



14 Porsche Customer Teams Test Daytona Waters at Pre-Season Preview

19/01/2022 WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, GTD Pro/GTD: Open Test

Daytona Beach, Florida. A new year brings new teams, new combinations, new classes and a new Porsche race car as customer programs prepare for the 2022 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and Michelin Pilot Challenge seasons. 14 total privateer teams have entered Porsche-built race cars – evenly split across the two sports car racing series – at the annual Roar Before the Rolex 24 scheduled for January 21 – 22. The two day test on the 3.56-mile, 12-turn Daytona International Speedway road course not only gives competitors an opportunity to prepare for the 60th Running of the Rolex 24 at Daytona but also sets the grid for the January 29 – 30 endurance classic with a 100-minute qualifying race scheduled for January 23.

WeatherTech, GTD Pro Class

With three teams entered in the new GTD Pro class, the most of any brand, the Porsche 911 GT3 R race car has an excellent opportunity to score the German manufacturer's 79th class win at Daytona. Leading the way in the all-professional driver category is 2021 WeatherTech champion Pfaff Motorsports. The No. 9 "Plaid Porsche" brings an entirely new lineup with Porsche factory drivers Matt Campbell (Australia), Mathieu Jaminet (France) and Felipe Nasr (Brazil) to face the challenge of the 12-turn road course. Nasr, who will drive the endurance events for the Canadian team in 2022, was the first of two Porsche "works" drivers named to the 2023 LMDh effort along with Californian Dane Cameron. The new Porsche LMDh car had its first shakedown laps on the Porsche test track in Weissach, Germany on January 14 at the hands of IMSA veteran Frédéric Makowiecki (France).

WeatherTech Racing drivers Cooper MacNeil (Hinsdale, Illinois), Julien Andlauer (France), Matteo Cairoli (Italy) and Alessio Picariello (Belgium) will share the No. 79 Porsche 911 GT3 R. The program is moving into the GT3-spec category after a season in the now retired Porsche 911 RSR-19 and the GTLM class. The third entry is that of KCMG making its WeatherTech Championship debut at the Roar. While the Hong Kong-based operation is new to North America, several of its drivers are familiar faces at Daytona. Patrick Pilet (France) returns to the track he won on with Porsche in 2014 while veteran Laurens Vanthoor (Belgium), Dennis Olsen (Norway) and Alexandre Imperatori (Switzerland) search for their first wins behind the wheel of the No. 2 Porsche 911 GT3 R racer.

WeatherTech, GTD Class

Identical to the GTD Pro class with its 510-plus horsepower, naturally aspirated, flat-six engine, the GTD class continues in its Pro-Am driver format with four Porsche customer entries. Returning Michelin Endurance Cup champions, Wright Motorsports, fields the No. 16 for Porsche factory wizard Richard Lietz (Austria), 2021 Porsche Cup winner and Michelin Pilot Challenge Champion Jan Heylen (Belgium), 2021 GTD Champion Zacharie Robichon (Canada) and Ryan Hardwick (Atlanta, Georgia) in one of the strongest drive lineups on the entry list. GMG Racing returns to the top-step of North American GT racing with the No. 34 Porsche 911 GT3 R being campaigned by veteran Jeroen Bleekemolen (Netherlands), Klaus Bachler (Austria), owner/driver James Sofronas (Villa Park, California) and Kyle Washington (Canada). TeamTGM will return to the WeatherTech Championship for the first time since Daytona, 2021. The No. 64 Porsche 911 GT3 R will bring in the four drivers that make-up the program's Michelin Pilot Challenge two-car effort: Ted Giovanis (Highland, Maryland), Hugh Plumb (Unionville, Pennsylvania), his brother Matt Plumb (Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania) and Owen Trinkler (Brentwood, Tennessee). Rob Ferriol (Fayetteville, North Carolina) and Katherine Legge (Great Britain) lead the way for the return of the No. 99 Hardpoint Porsche 911 GT3 R. Joining the full-season duo in the No. 99 will be Stefan Wilson (Great Britain) and Nick Boulle (Dallas, Texas).

Michelin Pilot Challenge, GS Class

The Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport was unveiled at the Los Angeles Auto Show in November 2021. Now, just two months later, the 4.0-liter, naturally aspirated race car will make its worldwide competition debut during the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge portion of the Roar Before the Rolex 24. The high-revving powerplant is shared with its road car sibling, the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS as well as the 911 GT3 Cup race car and develops 500 hp – 75 hp more than the previous GT4 Clubsport model which won the 2021 Michelin Pilot Challenge championship. Fitted as standard is a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission (PDK), replacing the GT4 Clubsport's six-speed version of a year-ago.

Seven teams have entered the new racer for the four-hour season opener on January 28. All will be on-site for the test days. McCann Racing will field the No. 8 for Andrew Davis (Athens, Georgia) and Michael McCann (Canton, Ohio) while GMG returns to the IMSA support series with Kyle Washington and James Sofronas in the No. 34. Like GMG, Team TGM will enter cars in both the Rolex 24 and the Michelin Pilot Challenge. The No. 46 Porsche will be raced by Hugh and Matt Plumb while team owner Ted Giovanis will share the No. 64 with Owen Trinkler. NOLASPORT, a champion in the SRO GT4 America series, brings its No. 47 Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport for Matt Travis (The Woodlands, Texas) and Jason Hart (Flower Mound, Texas). A regular in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge last season, BGB Motorsports is back with the No. 83 for Thomas Collingwood (Canada) and veteran Porsche ace Spencer Pumpelly (Atlanta, Georgia). New to the Porsche GT4 ranks is CarBahn with Peregrine Racing placing drivers Mark Siegel (Palo Alto, California), Tom Dyer (West Jordan, Utah) and Tyler McQuarrie (Danville, California) in the No. 93.

Historic Perspective

Porsche is the most success manufacturer since the inception of the first Daytona Continental race in 1962, and the first 24 Hours of Daytona in 1966. With 22 overall wins, the first coming in 1968 and the most recent in 2010, the German marque holds the record for most victories at the twice-around-the-clock event (1968, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1978 – 1987, 1989, 1991, 2003, 2009, 2010). The opportunity returns in 2023 for Porsche to add to this tally as the sports car manufacturer will again contest in the top prototype class when the LMDh category debuts at the 61st running of the Rolex 24. More immediately, Porsche has the opportunity to add to its class victory total of 78 (also a record) with cars entered in the GTD Pro and GTD classes.

Timing

The 2022 race season will unofficially get underway on Friday, January 21 with two Michelin Pilot Challenge (9:45 a.m. ET and 2:45 p.m. ET) and two WeatherTech Championship test sessions (11:15 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. ET). Another two test sessions for the Michelin Pilot Challenge will run on Saturday, January 22 (8:45 a.m. ET and 4:50 p.m. ET). A third session for the WeatherTech cars at 10:00 a.m. ET

followed by a night practice at 7:00 p.m. ET will also take place on Saturday. The final opportunity to fine-tune the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport will come with a session on Sunday, January 23 at 10:35 a.m. ET

Qualifying for the Rolex 24 At Daytona will again be held at The Roar. A single 15-minute qualifying session for GTD Pro and GTD will be held at 3:25 p.m. ET on Saturday, January 22. This session will set the grid for Sunday's 100-minute Rolex 24 qualifying race starting at 2:05 p.m. ET. In turn, the qualifying race will place each car in position for the 60th Running of the Rolex 24 at Daytona. The green flag will fall over the full grid of the WeatherTech Championship season-opener on January 29 at 1:40 p.m. ET.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



Tom Moore

IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship
Darkhorse Autosport
(for US media only)
+1 615 509 5000
tom@darkhorseautosport.com



Frank Wiesmann

770-290-3414
frank.wiesmann@porsche.us

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