



PORSCHE

Press Release

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Super Pole, Total 24 Hours of Spa, Spa-Francorchamps/Belgium

### **Porsche tackles the 24-hour classic from the front grid row**

**Stuttgart.** The best-placed Porsche 911 GT3 R takes up the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps from the first grid row. In the gripping and hotly-contested Super Pole, in which only the top twenty qualifiers were eligible, just one driver per car was permitted to take part. In the hunt for the best time, Laurens Vanthoor turned an impeccable lap for the KÜS Team75 Bernhard squad.

At the wheel of the No. 117 Porsche 911 GT3 R, the Belgian lapped the tradition-steeped 7.004-kilometre racetrack in a time of 2:18.605 minutes on his second flying lap. For a long period, he topped the Super Pole time sheets, before the final contender trumped his time by a mere 17-thousandth of a second. Thus, the local hero will take up the 71<sup>st</sup> running of the Ardennes marathon on Saturday with his teammates Timo Bernhard (Germany) and Earl Bamber (New Zealand) from the second grid spot.

Posting a time of 2:18.822 minutes, Nick Tandy planted his 500+hp Porsche fielded by Rowe Racing on P4. The British racing driver shares the No. 998 Porsche 911 GT3 R with the two Frenchmen Patrick Pilet and Frédéric Makowiecki.

Team colleague Mathieu Jaminet (France) concluded the Super Pole in tenth with the No. 98 nine-eleven. Lining up behind him on eleventh is Kévin Estre (France) from GPX Racing (No. 20) with the Norwegian Dennis Olsen on twelfth in Rowe Racing's third Porsche GT3 R (No. 99). In the No. 54 Porsche 911 GTR 3 campaigned by Dinamic Motorsport, Klaus Bachler (Austria) starts from 16th and

rounds off the strong Porsche performance in the Super Pole of the Ardennes classic.

### Super Pole result

1. Engel/Buurman/Stolz (D/NL/D), Mercedes-AMG GT3, 2:18.588 minutes
2. Bernhard/Vanthoor/Bamber (D/B/NZ), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 0.017 seconds
3. Molina/Aleshin/Rigon (E/R/I), Ferrari 488 GT3, + 0.218 seconds
4. Pilet/Makowiecki/Tandy (F/F/GB), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 0.234 seconds
10. Müller/Dumas/Jaminet (D/F/F), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 0.439 seconds
11. Estre/Christensen/Lietz (F/DK/A), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 0.479 seconds
12. Olsen/Campbell/Werner (N/AUS/D), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 0.671 seconds
16. Bachler/Rizzoli/Ashkanani (A/I/KWT), Porsche 911 GT3 R, + 1.293 seconds

A total of 248 drivers tackle the 24-hour classic at Spa-Francorchamps in 72 vehicles. Eleven manufacturers are represented at the 71<sup>st</sup> edition of the Ardennes marathon, which is considered the largest and most important GT3 event in the world.

### The schedule

Saturday, 27 July

15:35 – 16:15 hrs: Start ceremony

16:30 hrs: Start Total 24 Hours of Spa

The 24-hour race can be viewed via live stream on the internet website of the Blancpain GT Series ([www.blancpain-gt-series.com](http://www.blancpain-gt-series.com)) as well as on the homepage of the Intercontinental GT Challenge ([www.intercontinentalgtchallenge.com](http://www.intercontinentalgtchallenge.com)).

### Super Pole quotes

**Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R:** “That was a gripping qualifying. The times of all the cars were very close. Laurens drove a fantastic lap and was only a few thousandths of a second behind the fastest. The Super Pole has

underlined that we're spot on. Everything came together when it mattered and we can now be in the running for victory. Now we need to prepare the vehicles for the race. The weather will be unpredictable and we're expecting changing conditions. To get the best performance, we have to respond with the right tyres at the right air pressure at the right time."

**Timo Bernhard, team owner KÜS Team75 Bernhard and driver (Porsche 911 GT3 R #117):** "The first grid row is a dream and the perfect position to start the race. Laurens put in a flawless drive, and it gives us a lot of confidence. It's still new for me to cheer from the outside, but as a driver and team owner I now get to experience things from both sides. We'll now switch over racing trim and then we're ready for the 24 Hours of Spa."

**Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 GT3 R #117):** "That was fantastic – we're on the first grid row. Obviously, for me personally, it's bitter to have led the Super Pole for a long time only to lose it by just 17-thousandths of a second. Still, it's a good starting position for the race and that's what counts."

**Nick Tandy (Porsche 911 GT3 R #998):** "That was fun. It's always great to take part in a qualifying session in which only the best and fastest cars go head-to-head. This is a fantastic result for Porsche, with two GT3 R vehicles in the top five. That was a tremendous team effort from my Rowe Racing squad. We've put all three cars in the top twelve."

**Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #98):** "The lap was good but unfortunately not great. Compared to yesterday, we managed to improve and we're starting in the first group with the really fast cars. Still, this doesn't necessarily mean much at a 24-hour race. It's great that three Porsche GT3 R have landed in the top ten. We still had some room for improvement and I'm looking forward to going up against the competition in the race."

**Kévin Estre (Porsche 911 GT3 R #20):** “Eleventh on the grid is okay. We’re basically satisfied because we’ve spent the entire weekend until now working towards the race rather than the qualifying. We’re confident that we’ll start with a good setup and that’s the most important thing.”

**Dennis Olsen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #99):** “I’m not happy with my two flying laps. Unfortunately, I couldn’t get the most out of today. The vehicle balance for the Super Pole was completely different to what it was in the warm-up, and I couldn’t really figure out how hard I could push. So I lost the odd tenths of seconds here and there. Still, we’re in the top 20 and we have good chances for the 24-hour race.”

**Klaus Bachler (Porsche 911 GT3 R #54):** “We had a relatively difficult qualifying because we didn’t manage to find the right balance for the car. We’re pleased that the race finally gets the green flag tomorrow and we’ll do everything we can to make up positions. A lot can be done over 24 hours.”

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

