



Qualifying GT, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 2, Sebring (USA)

Porsche 911 GT3 R tackles 12-hour classic from pole position

Stuttgart. The Porsche 911 GT3 R showed its full strength in qualifying for the 12 Hours of Sebring. At the wheel of the No. 16 car fielded by the customer team Wright Motorsports, Zacharie Robichon turned the fastest lap in the GTD class. For the race, the Canadian shares driving duties in the nine-eleven with Jan Heylen from Belgium and Ryan Hardwick from the USA. In January, the trio had won the 24 Hours of Daytona with Porsche works driver Richard Lietz (Austria) and thus took the lead of the championship. The two 911 GT3 R in the GTD-Pro class qualified on positions five and ten.

“Congratulations to the Wright Motorsports customer squad. The grid position for the upcoming endurance classic is ideal,” says Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. “In the GTD-Pro class, the qualifying drivers from Pfaff Motorsports and WeatherTech Racing experienced a bit of bad luck with heavy traffic. The fact that the short 15-minute session was interrupted by red flags didn’t help either. The race will be long and tough and the gaps in both classes are very close. It’ll definitely be exciting and spectacular.”

In temperatures of 19 degrees Celsius and a light mist over the 6.02-kilometre racetrack in Florida, all three Porsche customer teams immediately went in pursuit of top times. However, a damaged vehicle interrupted the session early on. When the track finally went green again with six minutes left on the clock, Zacharie Robichon was ready: On the storied racetrack, famed for its gruelling bumps, the Canadian made the best use of his tyres to turn the fastest time in 1:59.763 minutes. In the GTD-Pro

class, the Australian Matt Campbell scored P5 in Pfaff Motorsports' No. 9 entry shortly before the finish. Julien Andlauer (France) was hampered by heavy traffic in WeatherTech Racing's No. 79 car and came tenth.

The American customer squad Hardpoint was unable to take part in qualifying for the 70th edition of the endurance classic in Florida. The No. 99 Porsche 911 GT3 R was damaged in an accident during free practice on Thursday evening. The team from the US state of Virginia are currently building a replacement chassis and will start the second race of the season from the back of the grid.

Live streaming of the race

The 12-hour race of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship on the Sebring International Raceway gets underway on Saturday, 19 March at 10:10 am local time (3:10 pm CET). The entire race can be viewed live outside the USA and Canada on www.imsa.com. Live timing of all sessions is available at scoring.imsa.com.

Drivers' qualifying quotes

Zacharie Robichon (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16): "It was clear before the start of our qualifying that the car was really good, but we still didn't really know how we would perform in one fast lap. I tackled the matter strategically and drove cautiously in the first couple of laps. When a clear run opened up, it was all or nothing. I only had this one chance without the pesky traffic – and everything came together perfectly! Pole position doesn't really play a major role in a 12-hour race, but it's a great feeling and it gives you extra motivation."

Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "Fifth place is what we'd expected for the qualifying prior to the session. Obviously, we would've preferred pole position, but that wasn't realistic. We're satisfied because our car is well balanced. We now have the rest of the day to take another close look at the data. Perhaps we'll find an even better setup for the race. Let's see."

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 911 GT3 R #79): “I was held up by traffic but we also made some set-up adjustments prior to the qualifying. Unfortunately, that went in the wrong direction. We urgently need to make some noticeable improvements before the race starts, otherwise it’ll be difficult. The balance isn’t great, so the performance is currently not there. But I’m confident that we’ll make good progress.”

Result GTD-Pro class

1. Serra/Rigon/Cheever (I/I/USA), Ferrari 488 GT3 #62, 1:59.414 minutes
2. Bortolotti/Mapelli/Caldarelli (I/I/I), Lamborghini Huracan GT3 #63, 1:59.431 minutes
3. Garcia/Taylor/Catsburg (E/USA/NL), Corvette C8.R GTD #3, 1:59.927 minutes
5. Campbell/Jaminet/Nasr (AUS/F/BR), Porsche 911 GT3 R #9, 1:59.982 minutes
10. Andlauer/Picariello/MacNeil (F/B/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R #79, 2:00.951 minutes

Result GTD class

1. Hardwick/Heylen/Robichon (USA/B/CDN), Porsche 911 GT3 R #16, 1:59.763 minutes
 2. Foley/Auberlen/Dinan (USA/USA/USA), BMW M4 GT3 #96, 1:59.788 minutes
 3. Ward/Ellis/Dienst (USA/CH/D), Mercedes-AMG GT3 #57, 1:59.848 minutes
- DNS. Ferriol/Legge/Wilson (USA/GB/GB), Porsche 911 GT3 R #88, no lap time

Full results and championship standings on imsa.alkamelsystems.com.

*Further information, film and photo material in the Porsche Newsroom: newsroom.porsche.com.
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