racing wrapped up the day in third and sixth place out of the eight participants in this category. The WeatherTech car crewed by the Belgian works driver Laurens Vanthoor, Cooper MacNeil (USA) and Earl Bamber (New Zealand) finished the afternoon session as the fastest in the Pro category.

In the GTE Am division, the No. 99 entry fielded by Proton Competition and Project 1's No. 56 car secured positions one and two with their identical 911 RSR. In this class, amateur drivers with FIA "bronze" or "silver" status share the cockpit with professionals. At the wheel of Dempsey-Proton Racing's No. 77 car, Hollywood actor Michael Fassbender celebrated his GTE debut at Le Mans. However, the Irish-German will not contest the race.

The season highlight of the FIA World Endurance Championship WEC takes off this Saturday at 4pm. The test day is the only opportunity before the start of the actual Le Mans week to fine-tune the mechanical and aerodynamic setup on the 13.626-

kilometre combination of permanent circuit and public roads. At the pre-test in high summer, teams faced hot asphalt temperatures of almost 50 degrees Celsius. On Sunday, the twelve 2019-generation 911 RSR turned a total of 991 laps, which corresponds to a distance of 13,503 kilometres.

With 19 outright victories and 108 class wins, Porsche is by far the most successful manufacturer at the French 24-hour classic. The most recent win for a nine-eleven in the GTE-Pro class on the storied racetrack was in 2018. At that time, Kévin Estre, Michael Christensen and Belgium's Laurens Vanthoor sat in the cockpit. In addition to the factory delegation, seven customer teams with a total of seven works drivers as well as the Porsche Young Professional Julien Andlauer (France) will tackle the 89<sup>th</sup> edition of the famous endurance race. They can earn twice as many points towards the world championship as in the shorter FIA WEC races. After clinching two class wins from the first three races this season, the works drivers Estre and Jani currently lead the drivers' classification. Porsche ranks second in the manufacturers' world championship, just seven points behind the leader.

### **The race on TV, via live-stream and on the Porsche Motorsport microsite**

The free-TV broadcaster RTL NITRO televises the entire Le Mans event for the first time after the RTL Group secured the broadcasting rights for the FIA WEC and the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The sports channel Eurosport also reports extensively on the 89<sup>th</sup> edition of the classic. Via their paid apps, the World Endurance Championship WEC and the Le Mans organiser ACO offer a live stream and live timing.

Porsche Motorsport compiles detailed information on the Porsche 911 RSR, the team and the works drivers as well as the 2021 Le Mans 24-hour race on its website <https://media.porsche.com/motorsport>. This website provides the latest news and background stories, images and extensive video features for media multipliers.

**Comments on the test day**

**Alexander Stehlig (Porsche Head of Operations FIA WEC):** “The test day went well for us. The racetrack had surprisingly decent grip, which we hadn’t expected, and we found some very typical conditions in the morning session. We can already see that it’ll be a very close race – seven of the eight cars in the Pro category are within three-tenths of a second. The team and the car that can achieve the best performance with the fewest mistakes will be at the front in the end. We managed to systematically tick off all items on our to-do list. We now have two days to work on the 911 RSR and analyse all the data before we continue on Wednesday afternoon.”

**Richard Lietz (Porsche 911 RSR #91):** “We were able to implement what we learned from the morning session in the afternoon and thus further improve the car’s balance. Ultimately, this resulted in a more stable rear axle in fast corners. Now we just have to find a little more grip on the front axle in the slow corners, and we’ll be good.”

**Gianmaria Bruni (Porsche 911 RSR #91):** “Today was okay. We worked through our job sheet and tried a few things to see how they went. I made a minor mistake on the last stint – I tried something new on the first lap and lost the car. But not much happened.”

**Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 RSR #92):** “Compared to previous years, the track was very clean with good grip. The Le Mans organisers did a great job here. We managed to start work on the setup very early – and that’s generally not the case. Our Porsche felt really good from the get-go and we quickly got up to speed. Still, we went through our checklist and found a few things. We now have a lot of data to analyse and discuss. It’s always difficult to know what the competition is doing, but we’ll concentrate on our own business. We’re pleased because we’ve learned a lot and we were always up with the play in terms of balance and lap times.”

**Neel Jani (Porsche 911 RSR #92):** “My first laps in a GT racer at Le Mans were a new experience, but they were also great fun. It was very hot today, I can’t remember the last time we had such temperatures at Le Mans. It’s forecast to be very warm on the race weekend, but the high temperatures suited us. We may have to do some work on the car so that we can cope with the heat better.”

**Florian Latorre (Porsche 911 RSR #99):** “I think we got a good start into the race week. All drivers set a good pace. We didn’t make any mistakes and we were able to give the car a few additional tweaks. This was my first time in the 911 RSR. We’re very satisfied with today’s test sessions.”

**Michael Fassbender (Porsche 911 RSR #77):** “That was my first attempt in the 911 RSR here at Le Mans. I’m taking it step by step. It feels great to be here and a part of this event.”

#### **Results, GTE-Pro class:**

1. Estre / Jani / Christensen (F/CH/DK), Porsche GT Team, Porsche 911 RSR #92, 3:52.901 minutes
2. Lietz / Bruni / Makowiecki (A/I/F), Porsche GT Team, Porsche 911 RSR #91, 3:52.904 minutes
3. MacNeil / Bamber / L. Vanthoor (USA/NZ/B), WeatherTech Racing, Porsche 911 RSR #79, 3:52.938 minutes
6. Martin / Parente / D. Vanthoor (B/P/B), HubAuto Racing, Porsche 911 RSR #72, 3:53.221 minutes

#### **GTE-Am class**

1. Intraphuvasak / Latorre / Tincknell (T/F/GB), Proton Competition, Porsche 911 RSR #99, 3:54.472 minutes
2. Perfetti / Cairoli / Pera (N/I/I), Team Project 1, Porsche 911 RSR #56, 3:54.502 v
4. Andlauer / Bastien / Arnold (F/USA/D), Dempsey-Proton Racing, Porsche 911 RSR #88, 3:54.619 minutes

6. Wainwright / Barker / Gamble (GB/GB/GB), GR Racing, Porsche 911 RSR #86, 3:54.668 minutes
9. Haryanto / Picariello / Seefried (RI/B/D), Absolute Racing, Porsche 911 RSR #18, 3:55.011 Minuten
14. Renauer / Ineichen / Bohn (D/CH/D), Herberth Motorsport, Porsche 911 RSR #69, 3:55.595 Minuten
18. Ried / Campbell / Evans / Fassbender (D/AUS/NZ/IRL), Dempsey-Proton Racing, Porsche 911 RSR #77; 3:55.895 Minuten
20. Olsen / Buchardt / Foley (N/N/USA), Team Project 1, Porsche 911 RSR #46, 3:56.190 Minuten

*Further information, film and photo material in the Porsche Newsroom: [newsroom.porsche.com](https://newsroom.porsche.com).  
The Twitter channel @PorscheRaces provides live updates from Porsche Motorsport with the latest information and photos from racetracks around the world.*

