IMSA win rounds off successful weekend for Porsche Motorsport

13/05/2024 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 4, Monterey, California
A banner weekend for Porsche Motorsport: After triumphs in both classes of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) in Spa-Francorchamps (Belgium) and factory driver António Félix da Costa's victory at the Formula E race in Berlin, Germany, the success at the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship in Laguna Seca was the icing on the cake. The Porsche 963 driven by Nick Tandy (United Kingdom) and Mathieu Jaminet (France) won the action-packed thriller in California. This marked the 600th career victory for a Porsche racing car in the top IMSA series and the 100th triumph for the Penske team in sports car racing. Clinching third place, the sister car shared by the championship leaders Felipe Nasr (Brazil) and Dane Cameron (Huntersville, North Carolina) continued its podium streak. The success continued into the GTD Pro class where AO Racing won their first IMSA WeatherTech race with the Porsche 911 GT3 R race car. The popular "Rexy" entry earned the German sports car manufacturer its career 601st IMSA win.

Atlanta. In perfect summer conditions at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, the IMSA series once again delivered a gripping show over two hours and 40 minutes of sports car racing on May 12. After a

solid start and thanks to a clever strategy, strong driver performances and decisively good tire durability, the two Porsche 963 racers from the Porsche Penske Motorsport factory team charged their way onto the podium. With just twelve minutes left on the clock, 24 Hours of Le Mans winner Nick Tandy (United Kingdom) made the crucial final move. In a dramatic push, the veteran driver catapulted his No. 6 hybrid prototype past the leading Cadillac and safely brought home the team's second win of the season in North America.

“What an incredible weekend for Porsche,” exclaims Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. “First the double success of the Porsche 963 and Manthey's Porsche 911 GT3 R at the FIA WEC race in Spa, then António Félix da Costa's triumph at the Formula E race in Berlin and finally victory and a podium place for Porsche Penske Motorsport as well as first place in the GTD Pro class for AO Racing in the IMSA series in Laguna Seca. My heartfelt thanks to everyone in the works and customer teams at the racetracks and at the Weissach R&D Center [Germany] for making these incredible successes possible. The results of the last two days make me extremely proud!”

“Laguna Seca is one of my favorite tracks and seeing the Porsche 963 win there today was fantastic,” states Roger Penske, CEO and founder of Penske Corporation. With this result, his team celebrates its 100th victory in sports car racing: “I was in Spa until yesterday evening watching the WEC team, now I was part of the success here in California – and later I'll follow our team in the IndyCar race. Many people know that we're winners. We've underlined this several times with Porsche Penske Motorsport. Now we're setting our sights on Le Mans.”

“It's a wonderful day for us,” offered Jonathan Diuguid, Managing Director Porsche Penske Motorsport. “Nick and Mathieu delivered a formidable and flawless performance. It was an unforgettable weekend for our global team with a win and podium finish in Laguna Seca and second place in Spa-Francorchamps. I'm very proud to notch up the 100th victory for the Penske organization in sports car racing. We're now very much looking forward to the next IMSA race in Detroit and the FIA WEC season highlight in Le Mans.”

In the overall standings, Felipe Nasr (Brazil) and Dane Cameron (Huntersville, North Carolina) retain first place in the drivers' standings after round four race of the season, while teammates Tandy and Jaminet move up into fifth place. Porsche Penske Motorsport ranks first in the team classification. In the manufacturers' championship, Porsche reduced the gap to the leaders in second place.

The two Porsche 963 racers fielded by the customer teams JDC-Miller MotorSports and Proton Competition finished the race in Laguna Seca in eighth and tenth respectively.

AO Racing's Porsche 911 GT3 R wins GTD Pro class for the first time

The Porsche 911 GT3 R demonstrated its potential in the two GT classes. In the GTD Pro category for all professional driver lineups, the customer team AO Racing brought home a commanding win with the dinosaur-liveried ‘Rexy’ 911. The 2021 Porsche Carrera Cup North American champion Sebastian

Priaulx (United Kingdom) laid the groundwork at the wheel of the No. 77 car with a solid drive in his first stint. Former Porsche junior Laurin Heinrich (Germany) followed up with an inspired drive. For long stretches, the German was undoubtedly the fastest GT driver on the track and built a significant lead over his pursuers. Wright Motorsports' drivers Adam Adelson (Los Angeles, California) and Elliott Skeer (San Diego, California) finished third in the GTD class.

Round five of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will be held on the street circuit of downtown Detroit, June 1. The race in the heart of North America's "Motor City" is the second, and final, 100 minute feature of the 2024 IMSA season.

Drivers' comments after the race

Nick Tandy, Driver, No. 6 Porsche Penske Motorsport Porsche 963:
"Our team did a tremendous job. Keep in mind, first, the WEC crew clinches the 100th pole position for Penske in sports car racing, and then a day later the IMSA team scores their 100th victory. The results on both sides of the Atlantic clearly show how much we've improved in all areas over the past few months. That's exactly what we needed. I'm so proud to be a part of it!"

Mathieu Jaminet, Driver, No. 6 Porsche Penske Motorsport Porsche 963:
"Luck eluded us in the first three races of the year, but now the tables have finally turned. The team did a perfect job, from preparing the cars to pit stops and strategy. Our Porsche 963 was a dream to drive today. Nick delivered a thrilling and ultimately successful fight for victory. Let's continue like this."

Felipe Nasr, Driver, No. 7 Porsche Penske Motorsport Porsche 963:
"Congratulations to our colleagues in the sister car. It was a fantastic day of racing in California for our team. We crossed the finish line in third place with our number 7 car – that earned us a lot of points in our bid for the championship. We've extended our lead in the drivers' standings, which was our goal. During my stints, I came from seventh on the grid and reached the podium. That was great fun."

Laurin Heinrich, Driver, No. 77 AO Racing Porsche 911 GT3 R:
"I'm over the moon! Not only is this my first win in the IMSA series but also for our AO Racing team and our much-loved 'Rexy'. Laguna Seca is only our third race with this configuration – and against many factory-supported teams in the notoriously competitive GTD Pro class. I'm immensely grateful and happy."

Elliott Skeer, Driver, No. 120 Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 R.
"We're newcomers to the scene so we kept our expectations conservative heading into the Laguna Seca weekend. Now the event is over, and we finished on the podium. My mom watched it on TV and I'm sure it was a great Mother's Day gift for her. I bet the same goes for my teammate Adam's mom. We surely made our mothers proud today."

Race result:

GTP class:
1. Jaminet/Tandy (France/United Kingdom), Porsche 963 No. 6, 119 laps
2. Derani/Aitken (Brazil/UK), Cadillac No. 31, + 5.764 seconds
3. Nasr/Cameron (Brazil/USA), Porsche 963 No. 7, + 34.673 seconds
8. Van der Helm/Westbrook (Netherlands/UK), Porsche 963 No. 85, + 77.343 seconds
10. Bruni/Rockenfeller (Italy/Germany), Porsche 963 No. 5, 118 laps

GTD-Pro class:
1. Heinrich/Priaulx (Germany/United Kingdom), Porsche 911 GT3 R No. 77, 111 laps

GTD class:
1. Ellis/Ward (United Kingdom/USA), Mercedes-AMG No. 57, 111 laps
2. Foley/Gallagher (USA/USA), BMW No. 96, + 3.458 seconds
3. Adelson/Skeer (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R No. 120, + 9.371 seconds
10. Andretti/Chaves (USA/USA), Porsche 911 GT3 R No. 43, 109 laps
13. Li/Fjordbach (China/Denmark), Porsche 911 GT3 R No. 86, +25.368

Full results and championship standings at https://imsa.alkamelsystems.com.

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