



Porsche customer teams pursue titles at Petit Le Mans

27/09/2022 Porsche's customer teams tackle the final round of this season's IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship with excellent chances to clinch the title. The Canadian Pfaff Motorsports squad are about to win the new GTD-Pro classification with the two Porsche works drivers Matt Campbell (Australia) and Mathieu Jaminet (France). In the GTD class, the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Wright Motorsports has good prospects of claiming the championship title at Road Atlanta.

The preview

Thanks to the strong performance of Pfaff Motorsports over the course of the 2022 season, Porsche looks set to win the manufacturers' championship in the GTD-Pro class. Five victories so far this season have put the Canadian team in such a great position that the No. 9 Porsche 911 GT3 R only has to start the race at Road Atlanta to earn enough points and win the manufacturers, drivers and team championship titles. In the GTD class, in which amateurs and professional drivers share a car, Wright Motorsports currently ranks third with good prospects at the so-called "Petit Le Mans" season finale in

the US state of Georgia.

“The expectations are huge: Pfaff Motorsports travels to Petit Le Mans as the leader of the driver and team classifications in the GTD-Pro class, plus Porsche ranks first in the manufacturers' championship,” explains Sebastian Golz, Project Manager Porsche 911 GT3 R. “Still, this is no reason to sit back and relax. On the contrary: the team and drivers are working with total concentration on the classic. Aside from the final IMSA event, the race at Road Atlanta offers us another unique opportunity to send the latest Porsche 911 GT3 R into retirement with a top result. From 2023, the teams will then field the 992-generation car.”

The ten-hour “Petit Le Mans” race has been a regular fixture on the North American sports car calendar since 1988. The extremely popular event will be contested for the 25th time on the 4.088-kilometre Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. The undulating track located about 80 kilometres northeast of Atlanta in the US state of Georgia features twelve turns – including the famous ‘esses’, an ultra-fast, snake-like passage. On the tradition-steeped circuit close to the town of Braselton, weather conditions often play a critical role: autumn can bring hot temperatures and sunshine as well as torrential rain.

Such unpredictable weather handed Porsche its greatest success to date at Road Atlanta. In 2015, Nick Tandy (United Kingdom), Patrick Pilet (France) and Richard Lietz (Austria) beat even the more-powerful prototypes in heavy rain to clinch a sensational overall victory in the Porsche 911 RSR. The Stuttgart sports car manufacturer has so far notched up a total of 24 class wins at the Petit Le Mans. For Porsche, the race is significant for another reason: Atlanta is the headquarters of Porsche Cars North America.

The customer teams and drivers

In the GTD-Pro category, which replaced the previous GTLM class at the start of the season, Pfaff Motorsports campaigns the ca. 367 kW (500 PS) Porsche 911 GT3 R. The two regular drivers Matt Campbell from Australia and Mathieu Jaminet from France share the cockpit with their Brazilian works driver teammate Felipe Nasr. In January, these three notched up a class win at the 24 Hours of Daytona. In 2021, Pfaff Motorsports took home the GTD championship title and is now set to claim its second straight triumph.

In the GTD class, the American businessman Ryan Hardwick joins forces with Belgium's Jan Heylen in the Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Wright Motorsports. This season, the two won the 24 Hours of Daytona and the Laguna Seca race in the No. 16 car. At the ten-hour endurance classic at Road Atlanta, the two regular drivers will receive reinforcement from Canadian Zacharie Robichon. In the championship standings, the team is just 57 points off the top of the table. At Petit Le Mans, a total of 385 points are awarded in the qualifying and race. The Hardpoint customer squad contest the GTD class with the two Americans Rob Ferriol and Nick Boule as well as Katherine Legge from England.

Drivers' comments before the race

Matt Campbell (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "The minute we start the race, we'll be eligible to earn points – and then we'll have the championship in the bag. Of course, the situation couldn't be more perfect for the finale at Road Atlanta. We're not under any pressure, we just want to enjoy the race. I really like Road Atlanta and I won my class there in the past two years. Now I'm keen to continue that streak and notch up another victory with our current Porsche 911 GT3 R. We're feeling optimistic after our two-day test at the track with Felipe."

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "We're in a great position, which means we can just have fun with the team. Once we get off to a smooth start and we have the title safely in our hands, we'll step on the gas. We aim to be at the top of the podium again. If we do this, we'll go down in IMSA history: no one has ever managed six class wins in one season before. Matt and I will switch to the new Porsche 963 from Porsche Penske Motorsport in 2023, but for now, we'd like to give this fantastic Porsche 911 GT3 R a proper farewell."

Jan Heylen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #16): "We start every season with the desire to still be in contention for the title at the final race. And that's exactly the case for me and my teammates at Wright Motorsports this season. Our current chances in the championship are hugely motivating for the race at Road Atlanta. It won't be easy, but our hopes are by no means ridiculous. We'll do our absolute utmost to take home the GTD class title at the end of the season."

The schedule (local time, CEST -6 hours)

Thursday, 29 September

9:50 am to 11:20 am: Free practice 1

2:55 pm to 4:40 pm: Free practice 2

7:30 pm to 9:00 pm: Free practice 3

Friday, 30 September

3:40 pm to 3:55 pm: Qualifying GTD-Pro / GTD

Saturday, 1 October

9:15 am to 9:35 am: Warm-up

12:10 pm to 10:10 pm: Race

**MEDIA
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