



Porsche Penske Motorsport is keen to continue its clear upward trend

10/05/2023 The Porsche Penske Motorsport works team is keen to continue its upward trend in North America with the two Porsche 963. After its victory at Long Beach in mid-April, the factory squad is now eager to climb the podium again at round four of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

Preview

The customer team JDC-Miller Motorsports fields a Porsche 963 in the top GTP class for the first time in the race over two hours and 40 minutes on the Laguna Seca Raceway. In the two GTD categories, four customer teams campaign a total of five Porsche 911 GT3 R.

On the back of its triumph at the previous race in Long Beach, Porsche Penske Motorsport heads to round four in Laguna Seca with big aspirations. At the second event in California after Long Beach, the works drivers Nick Tandy from the UK and Frenchman Mathieu Jaminet compete in the No. 6 Porsche 963 as the leaders of the drivers' championship. Their team colleagues Matt Campbell from Australia

and Felipe Nasr from Brazil currently rank fifth after achieving a hotly-contested third place in Long Beach. At the race over 2:40 hours, the customer squad JDC-Miller Motorsports celebrates its debut in the top GTP class on the legendary course close to the harbour of the City of Monterey. The former Porsche-Junior and ex-works driver Mike Rockenfeller from Germany and Tijmen van der Helm from the Netherlands share the cockpit of the No. 5 Porsche 963.

"I'm very much looking forward to the race at Laguna Seca. It's one of my favourite circuits on the calendar," explains Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. "Our recent victory gave the team a huge boost and we want to use this to score another win next weekend. We're well aware that we still have some progress to make in terms of the optimal preparation and setup of our cars. This was obvious at the previous FIA World Endurance Championship round in Spa. At the same time, I look forward to our customer team JDC-Miller Motorsports, which will contest the GTP class with the Porsche 963 and thus fight for overall victories."

"The Laguna Seca racetrack has different characteristics compared to the circuits at Daytona, Sebring and Long Beach. No one has tested at this venue so it'll be a journey into the unknown for us all in the top GTP class," describes Urs Kuratle, Director Factor Motorsport LMDh. "There is no doubt that our squad tackles the upcoming challenge feeling highly motivated after our win on the streets of Long Beach. We want to improve further and establish ourselves at the top with the Porsche 963. I'm also very excited about the first outing for our customer car in the hands of JDC-Miller Motorsports. A third hybrid prototype from Weissach will certainly add extra spice to the already gripping competition in the IMSA series."

"Our team goes racing in California for the second time in two months, however we're in a different position than last time in Long Beach," says Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. "We travel to Laguna Seca as the race winners and championship leaders. This doesn't change our approach in the slightest, but we'll do everything we can to keep the momentum up. As a globally active team, we can use the insights that our FIA WEC colleagues gained recently. The knowledge from Spa and Portimão is very helpful in developing a good baseline setup. There are very few chances to test in Laguna Seca so we don't have any experience there. The drivers and all IMSA personnel are looking forward to taking on the special challenges that the circuit and the competition throw at us."

The race

The 3.6-kilometre Laguna Seca Raceway is famous for its "corkscrew" passage. The narrow, steeply banked left-right combination is often the scene for spectacular overtaking moves. The "corkscrew" section of the racetrack is so unique that Porsche replicated it on its own racetrack in Leipzig. The tradition-steeped American circuit lies on a plateau just a few kilometres from the Pacific coast. The surface of the racetrack built in 1957 offers very little grip. Persistent winds blow sand onto the track. Porsche enjoys coming to Laguna Seca: From 28 September to 1 October this year, the raceway will host the "Rennsport Reunion" for the fourth time. This gathering is extremely popular with fans and

Porsche customers.

Debut for JDC-Miller Motorsports' bright yellow Porsche 963

Just two weeks after the impressive debut of Hertz Team Jota's Porsche 963 in the FIA World Endurance Championship, a second customer squad takes on the challenge: JDC-Miller Motorsports tackles the top GTP category for the first time in Laguna Seca.

"It's a great honour for us that Porsche selected JDC-Miller as the first customer in the IMSA series," says John Church, co-owner of JDC-Miller Motorsports. "This is a huge affirmation that others recognize what we have built. The car is an incredible work of engineering and the support system behind it very impressive. Working with Porsche has been amazing. Our team has spend over 75 man-days in Weissach getting training and building the car. The high level of commitment the staff and management at Porsche have given to our program was obvious from day one and has gotten stronger as we have gone along. We, of course, compete to win but we are realistic about what this weekend will bring. We have a lot to learn and the other teams have three races under their belt. Just one example of many is that our drivers have not turned a wheel in a Porsche 963. We are confident they will get up to speed quickly but there is a lot that is new here."

The Porsche teams and drivers

The Long Beach winners Nick Tandy from the United Kingdom and Frenchman Mathieu Jaminet will again share the cockpit of the No. 6 Porsche 963 at Laguna Seca. After three of eleven races on this year's calendar, the two works drivers currently lead the drivers' championship. Matt Campbell from Australia and Felipe Nasr from Brazil helm the sister car. After securing a podium result in Long Beach, the crew of Porsche Penske Motorsport's No. 7 car travels to Laguna Seca in P5 of the standings. Porsche ranks third in the manufacturers' classification.

The customer car campaigned by JDC-Miller Motorsports is shared by the 19-year-old Dutchman Tijmen van der Helm and Mike Rockenfeller. The German has close ties with the Porsche brand: In 2004, he won the Carrera Cup Deutschland as a Porsche Junior. In the following two years, he contested various racing series as a works driver. In 2005, he won the GT2 class at the 24 Hours of Le Mans driving a Porsche 911 GT3 RSR. In 2010, the now 39-year-old German won the world's greatest endurance race with today's Porsche ambassador Timo Bernhard (Germany) and works driver Romain Dumas (France). Three years later, Rockenfeller clinched the title in the DTM.

As last year's Laguna Seca winner, Pfaff Motorsports tackles the GTD-Pro class with the newest model Porsche 911 GT3 R. Sharing driving duties in the cockpit are Austria's Klaus Bachler and Patrick Pilet from France. In March, the pair achieved a class win at the 12 Hours of Sebring with the Belgian works driver Laurens Vanthoor. In the GTD category, two more 992-generation 911 GT3 R fielded by Kelly-Moss with Riley will compete. The former Porsche Junior Julien Andlauer from France is one of the

driver crew. Wright Motorsports and AO Racing run one 911 GT3 R each.

An overview of the teams and drivers

GTP-class (Porsche 963):

JDC-Miller Motorsports (#5): Mike Rockenfeller (D), Tijmen van der Helm (NL)

Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6): Mathieu Jaminet (F), Nick Tandy (UK)

Porsche Penske Motorsport (#7): Matt Campbell (AUS), Felipe Nasr (BR)

GTD-Pro class (Porsche 911 GT3 R):

Pfaff Motorsports (#9): Klaus Bachler (A), Patrick Pilet (F)

GTD-class (Porsche 911 GT3 R):

Wright Motorsports (#77): Alan Brynjolfsson (USA), Trent Hindman (USA)

AO Racing (#80): PJ Hyett (USA), Sebastian Priaulx (UK)

Kelly-Moss with Riley (#91): Alan Metni (USA), Kay van Berlo (NL)

Kelly-Moss with Riley (#92): Julien Andlauer (F), Alec Udell (USA)

The schedule (local time, CEST -9 hours)

Friday, 12 May

4:05 pm – 5:35 pm: Free practice 1

Saturday, 13 May

8:55 am – 10:40 am: Free practice 2

12:55 pm – 1:10 pm: Qualifying GTD-Pro/GTD

1:45 pm – 2:05 pm: Qualifying GTP

Sunday, 14 May

8:00 am – 8:20 am: Warm-up

12:10 pm – 2:50 pm: Race

Drivers' comments ahead of the race

Mathieu Jaminet (Porsche 963 #6): "I'm really looking forward to the race in Laguna Seca, even if we don't quite know what's in store for us there. Taking into account the results and the competition since the beginning of the season, it's very hard to tell what the real situation will look like. So far, we're certainly not the best over a fast lap but anything can happen in a race – the team and strategy play a big role in this regard. That's how we've always managed to fight among the frontrunners. After the victory and third place in Long Beach, we're confident that we can continue our streak."

Matt Campbell (Porsche 963 #7): "This is the last race of the season on the West Coast of America before we shift our attention to the east for the rest of the year. We're keen to achieve something similar to what we did recently in Long Beach. However, the circuit is completely different from the previous ones on the calendar and that comes with a major challenge for us. On the other hand, I can't wait to compete there. Laguna Seca is one of my all-time favourite racetracks."

Mike Rockenfeller (Porsche 963 #5): "I'm delighted that I get the chance to sit in the JDC-Miller Porsche. Even if it's not a works car, in a way I'm back at Porsche. That's where my professional career began. I was part of the junior squad for three years, then I spent two seasons as a works driver. We're heading into the race with humility and realistic expectations. The car is brand new and very complex. We regard this race as a test. We have zero experience compared to other GTP teams, so no one should expect too much from us. That said, as always, we're competing to achieve the best possible result. If we are quick learners as the season progresses, I think we'll be good for some surprises later this year."

Patrick Pilet (Porsche 911 GT3 R #9): "The circuit is one of the best that North America has to offer in motorsport. I've really missed racing at Laguna Seca. I'm excited to return there. Last year, our team Pfaff Motorsports won there, so the Porsche 911 GT3 R should fit well with the track characteristics. The track has to be resurfaced later this year – but unfortunately only after our event, so we have to cope with a lack of grip again. My teammate Klaus Bachler has never raced at Laguna Seca. With the help of our team, I'm sure he'll adapt quickly."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



Holger Eckhardt

Spokesperson GT and Customer Motorsports, Esports
+49 (0) 170 / 911 4982
holger.eckhardt@porsche.de

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