Press Release   **May 4, 2019**

<u>Qualifying GT, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, round 4, Lexington/USA</u>

Porsche 911 RSR again starts from the first grid row in Mid-Ohio

Stuttgart. The Porsche GT Team has continued its good run in qualifying for round four of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. In the hunt for top times for the race in Lexington, Ohio (USA), the Belgian Laurens Vanthoor turned the second quickest lap in his ca. 510 hp Porsche 911 RSR with the starting number 912. After claiming pole position at Daytona, Sebring and Long Beach, a 911 from Weissach once again starts from the first grid row. In the No. 911 sister car, Patrick Pilet (France) achieved the eighth quickest time.

The qualifying at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course took place under difficult conditions. After rain in the morning, the track gradually dried during the 15-minute session. With each lap, the track condition improved and times got quicker minute by minute. Laurens Vanthoor, who shares the No. 912 Porsche 911 RSR with Earl Bamber (New Zealand), was only beaten to pole in the final seconds after a gripping duel. His factory driver colleague, who shares driving duties at the wheel of the No. 911 car with Nick Tandy (Great Britain), never quite got the tyres into the ideal operating range and was thus unable to fight for a top position.

In the GTD class, the new Porsche 911 GT3 R once again underlined its huge potential. Zacharie Robichon took an early lead in the hunt for times, only to be beaten to pole by another competitor at the very end of the session. However, due to a belated drive-through penalty, the fastest lap time was cancelled. As a result, the vehicle was relegated from second to fifth place. For the race, the Canadian shares the cockpit of the No. 9 vehicle with his compatriot Scott Hargrove. Marco Seefried (Germany)

experienced bad luck at the wheel of the identical 500+hp GT3 vehicle fielded by the customer team Park Place Motorsports. The German encountered a puddle on his first flying lap and slid onto the grass. This resulted in a red-flag period and the team's fastest lap times were deleted. Because of this, the No. 73 Porsche 911 GT3 R, which is shared by works driver Patrick Long (USA), starts from position 15.

Qualifying quotes

Steffen Höllwarth (Programme Manager IMSA SportsCar Championship): "The improving conditions made this qualifying thrilling to the last second. Laurens was in the lead until the end of the session, but then a Ford snatched pole position from us. It's the first time we've not started from pole this season, but the starting position for our number 912 car is still very good. We have to take a look at the sister car to see why the tyre temperatures never quite reached the optimal window at the right time. The race will be very interesting. Slicks haven't been used much so far this weekend. Race day is supposed to be dry, so tyre management will be a crucial factor."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 RSR #912): "The track didn't offer much grip, so it took attack mode and many fast laps to get the tyres up to the required temperature. I had to go flat-out in every lap – it was like a race. In my opinion, we have a perfect starting spot for round four. More than second place wasn't possible today. We aim to go for victory in the race so that we can expand our top position in the championship."

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 RSR #911): "That was a disappointing qualifying for me. In the last two hot laps, just as the track was at its best and things got serious, suddenly the balance wasn't as good as it had been. For this reason I couldn't do better today. Race day is predicted to stay dry. So far, no one has enough experience on slicks, so this will be our chance to make up positions during the race. If we manage our tyres well, anything is possible."

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Zacharie Robichon (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "Under these difficult conditions, our Porsche 911 GT3 R was a real rocket. I definitely had a chance at pole, but we had to come in for a drive-through penalty in qualifying. This meant I couldn't do improve on my lap time when the track offered the most grip at the end. It's a bit of a shame, but position five is definitely a decent starting position for the race."

Marco Seefried (Porsche 911 GT3 R #73): "At the exit of the second corner I drove on wet grass and that was the end of that. I got stuck in a run-off area and the car had to be pushed out by helpers. After that there was only time for two fast laps, and those were the lap times that were annulled because I'd caused a red-flag phase. It's a pity because I was fifth fastest. Still, despite the bad luck in qualifying, the performance gives us confidence for the race."

Qualifying result

GTLM class

1. Müller/Bourdais (D/F), Ford GT, 1:19.124 minutes

2. Bamber/Vanthoor (NZ/B), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:19,339 minutes

3. Krohn/Edwards (FIN/USA), BMW M8 GTE, 1:19.623 minutes

8. Pilet/Tandy (F/GB), Porsche 911 RSR, 1:20.098 minutes

GTD class

1. Heistand/Hawksworth (USA/GB), Lexus RC F GT3, 1:24,281 minutes

2. Keating/Bleekemolen (USA/NL), Mercedes-AMG GT3, 1:26,109 minutes

3. Montecalvo/Bell (USA/USA), Lexus RC F GT3, 1:26,451 minutes

5. Hargrove/Robichon (CAN/CAN), Porsche 911 GT3 R, 1:27,113 minutes

15. Long/Seefried (USA/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R, no lap time

Full results: http://imsa.alkamelsystems.com

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