



PORSCHE

Press Release

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IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, round 5, Watkins Glen, USA

Porsche heads into second half of the season as points leader

Stuttgart. A fortnight after winning the 24-hour classic at Le Mans, Porsche takes on the next challenge in the USA: The six-hour race at Watkins Glen on 1 July heralds the start of the second half of the IMSA SportsCar Championship season. At the traditional race in the U.S. state of New York, the Porsche GT Team fields two Porsche 911 RSR in the strongly represented GTLM class. After scoring victories at Sebring and Mid-Ohio, Porsche leads the manufacturers' classification of America's premier sports car series. In addition to the long-distance races at Daytona, Sebring and Petit Le Mans, Watkins Glen, too, counts towards the North American Endurance Cup. Porsche currently ranks second in the toughest and most important performance and reliability category in GT racing worldwide.

The race

The 5.472-kilometre Watkins Glen International racetrack was built around a forested hilltop and opened in 1956. The storied course is not merely a phrase for sports car fans around the world: From 1961 to 1980, the United States Grand Prix was contested on the outskirts of this tranquil town. 2015 marks the last Porsche victory at "The Glen" courtesy of Wolf Henzler and Bryan Sellers in the 911 RSR.

The Porsche drivers

The cockpit of the #911 Porsche 911 RSR is shared by the GTLM winners of the Sebring 12-hour race, Patrick Pilet (France) and Nick Tandy (Great Britain). The newly-crowned Le Mans winner Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium) joins forces with Earl Bamber (New Zealand) to drive the second 911 RSR (#912) fielded by the Porsche GT Team. The pair recently won the Mid-Ohio race in the USA. Porsche customer teams contest the GTD class, with Patrick Long (USA) and Porsche Selected Driver Christina Nielsen (Denmark) driving for Wright Motorsports, as well as Jörg Bergmeister (Germany) and Patrick Lindsey (USA) competing for Park Place Motorsports.

The Porsche vehicles

For the second race season, the 911 RSR was optimised primarily in the setup. Depending on the size of the restrictor, the motor, which is positioned in front of the rear axle, puts out around 375 kW (510 hp). The particularly large rear diffuser combined with a top-mounted rear wing provide strong downforce and aerodynamic efficiency. For 2018, Porsche provides its customer teams with an evo-kit for the 911 GT3 R. The ca. 368kW (500 hp) customer sport racer was designed for worldwide GT3 series on the basis of the 911 GT3 RS production sports car.

The schedule

The six-hour race takes off on Sunday, 1 July, at 9.45 hrs local time (15.45 hrs CEST). The race can be viewed live outside the USA on www.imsa.com.

Pre-race quotes

Dr Frank-Steffen Walliser, Vice President Motorsport and GT Cars: “After our triumph at Le Mans, Porsche is by no means returning to everyday life. The next big challenge awaits us at the Watkins Glen race, one of the great sports car classics in the USA. We are looking good in the race for the North American Endurance Cup, not least thanks to our win at the 12 Hours of Sebring. At this prestigious long-distance event, our 911 RSR shone in terms of performance and reliability. We want to bring home a top result from Watkins Glen, not only to extend our lead in the IMSA SportsCar

Championship, but also to defend our chances to bring home the North American Endurance Cup title.”

Pascal Zurlinden, Director GT Factory Motorsport: “After our phenomenal win at Le Mans we’re now turning our full attention to the six-hour Watkins Glen race. One of the big challenges at this classic is to find a perfect vehicle setup for this demanding track. The team and drivers have to make the most of the practice and qualifying sessions in order to line up on the grid with the best possible 911 RSR setup. If this is the case, our chances look good to secure our third win of the season in the USA after Sebring and Mid-Ohio.”

Sebastian Golz, Project Manager 911 GT3 R: “The track suits our 911 GT3 R with the new Evo-update. It’s a flowing circuit and is only driven using the third to sixth gear. The slightly banked Turn 1 allows early acceleration, and from there you pick up the pace to carry momentum through the Esses. Typical of Porsche, the weight advantage makes it possible to brake very late into the chicanes in order to position the vehicle for the right-left-right combination. In Turn 11, you usually get slight lift. We’re curious to see if the curve can be taken at full speed with the Evo-update.”

Patrick Pilet (911 RSR #911): “We’ve had many great experiences at Watkins Glen. Okay, I haven’t won there yet, but maybe it’ll happen this time. It’s a fabulous racetrack and it suits our 911 RSR very well. We saw this last year when we were running in second place over a long period of time. I’m very much looking forward to it.”

Nick Tandy (911 RSR #911): “Watkins Glen is one of those classic racetracks – very fast and very demanding. Strategy plays an important role at a six-hour race. This’ll definitely play into our hands, as our team has a lot of experience. I’ve never climbed the podium at Watkins Glen, so it’s high time I changed that.”

Laurens Vanthoor (911 RSR #912): “It’s a tremendous feeling to race at Watkins Glen as the newly crowned Le Mans winner. This circuit is a favourite for many race drivers. Fans can look forward to an exciting and very competitive race. I hope we perform as strongly as we did in Mid-Ohio with our 911 RSR and that we manage to score our second win of the season in the USA.”

Earl Bamber (911 RSR #912): “I can hardly wait to return to Watkins Glen. This race on one of the fastest courses in the USA is a real highlight. I’m sure we’ll do well there

with the 911 RSR, like in 2015 when Porsche celebrated its double victory. I finished second back then – this time I'd like to win.”

Patrick Long (911 GT3 R #58): “Watkins Glen is the ultimate sports car classic. We should perform well with our 911 GT3 R on this very challenging racetrack. It's a real highlight for me and my team.”

Jörg Bergmeister (911 GT3 R #73): “After the great experience at Le Mans, I'm excited to compete again for Place Motorsports in the USA – especially at a classic as attractive as Watkins Glen.”

This is the IMSA SportsCar Championship

The IMSA SportsCar Championship, a sports car race series contested in the USA and Canada, was run in 2014 for the first time. The series was formed from the merger of the American Le Mans Series and the Grand-Am Series. Sports prototypes and sports cars start in three different classes: GTLM (GT Le Mans), GTD (GT Daytona) and P (Prototype). The Porsche 911 RSR runs in the GTLM class, with the Porsche 911 GT3 R contesting the GTD class.

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