

**24H
SERIES**

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25
EDITIONS

24H DE BARCELONA D'AUTOMOBILISME

24:00:00

HANKOOK

24H BARCELONA

13-14-15 SEPTEMBER 2024

1	0.00
2	0.00
3	0.00
4	+0.36
5	+2.748
6	+2.982
7	+3.002
8	+3.944
9	+4.229
10	+4.902

Le Mans legends
back on the
24H SERIES grid!

Hometown champs?
Can E2P Racing take
a GT3 title at home?

A (very) brief history
We revisit the early years
of the 24H BARCELONA.

Orchid Racing Team
A look back at the Porsche
team's first full season.

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RENGER VAN DER ZANDE
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Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya celebrates this year the 25th anniversary of the 24 Hours of Barcelona - Trofeu Fermí Véllez. The international event puts the best GTs and touring cars in the world to the test and has become a famous meeting on the motorsport calendar.

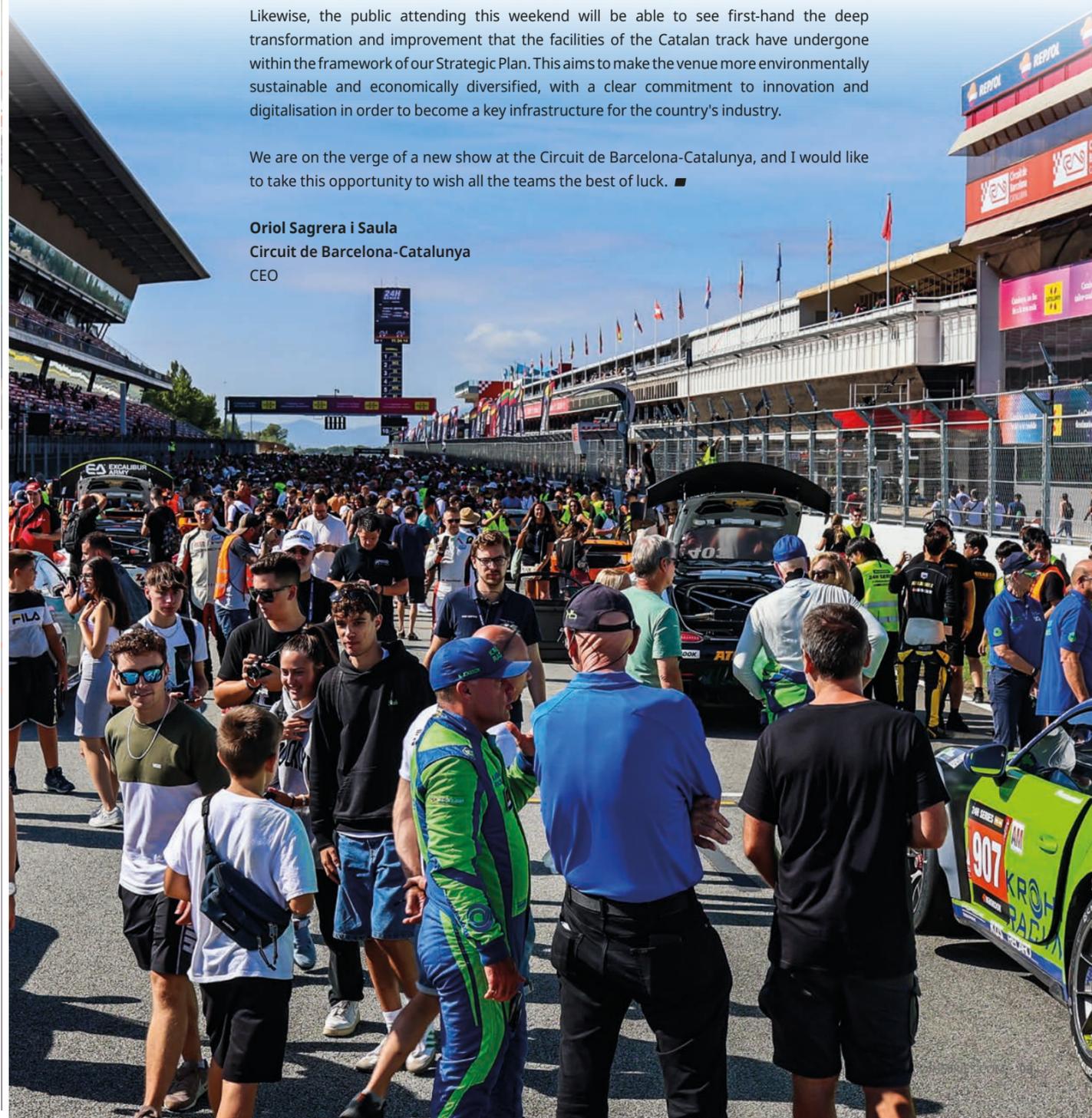
Since 2011, the endurance event has been organised with the collaboration of Dutch promoter CREVENTIC, and since then, the race has experienced a remarkable international projection, welcoming the best drivers of the speciality and combining show and thrill, both during the day and at night.

The 25th edition of the 24 Hours of Barcelona - Trofeu Fermí Véllez will feature teams from more than 15 different countries, all of which are sure to delight the public with this unique and demanding endurance competition. A race that blends tradition and history and recalls the legendary races in Montjuïc. Moreover, the Alpine Elf Cup Series and the Clio Cup Series will also be held during the weekend.

Likewise, the public attending this weekend will be able to see first-hand the deep transformation and improvement that the facilities of the Catalan track have undergone within the framework of our Strategic Plan. This aims to make the venue more environmentally sustainable and economically diversified, with a clear commitment to innovation and digitalisation in order to become a key infrastructure for the country's industry.

We are on the verge of a new show at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the teams the best of luck. ■

Oriol Sagrera i Saula
Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya
CEO



¡Bienvenido!

It's all been leading to this. At CREVENTIC's European season opener in Mugello, at which heavy rain threw some sizeable spanners into the works, The Netherlands' Team GP-Elite stormed back from a first lap collision to take its first overall win in the 24H SERIES. One month later at Spa-Francorchamps (another event at the mercy of Mother Nature), series mainstay CP Racing brought its tenure with CREVENTIC to a fitting close with a fairy tale win. Shortly after that, fellow series champion Herberth Motorsport brought a frustrating, three-year winless streak to an end in commanding fashion with a 1-2 finish in Portimão. And last but not least, the Saintéloc Junior Team, like GP-Elite before it, collected the chequered flag in Misano at the head of the field for the very first time.

Four events. Four winners. And a European championship fight that's come down to the wire.

Spain's own E2P Racing for instance is closing in on its first GT3-PRO/AM class championship in the 24H SERIES, something we discuss with local boys Pablo Burguera and Antonio Sainero on page 24. Similarly, the Orchid Racing Team could be on the brink of securing 992-AM honours this weekend, a fitting way to close out its first-full endurance racing program (page 58). On top of that, the title chase in GT3 overall is still wide open between Herberth Motorsport and the Saintéloc Junior Team, former class champion Red Ant Racing is

looking to close out a perfect season in 992, and is series favourite Vortex V8 on the verge of becoming a two-time champion? It will all be decided in Catalunya.

But of course, that won't be the only talking point this weekend. Celebrating its 25th edition in 2024, the '24 Hours of Barcelona-Trofeu Fermí Véllez' was first held in 1998, and has been a much-valued part of the 24H SERIES calendar since 2011. Once a regional tribute to Montmeló's endurance racing history, the Hankook 24H BARCELONA is now one of the most hotly contested GT endurance races annually in Europe, with Dakar luminaries Nani Roma and Marc Coma, Women's Trial World Championship legend Laia Sanz, three-time MotoGP winner Jorge Lorenzo, and even two-time Formula 1 champion Fernando Alonso among the event's celebrated alumni. Not to mention the Guardia Civil, ex-FC Barcelona left-back Sergi Barjuán, and even one of Barcelona's most notorious car thieves! You can read more about that on page 10.

For one last time in 2024, we at CREVENTIC would like to thank all of our competitors, our partners and our sponsors, as well as everyone at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, for their continued support. We've no doubt this year's championship fight will be a fitting addition to an already stuffed 27-year history. ■

TEAM CREVENTIC





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24H BARCELONA

► **Live broadcast** *with commentary from Radio Le Mans*

Friday September 13

16:25 - 18:40	Hankook 24H BARCELONA	Qualifying
18:50 - 19:35	Alpine Europe Cup	Race 1
19:45 - 20:30	Clio Cup	Race 1

Saturday September 14

09:15 - 10:00	Alpine Europe Cup	Race 2
10:15 - 11:00	Clio Cup	Race 2
11:30 - 12:00	Hankook 24H BARCELONA	Startgrid
12:00 - 24:00	Hankook 24H BARCELONA	Race

Sunday September 15

00:00 - 12:00	Hankook 24H BARCELONA	Race
12:00 - 13:00	Hankook 24H BARCELONA	Podium




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24hseries.com

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Antonio Garzon

24H SERIES.COM

TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024

20:00 Creventic Track Days Access to Paddock & Pit Boxes (Wednesday test teams only)

WEDNESDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2024

09:00 - 11:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Days Session 1
 11:00 - 13:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Days Session 2
 14:00 - 16:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Days Session 3
 16:00 - 18:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Days Session 4
 18:30 - 21:00 All Series Track Walk

THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2024

09:00 - 11:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Day Session 5
 11:00 - 13:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Day Session 6
 13:10 - 13:40 Renault Clio Cup Free test session 1
 14:00 - 16:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Day Session 7
 16:00 - 18:00 Creventic Track Days Creventic Track Day Session 8
 18:10 - 18:40 Alpine Elf Europe Cup Free test session 1
 18:30 - 21:00 All Series Track Walk
 19:00 - --:-- 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Photo of all cars on straight
 19:30 - 21:00 All Series Track Walk

FRIDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2024

09:00 - 10:30 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Private Test
 10:40 - 11:10 Renault Clio Cup Free Practice 2
 11:20 - 12:00 Alpine Elf Europe Cup Free Practice 2
 12:45 - 14:15 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Free Practice
 15:00 - 15:20 Alpine Elf Europe Cup Qualifying 1
 15:30 - 15:50 Alpine Elf Europe Cup Qualifying 2
 16:00 - 16:20 Renault Clio Cup Qualifying 2
 16:30 - 16:45 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Qualifying Session 1 - Classes TCE & GT4
 16:50 - 17:05 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Qualifying Session 2 - Classes TCE & GT4
 17:10 - 17:25 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Qualifying Session 3 - Classes TCE & GT4
 17:35 - 17:50 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Qualifying Session 1 - Classes GT3, GTX & 992
 17:55 - 18:10 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Qualifying Session 2 - Classes GT3, GTX & 992
 18:15 - 18:30 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Qualifying Session 3 - Classes GT3, GTX & 992
 18:55 - 19:25 ▶ Alpine Elf Europe Cup Race 1 (25 min. + 1 lap)
 19:50 - 20:20 ▶ Renault Clio Cup Race 1 (25 min. + 1 lap)
 20:45 - 22:15 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Night Practice

SATURDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2024

08:30 - 08:50 Renault Clio Cup Qualifying 2
 09:20 - 09:50 ▶ Alpine Elf Europe Cup Race 2 (25 min. + 1 lap)
 10:20 - 10:50 ▶ Renault Clio Cup Race 2 (25 min. + 1 lap)
 12:00 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Start Race - **Hankook 24H BARCELONA** - Trofeo Fermí Véllez

SUNDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2024

12:00 ▶ 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Finish Race - **Hankook 24H BARCELONA** - Trofeo Fermí Véllez
 19:00 24H SERIES powered by Hankook Pit box empty & paddock must be clear



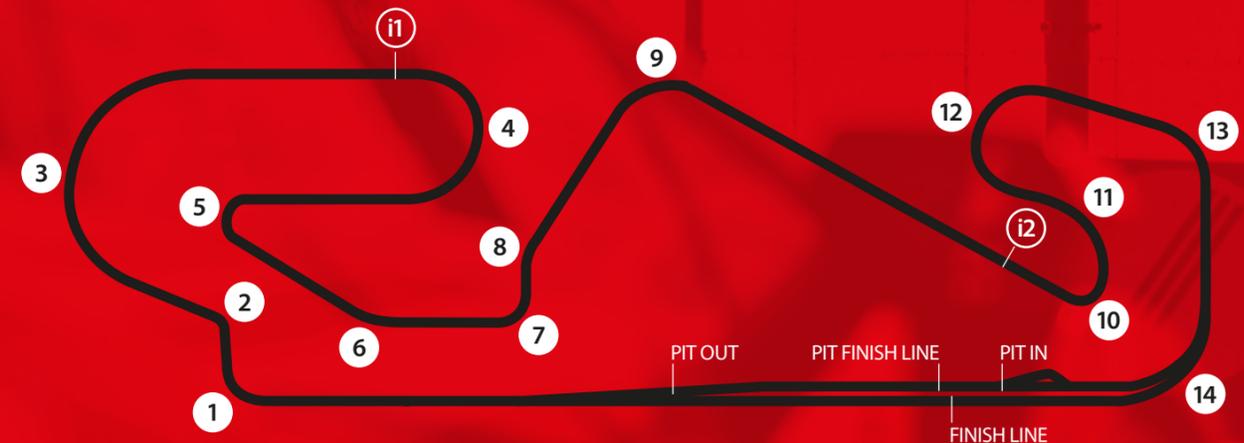
Circuit de Barcelona CATALUNYA

TRACK MAP

Located in Montmeló, the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya was inaugurated on 10 September 1991. With the staging of the Formula 1 Grand Prix, the MotoGP Grand Prix and other important motor sport competitions in its sports calendar, Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya showcases its own name and that of Montmeló, Barcelona and Catalonia at a worldwide level.

Grand Prix Circuit

Centerline 4.657m Start Line Offset 142,7m Lap by Pits 4.636m
 Pit In - Pit Out 387,2m Pit in - Pit FL 40,2m Pit FL - Pit Out 347,2m
 i1 at 1.643m i2 at 3.411m Pit in at 4.596m



Circuits de Catalunya S.L.
 Mas "La Moreneta", PD 27 08160, Montmeló, Barcelona
 P. +34 93 57 19700



LOS PRIMEROS AÑOS

On 20-21 June 1998, the first edition of a brand-new amateur endurance motor race was held at the Circuit de Catalunya. The first of what turned out to be a memorable 11-year run...

Images: Circuito de Barcelona-Catalunya / Todo Sport / RC Competition

Not quite the internationally-recognized behemoth it would later become, the first-ever 24 Horas de Barcelona in 1998 was a predominantly touring car affair, one inspired by Montmeló's (admittedly two-wheeled) endurance racing history. First held in 1955, the 24 Horas Motociclistas de Montjuïc ran until 1986, and even achieved World Endurance Championship status, before being revived in 1995.

Organized by both the Circuit de Catalunya (as it was then-named) and the Real Automóvil Club de Cataluña (RACC), the new '24 Hores de Barcelona d'Automobilisme' similarly looked to champion the region's motoring heritage with the help of local 'gentlemen' drivers and journalists. The RACC itself even entered a car for then-president Sebastia Salvado, ex-Formula 3 competitor Jaime Piera and future Baja 1000 runner Jaime Martinez to "recover the spirit of the endurance automobile races."

In-keeping with this "spirit," Spanish young guns and established motorsport names alike were also invited to participate. Juan Fernández García for example, 49 years after his first motorsport event aboard a Montesa B46, made his final race start at Barcelona. The two-time European Hillclimb Champion, who, rather fittingly, also won the 12 Hours of Barcelona in 1969, shared an Audi A3 TDI with Spanish Touring Car up-and-comer Joan Vinyes, future SEAT works driver Jordi Gené, and the latter's youngest brother Marc. Just under one year later, the younger Gené was making his Formula 1 debut with Minardi.

Eventual inaugural winner Auto Bétulo – entered as 'Gamace Competición' – dominated much of the early going, and

was already four laps ahead of the race's other 24 entries after the opening eight hours. Bar a prolonged brake change shortly before midnight, the #25 BMW M3 was untroubled, and Francesc Gutiérrez, Pau Romero, Santiago Puig and Javier Buch went on to complete 918 laps of the 3.069km National circuit. In a dazzling performance, the quartet collected the chequered flag 17 laps clear of the Ibiza TDI of local SEAT dealer, 'Catalunya Motor.'

In a run that would go on to define the event, and one marred only by a broken wheel hub that cost the team 45 minutes - and, ultimately, the runners-up spot - Carles García Otín's Citroen Saxo rounded out the podium after a fast, yet fuel-conscious race.

Deliberately 'grassroots' in nation, the event had proven surprisingly popular, and word in the paddock soon spread that a second edition of the 24 Hores de Barcelona d'Automobilisme was already being readied by the RACC and the circuit for 1999. Albeit with the June date pushed back into the autumn to counter Catalunya's stifling summer temperatures.



The bolstered grid – now up to 35 – was led away on 23 September 1999 by one of three Escuderia GM-R Hondas entered for the event, although the polesitter dropped back shortly afterwards with a technical gremlin, handing the early lead to the 'Club Motor Circuito Albacete' Renault Mégane.

Not that this mattered much. By half-distance, Escuderia GM-R was back in the lead, and, despite its lead Civic – driven by Pasqual Germán, Ramon Naqui, Albert Roquet and Lluís Umbert – receiving a four-lap penalty for overtaking under yellow flags AND speeding in the pitlane, still finished one lap clear of '98 winners Gutiérrez, Buch and Puig (now joined by Joan Piferrer) in the sister Integra. Once again, a high-miling Citroen Saxo (Sportkart) rounded out the podium.

23 laps further back in 6th, another soon-to-be Minardi F1 graduate was making history in his 24-hour race debut at just 18 years old. He would have to wait six years for the first (of two) Formula 1 World

“He would have to wait 19 years for his first 24-hour win, but Fernando Alonso’s performance aboard a Hyundai Accent GT in 1999 had been an impressive one.

Championships, and 19 years for his first 24-hour win at Le Mans, but Fernando Alonso’s performance aboard a Hyundai Accent GT alongside Salvi Delmuns, local journalist Pedro Fermín Flores and future Daytona 24 Hours winner Antonio García had been an impressive one.

Hyundai Spain’s ‘media’ car, by the way, soon became an event tradition, and across the early 2000s, at least one ‘Hyundai Cup’ – a track-going version of the Korean brand’s Accent saloon car – was reserved for the Motorpress Ibérica Group. In perhaps the most bizarre line-up, Automóvil magazine director Fernando Gómez-Blanco, José Ignacio Eguirra (chief editor), Juan Collín (technical editor) and José María Quesada (technical editor of Autopista) entered the 2001 race alongside new road tester Juan Carlos Delgado, who, as ‘El Pera,’ had at one stage been the notorious car thief in Madrid!

‘El Pera’ ended up finishing 43rd in ‘01, ironically, four spots behind a Renault Clio entered by the Guardia Civil, and driven by its then-director general Santiago López Valdivielso.

Such was the interest in Montmelo’s rejuvenated ‘endurance racingspirit,’ the ‘99 paddock featured the I Maxi Tuning Show for the first time, and which reportedly helped draw in 50,000 spectators over the weekend. Interest was so high that, for the third edition in 2000, and to cater to the 58 registered entries, the event was moved the circuit’s 4.730km Grand Prix layout. It all but set in stone ‘98 winner Gamace Competición’s 918-lap distance record.



If victories for both Gamace Competición and Escuderia GM-R seemed to come easily, Superwagen’s win in 2000 was anything but. Few could beat the Philips-sponsored, turbodiesel-powered Volkswagen Golf’s fuel consumption, but still fewer could match the raw pace of Team Codony as the Renault Clio RS scampered into an early lead. Historic racer Jordi Serra running out of fuel and a two-lap penalty for overtaking under yellows didn’t help much either.

In a nail-biting final two hours however, the Renault was felled with both hub and gearbox issues, allowing the VW, thanks to inspired pace by Jordi Gené, to fight back from three laps down and snatch the win



from Codony Sport. It would be the first of two back-to-back wins for the future World Touring Car race winner, Joaquín Folch-Rusiñol and Carles Vilarrubí, the trio also taking the garlands with GT2 Le Mans class winner Carlos Palau in 2001.

Further back in the diesel category, ‘98 winner Gutiérrez was building his 24 Horas de Barcelona legacy with a class win aboard a SEAT Ibiza TDI.

By 2001, Montmelo’s endurance ‘love letter’ was starting to get serious, as 76 cars – the maximum allowed by the sporting regulations – had been registered more than six months before the green flag was due to drop. Among them were two Renault Clios representing Ibiza for the first time, and two teams – Caixa Renting Superwagen and Team Tao – with an all-female driver, mechanic and engineer line-up. For the first time also, the event received official sponsorship on top of its faithful local media coverage, as pressure washer manufacturer Kärcher stepped up to the plate for both the ‘01 and ‘02 editions.

Moreover, as would be the case in 2011 (page 16), the 24 Horas de Barcelona coincided with a milestone for the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya.

Shortly before qualifying, a plaque, celebrating the venue’s 10th anniversary, was affixed to the main scoreboard. It seemed fitting that the official RACC entry, despite losing 15 minutes to an exhaust manifold problem, emerged victorious at the event it had helped create.

Three for four in 2001, a Citroen

finished 3rd. Though nobody knew it at the time, Escuderia Terrassa’s ‘ZX’ would be the last non-Renault or SEAT to finish on the overall podium until 10 years later.

Having come so close in 2000, and after their ‘01 efforts ended early in the retaining wall, Team Codony Sport (effectively Renault Catalunya’s ‘works’ team) eventually broke its Barcelona duck in 2002. In a gutsy performance, the brake-less Clio Sport charged through the night to take the lead during the 14th hour, and was never led thereafter.

‘00 and ‘01 winners Gené, Folch and Palau retired early with wheel hub failure on their Gabord Competición BMW 320, and thus the final rostrum spots went to Team Elías (three lap back) and Jordi Puig Herrera’s new SEAT León Cupra Rs.

Further back in the pack, Joan ‘Nani’ Roma was making a quiet 24-hour racing circuit debut with ‘Vanguardia’ journalists Pere Prat and Quico Pla. Gearbox gremlins put paid to the two-time Dakar winner’s hopes of victory, but the Folgueroles native did at least get to cross the finishing line.



Enric and Jordi Codony, Anselm Llovera and soon-to-be two-time SEAT León Supercopa champion Òscar Nogues (remember that name...) took a controlled second win on the bounce in 2003. Team Codony Sport similarly wrote itself into the record books as the first team – of only three, to-date – to take a repeat win at the 24 Horas de Barcelona. Regional publications were also quick to praise the performance of not only event debutant, and two-time French Open tennis champion, Sergi Bruguera, but also 2nd placed Kärcher Siegu Racing. In-keeping with the event’s still ‘amateur’ priority, ‘Challenge Garbí’ drivers – Lluís Cardús, Carles Cosin and Rosend Rabat – made the podium on their debut. Future 24H BARCELONA class winner Laia Sanz would also take her fourth consecutive world title that same weekend, one day after winning her second European title.

Though Baporo Motorsport’s SEAT León Cupra R had been easily the fastest car on-track, the Renault’s Clio RS 2.0 was starting to take a vice-like grip on the event: in both 2003 and 2004, seven finishers in the top 10 were Renaults. In a bid to keep the competition tight, regulations limiting the new León Cupra R to a 40-litre fuel tank – effectively dooming the faster and more powerful 300hp SEATs to pit stops every 35-40 minutes, compared with 90 for the 190hp Renaults – would gradually be lifted. The effects weren’t immediately apparent. Òscar Nogues took a third consecutive win in ‘04 with his brother Jordi and Sergi Ruiz for Pujolar Racing, while Motor Competición (Gutiérrez



back on the podium) and 'Cracs' rounded out an all-Renault Clio RS 2.0 16V podium. Change, however, was just around the corner.

Ironically, the battle for the win in 2005 would be among the most intense in event history, as Nostrum eventually took the chequered flag ahead of Frytop by a staggeringly slim 28.095 seconds!

A battle that not only shattered the 'GP' era distance record – 643 laps, up from 625 – but might also have ended very differently had Frytop not picked up a two-lap penalty for speeding in the pitlane.

It was also handily timed, as the close finish helped the RACC replace the outgoing Formula Q with Quadis as the race's main sponsor for '06, '07 and '08.

The win would prove particularly emotional for former Minardi F1 driver (them again...), and future HRT F1 team principal, Luis Pérez Sala. Sharing the top step with future BMW works driver Marcel Costa, and father-son duo Manel Cerqueda Snr. and Jr. – the only Andorran drivers to take overall victory

“The win in 2005 would prove particularly emotional for future HRT F1 team principal, Luis Pérez Sala, who paid tribute to his “dear friend” Fermín Velez post-race.

between '98 and '09 – Sala paid tribute to his “dear friend” Fermín Velez post-race. The two-time Sebring 12 Hours winner, two-time Group C2 World Sports Car champion, and all-round Barcelona motor racing legend had sadly lost a brave battle with cancer two years earlier. That same year, the 24 Horas de Barcelona was re-christened the ‘Trofeo Fermí Velez’ in his honour.

Despite being fastest in practice and the event polesitter, SR2 Racing, which reunited '04 winners Oscar and Jordi Nogues, and Sergi Ruiz, finished 3rd after a beached moment in the gravel cost them dearly. It cemented an utterly dominant performance by SEAT: Renault's sole hopes of victory were gone in the early going, and the Automóvil 'media' Hyundai was the sole remaining headline-grabber after an unexpected run to 10th overall.

Indeed, the winds of change were clear to see in 2006 as the 68-car grid lined-up: 36 of them were SEATs compared with 'just' 20 Renaults, seven Hyundais, and a loose change

assortment of BMWs, Peugeots and Nissans.

Once again, the podium was monopolized and the lap distance record broken (albeit by just one lap) as the Zener Racing Team finished three laps clear of '05 winner Nostrum and a staggering 19 ahead of Proauto Competición. SEAT's new generation Leon Supercopa – unshackled from its limited fuel tank – finished 1-2-3, the older Leon finished 4th though 11th, and an Ibiza Cupra took the diesel class win. An elated SEAT praised the “absolute victory.”

Efforts were made to shake up the SEAT procession in 2007, when the 24 Horas de Barcelona schedule was shifted from September to November, thus closing out the circuit's '07 program. Running in the cooler temperatures may have alleviated the strain on both machinery and driver, but the changeable climate also produced more spins, more gravel extractions, and more safety car periods, alleviating the SEAT's withering fuel consumption concerns yet further. So much of the event was run under caution period in fact that Gevicar completed 'only' 616 laps en-route to victory, the fifth lowest in the event's history.

Incredibly, Cristian Cano, who took the '07 win alongside Albert and Daniel Vilanova, was the only repeat visitor to the podium that year, the young Spaniard having finished 3rd in 2006. Even Renault, winner lest we forget in '02, '03 and '04, could do no better than 7th.



If SEAT's unprecedented monopoly was recorded in increasingly smaller column inches, Francesc Gutiérrez – a frustrated 5th in '06 after a time penalty dropped his Motor Competición SEAT out of 3rd in the closing stages – did at least give the 24 Horas de Barcelona a much-needed fairytale ending in 2008 when the Barcelona native took his second overall win at the event, 10 years after his first in 1998. That he would finish on the overall podium again in '09, as he had done in '99, seemed equally as fitting.

Back on the top step in '08, the Zener Racing Team was similarly thrilled, as was Barcelona-based PCR Sport, the mechanical and engineering support behind not only Zener's '06 and '08 wins, but also Gevicar's '07 victory. It had been a strange week for then-18-year-old Dani Clos as well: just days earlier, the future GP2 race winner had made his Formula 1 testing debut with Williams.

Sadly, while the 24 Horas de Barcelona was back to its traditional September timeslot in 2009, catastrophic outside forces left the event with its back to the wall.

Buoyed by two decades of economic

growth, but hit hard by both the global economic crisis and a housing bubble that had unceremoniously been burst, Spain officially entered recession in 2009, and would be forced to apply for a €100 billion bailout shortly after. Far from ideal circumstances to organize an ‘amateur’ endurance motor race.

An environmentally friendly Nissan Micra raised several sceptical eyebrows on the entry list – this after all marked the first diesel racer for circuit competition in the Japanese marque's history – but economic worries, plus SEAT's continued dominance

“El Pera,’ Madrid’s most notorious car thief, finished four spots behind the Guardia Civil and its then-director general in 2001.

at the event, had depleted customer team interest significantly, with many Renault loyalists either unable or unwilling to fork over more money for the new Supercopa juggernaut. Even the ‘media’ Hyundai Cup stopped turning up.

Not even a new sponsorship deal from Dunlop for 2008 could help plug the gap, and on 5 September, just 28 cars lined up on the grid.

One of which, bearing a distinctive ‘24hDubai.com’ livery, went on to take the C6 class win...

Limited running under caution and a flawless performance by SunRed Seven (the long-time SEAT customer was the only team to dip below the two-minute mark in qualifying) saw the distance record extended to 649 laps, and Óscar Nogues notch up a record-breaking fourth win at the event alongside first-time winners Borja Veiga, Manuel Saez-Merino, and Ferran Monje. Four laps further back, PCR Sport led home the Zener Racing Team (a further eight laps back) for another all-SEAT podium.

Nogues' accomplishment aside, the shine and “spirit” very much seemed to be off the apple, and early the following year, the RACC and circuit management, unable to bolster enough entries and having now lost Dunlop as well, confirmed the event's cancellation for 2010.

After an 11-year run, the 24 Horas de Barcelona de Automovilismo looked to have been permanently shelved, and another chapter in Montmeló's faltering endurance racing history appeared to be over.

But then came 2011... ■





ENTER CREVENTIC

On 23-24-25 September 2011, the 24H BARCELONA, re-animated after an enforced one-year break, is organized for the very first time by CREVENTIC. Reigning 24H DUBAI victor Schubert Motorsport would make history as the first 'GT' winner of the event, while Laia Sanz, Dakar Rally winner Marc Coma, and a young Spaniard named Jorge Lorenzo would also impress at their home event...

Images: Eric Teeken

When it was announced in February 2011 that 'las 24 Horas de Barcelona de Automovilismo' would be revived that September, it was seen as a master stroke for both its new promoter, CREVENTIC, and the event's long-time guardian, the RACC.

For CREVENTIC, the opportunity to revive an endurance race with an established heritage, in a region with an already rich motorsport history, AND on a weekend in which the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya was celebrating its 20th anniversary, was too good to pass up. Similarly, for both the RACC and circuit alike, the chance to welcome a new partner, one with international promotional experience and the connections to match, and to reactivate its sleeping giant was equally as tempting. In short, a win-win for both parties.

"It was a pleasure for us to provide support, and the cooperation with the [Royal Catalan Automobile Club] was

also very pleasant," CREVENTIC's Gerrie Willems said at the time. "With well-known drivers from the WTCC, the DTM, Le Mans winners and motorcycle racing heroes in the field, the status of the event has certainly been raised to a higher level, and of course we have not forgotten the various amateur teams. Hopefully we have been able to add something of the atmosphere of our other events – the 24H DUBAI and the 12H HUNGARY – to this race.

"Enjoying motorsport together, that is our philosophy, and that was certainly the case again at this race!"

While many were concerned that the rebranded '24H BARCELONA's' position on the schedule, smack between the 24 Hours of Zolder on 4 September and Britcar's Silverstone 24 Hours on 1 October, would detract potential GT3 teams (and admittedly, the GT3 field at Barcelona was smaller than

both the circuit and promoter had hoped), interest was nevertheless piqued. By August in fact, 66 entries representing 13 different manufacturers and nationalities – up from the 31 almost exclusive SEAT and Renault entries in 2009 – had been registered, with 59 ultimately making it to the grid.

That the two largest categories on the grid were the SEAT León Supercopa-dominated 'A3T' (17) and the Renault Clio Cup-heavy 'A2' (15) flew in the face of dissenting voices that claimed a new focus on international teams and GT entries had blighted Montmeló's endurance racing tradition.

Alongside previous event winners Codony Sport, SunRed, and PCR Sport, notable entries included the Lotus On Track Racing Drivers Club (running an Elise S1 Sport 160), French independent GC Automobile Factory (known more fondly today as 'Vortex V8'), and Australia's Racer Industries. Sadly, the



Antipodean squad's Spanish jaunt ended up, as an overheated engine eliminated the Holden Astra VX-R shortly before half-distance.

Local boys Monlau Competición, a future overall podium finisher and class winner at the 24H BARCELONA, brought three entries to its home event. One of which, interestingly, featured Marc Coma. The then then three-time (now five-time) Dakar Rally winner was entered alongside Miguel Labaraías, Aitor Gonzalez and Carlos Victor Yague, the three winners of the 'Objectiu 24 Hores' competition championed by TV3's 'Motor a Fons' television program and the Circuito Escuela Fast Parcotor. A somewhat raw version of what Nissan would debut more successfully as 'GT Academy'.

Far from the only high-profile name, Coma was joined on the grid by future Dakar Rally alumnus – and Women's Trial World Championship legend – Laia Sanz, who raced alongside two-time event winners Enric and Jordi Codony ('01 and '02) and Francesc Gutierrez ('98 and '08) at Codony Sport.

Jorge Lorenzo, then reigning (and future three-time) MotoGP World Champion, was the high-profile addition to PCR Sport's line-up – one year on from the Yamaha factory rider's four-wheel endurance debut at the 500km of Alcañiz – alongside Alvaro Fontes, Jose Manuel de los Milagros

Viñegla, and Ricky Cardús. The latter was only halfway through his second season in Moto2 at the time.

Even two outright Le Mans winners – the late Jean-Pierre Jaussaud ('78 and '80), and Jan Lammers ('88) – lined up with Auto Sport GP and BvV Racing respectively. While Jaussaud's Renault Clio III RS Cup came home 7th in A2, electrical gremlins eliminated Lammers' BMW 120d after only a few hours. Fingers crossed the Dutchman can avenge this result on his 2024 return with Team Africa Le Mans (page 40).

At the front meanwhile, Team Schubert, winner of the 24H DUBAI that January and overall runner-up at that year's Spa 24 Hours, was the team to beat.

Quite literally, as it turns out.

The German team secured pole position by what appeared to be a scant 0.39s on the Saturday (Lammers' BvV Racing weekend got off to a poor start with a heavy accident), though many in the paddock believed the #2 BMW Z4 GT3 was holding two, if not three, seconds in reserve over its 1m 52.082s pole time.

Indeed, behind Schubert and fellow front row starter Equipe Vershuur (#10), Bovi Motorsport's bespoke Brokernet Silver Sting (#7) and the Besaplast Racing Team's Porsche 997 GT3 Cup – the SP2 and 997 class polesitters, respectively – lined up 3rd and 4th overall, but were still two seconds slower than the pole-sitting BMW.

A heavy downpour on race day morning, as well as constant rain during the opening two hours, suggested the revived 24H BARCELONA might still produce a shock result.

Certainly Equipe Vershuur's Duncan Huisman gave it his best shot: on the tail of Schubert Motorsport's Edward Sandström into turn one, the Dutchman managed to muscle his way past the BMW to briefly take the lead on the first lap.

Huisman's advantage would not last long, however: by the end of lap one, Sandström was already back in-front, and after just 76 laps, the #10 Renault Mégane Trophy was out of the race altogether with a blown engine.

Thereafter, Schubert's pace seemed unassailable. By half-distance, the 24H DUBAI winner had already banked a new lap record – Michael Outzen's 1m 51.876s – and was seven laps clear of the field. A cushion that increased to 21 laps at the chequered flag after a flawless performance by Sandström, Outzen, Peter Posavac, Lars Stugemo, and the Schubert team.

"It's fantastic that we can add another victory to our list of achievements," Schubert team manager Stefan Wendl explained, post-race. "Our car was running like clockwork. The only problem was that Michael Outzen drove through the gravel trap during the night when he had to avoid another car that was [stationary] on the track in front of him. After that, we had to remove some gravel



from the car, but that was it.

"With this victory, we now have three podium finishes from three races with this car." – Chassis 1101 also finished 2nd at Spa and 3rd in a warm-up VLN race at the Nordschleife. – "A big compliment also to the drivers, who were driving in this line-up for the first time."

"It was amazing, perfect," Sandström added. "All we had to do was drive. Schubert is a very good team and the car we drove worked without a hitch. It's so easy to win!"

Schubert's advantage was amplified, admittedly, by a magnificent race-long battle for 2nd that, seemingly, nobody wanted to win. After the #10 Renault's early exit, the gauntlet was first taken up by the Besaplast Racing Team (#5), only for the Porsche 997 to end up losing an hour in the pits with a drivetrain issue.

Up next was the Bovi Motorsport Brokernet (#7), but this too was forced into the pits when István Rácz went through the gravel at speed and had to pit for a new front splitter. Plummeting to 50th by the fiddly work, impressive speed during the night meant the Brokernet was back up to 3rd come Sunday morning, now behind the Schubert steamroller and, ironically, Equipe Vershuur's other Renault Megane Trophy (#9).

Brutally, ill fortune continued to follow the Dutch team, which was forced to pit with only two hours remaining on the Sunday to replace a shift cable in the gearbox. Bas Schothorst, Joeroen and Pieter Schothorst, World Touring Car Championship favourite Tom Coronel, and Raymond Coronel nevertheless managed to fight back on to the final rostrum spot behind Bovi Motorsport's Kaufmann, Rácz, Kalmán Bodis – the mad scientist behind the Porsche flat-six-powered, race-derived sports car – and Jaap Van Lagen.

"This time we had the luck we needed at the end," Kaufmann explained, post-race. "The repairs threw us back to 3rd place, but our competitor for 2nd also had problems, so we were able to move up to P2 again.

"We knew beforehand that we could hardly get more than 2nd place against the BMW Z4 GT3, so our team prepared the Silversting optimally for the 24-hour distance and did a

great job during the race. We are more than satisfied with the result!"

4th overall and '997' class victory went to the recovering Besaplast Racing after a similarly impressive fightback. Just reward for '86 DTM champion Roland Asch, his son Sebastian, Franjo Kovác, Martin Tschornia, and Stephanie Halm.

Fittingly, the battle for A3T class victory in Barcelona, and 5th overall, was decided by just under two minutes, as PCR Sport (#39) came out ahead of its 'sister,' Team Clairet Sport SEAT León Supercopa Mk.2 (#40), the former having outsprinted the latter in the closing stages despite making more pit stops. Just like that, and despite some pre-race jitters, MotoGP champion Lorenzo was an endurance race winner!

Early class leader – and reigning event winner – Move Racing by SunRed (#1) lost more than hour in the pits after an on-track collision during the first two hours. But the ferocious pace of two-time winner Jordi Gené (reminiscent of his '00 run), '09 winner Ferran Monje, Fernando Monje and Borja Veiga saw the SunRed SEAT storm back to 3rd in-class and 9th overall ahead of Monlau's #37 SEAT. riven, incidentally, by FIFTEEN year-old Jordi Oriola!

Across in the 'A2' class, fellow event winner Cordony Sport only just escaped a late-race heart attack when Laia Sanz inadvertently collided with D1 class leader Recy Racing during the final hour. The Renault's front left suspension was toast, but Cordony's cushion over Formula GT (#50) meant the French team could still celebrate A2 class victory from the garage.

"It was a very intense experience," Laia Sanz explained, post-race. "I had a great time at times, and a bad time at others! On [Saturday morning], the team gave me the car while we were 1st in A2 and 16th overall, so I had the pressure of not making any mistakes. I also lost my radio and couldn't communicate with the team, but everything went well and I returned the car without losing any positions.

"[During the night], my teammates did very well and climbed up to 11th place. We had everything in our favour, so I went out very calmly so as not to make any mistakes.

"The objective was to reach the finish line, but suddenly a car spun and came straight towards me. I tried to avoid it but I didn't have time, and it hit me. When I saw the damage and that I couldn't continue, I had a very bad time because I thought we were out of the race. I felt down, above all for the team, for all the work and effort that everyone had put in.

"But when I got to the pits, they told me not to worry, that we had won. That was a huge relief... It was a fantastic experience!"

Recy Racing unfortunately was less lucky, and the Dutch team, with its BMW 120d also parked, could do nothing to stop Marcos Racing International (#63) coming through to sneak the diesel D1 win at the line. Another class win in the books for Jim Briody as he approached 24-hour number 90, of an eventual 100.

While Schubert was left celebrating a second 24-hour win for its Z4 GT3 at Barcelona, CREVENTIC and the RACC was similarly praising a job well done. In a crucial nod to the event's multi-class format, five different manufacturers finished in the top 10 in 2011 - compared with just ONE in the top 11 in 2009 - as did five different class winners. Interest, both local and international, was up, and talk in the paddock had already turned to the prospect of a second edition in 2012.

Okay, the GT3 competition had not been quite as tight as anticipated: the only other 'A6' competitor, Backdraft Motorsport's Lamborghini Gallardo LP500, finished 145 laps further back in 41st. Several vocal members of the local media had not been won over either by the regional '24 Hores de Barcelona' being reinvented so radically. Keen to ride the momentum though, a second edition was quickly greenlit for 2012. One that would amass an even larger grid, a more compelling fight at the sharp end, and, crucially for CREVENTIC, momentum to build an extended, and soon-to-be FIA-accredited endurance racing calendar.

Back from the dead, life had been injected not just into the '24 Hores de Barcelona,' but the 24H SERIES as well.

Win-win. ■





2023

- GT** #76 IMSA LS GROUP PERFORMANCE
Porsche 911 GT3 R (992)
Julien Andlauer
Gregory Guilvert
Simon Tirman
Laurent Hurgon

- TCE** #121 Wolf-Power Racing
Audi RS3 LMS TCR
Jasmin Preisig
Ivars Vallers
Roberto Ferri
Miklas Born

- #21 HAAS RT
Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II
Miika Panu
Mathieu Detry
Max Hofer
Gavin Pickering
Kris Cools

- #102 Holmgaard Motorsport
Cupra Leon Competición TCR
Jonas Holmgaard
Magnus Holmgaard
Roy Edland
Tom Cloet
Michael Sallenbach

- #91 Herberth Motorsport
Porsche 911 GT3 R (991 II)
Ralf Bohn
Daniel Allemann
Alfred Renauer
Robert Renauer

- #125 Bas Koeten Racing
Cupra TCR DSG
Bert Mets
Jos Stevens
Bob Stevens
Christiaan Frankenhout

1

2

3

2022

- GT** #22 WTM Racing
Ferrari 488 GT3
Georg Weiss
Leonard Weiss
Nicolas Varrone
Daniel Keilwitz
Indy Dontje

- TCE** #158 BBR
Cupra Leon Competición TCR
Dechathorn Phuakkarawut
Kantadhee Kusiri
Kantasak Kusiri
Grant Supaphongs
Nattanid Leewattanavalagul

- #18 Phoenix Racing
Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II
Michael Doppelmayr
Pierre Kaffer
Elia Erhart
Sven Herberger

- #159 BBR
Cupra TCR DSG
Chariya Nuya
Sandy Stuvik
Munkong Sathienthirakul
Tanart Sathienthirakul
Pasarit Promsombat

- #85 CP Racing
Mercedes-AMG GT3
Charles Putman
Charles Espenlaub
Joe Foster
Shane Lewis

- #188 AC Motorsport
Audi RS3 LMS DSG
Stephane Perrin
Mathieu Detry
Vincent Radermecker
Charles Dawson

2021

- GT** #91 Herberth Motorsport
Porsche 911 GT3 R (991 I I)
Daniel Allemann
Ralf Bohn
Alfred Renauer
Robert Renauer

- TCE** #112 Autorama Motorsport by Wolf-Power Racing
Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR DSG
Arunas Geciauskas
Sigitas Ambrazevicius
Vytenis Gulbinas
Paul Sieljes

- #92 Herberth Motorsport
Porsche 911 GT3 R (991 I I)
Jürgen Häring
Bobby Gonzales
Wolfgang Triller
Marco Seefried
Tim Müller

- #1 Autorama Motorsport by Wolf-Power Racing
Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR DSG
Emil Heyerdahl
Jasmin Preisig
Constantin Kletzer
Roberto Ferri

- #18 Rutronik Racing by TECE
Audi R8 LMS GT3
Michael Doppelmayr
Pierre Kaffer
Elia Erhart
Sven Herberger

- #123 RAIL EQUIP BY TOTCAR SPORT
Cupra TCR DSG
Jorge Belloc Diaz
Jorge Belloc Ruiz
Álvaro Rodríguez Sastre

2019

- GT** #77 Barwell Motorsport
Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo
Adrian Amstutz
Leonid Machitski
Patrick Kujala
Dennis Lind

- TCE** #131 TOPCAR sport with Bas Koeten Racing
Cupra TCR DSG
Fabian Danz
Julien Apotheloz
Loris Prattes
Antti Buri

- #91 Herberth Motorsport
Porsche 911 GT3 R (991 I I)
Daniel Allemann
Ralf Bohn
Robert Renauer
Sven Müller

- #135 Baporo Motorsport
Cupra TCR DSG
Jose Manuel Sapag
Marcelo Rafael Ciarrocchi
Alexandr Artemyev
Alberto Vescovi

- #24 GPX Racing
Porsche 911 GT3 R (991 I I)
Jean-Pierre Valentini
Benjamin Goethe
Stuart Hall
Jordan Grogor
Nicky Pastorelli

- #112 Autorama Motorsport by Wolf-Power Racing
Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR DSG
Ralf Henggeler
Jérôme Ogay
Benjamin Leuchter
Yannick Mettler

2018

- GT** #911 Herberth Motorsport
Porsche 911 GT3R
Daniel Allemann
Ralf Bohn
Matt Campbell
Alfred Renauer

- TCE** #108 Cupra Racing - Monlau Competición
Cupra TCR DSG
Laia Sanz
Francesc Gutierrez Agüi
Jordi Gené

- #11 Scuderia Praha
Ferrari 488 GT3
Jiri Písařík
Josef Kral
Matteo Malucelli

- #133 Baporo Motorsport
Audi RS3 LMS DSG
Alberto Vescovi
Roberto Ferri
Jaime Font Casas
Alvaro Vela

- #17 IDEC SPORT RACING
Mercedes-AMG GT3
Patrice Lafargue
Marvin Klein
Dimitri Enjalbert

- #303 Red Camel-Jordans.nl
Seat LCR TCR V3 DSG
Ivo Breukers
Monny Krant
Henry Littig
Bert de Heus
Rik Breukers

2017

- #215 NM Racing Team
Ginetta G55 GT4
Nil Montserrat
Ivan Pareras
Marc de Fulgencio
Maxime Guillemat
Nikolay Dmitriev

- #100 Team Bleekemolen
SEAT Leon TCR V3 SEQ
Sebastiaan Bleekemolen
Melvin de Groot
Michael Bleekemolen
Rene Steenmetz

- #107 Monlau Competition
SEAT LCR TCR V3 DSG
Alba Cano Ramirez
Jurgen Smet
Jose Manuel Perez Aicart
Alvaro Bajo

1

2016

#991 Precote Herberth Motorsport
Porsche 991 GT3 R
 Alfred Renauer
 Robert Renauer
 Daniel Allemann
 Ralf Bohn

2

#52 Barwell Motorsport
Lamborghini Huracán GT3
 Mark Poole
 Richard Abra
 Jeroen Bleekemolen
 Joe Osborne

3

#53 Spirit of Race
Ferrari 458 Italia GT3
 Tom Dyer
 David Irajá Alexander
 Gino Forgione
 Alexandre Coigny

2015

#2 HP Racing
Mercedes SLS AMG GT3
 Bernd Schneider
 Hari Proczyk
 Reinhold Renger
 Sean Johnston
 Reinhard Kofler

#10 Hofor Racing 2
Mercedes SLS AMG GT3
 Michael Kroll
 Chantal Kroll
 Roland Eggimann
 Kenneth Heyer
 Christiaan Frankenhout

#30 RAM Racing
Mercedes SLS AMG GT3
 Tom Onslow-Cole
 Jeroen Bleekemolen
 Paul White
 Thomas Jaeger

2014

#4 Scuderia Praha
Ferrari 458 Italia GT3
 Jiri Písarík
 Jaromír Jarík
 Metto Malucelli
 Peter Kox

#32 Kessel Racing
Ferrari 458 Italia GT3
 Jonathan Sicart
 Nicola Cadei
 Giacomo Piccini
 Frederic Delpit
 Dmitri Enjalbert

#1 Hofor Racing
Mercedes SLS AMG GT3
 Michael Kroll
 Roland Eggimann
 Kenneth Heyer
 Christiaan Frankenhout
 Chantal Kroll

2013

#4 Hofor Racing
Mercedes SLS AMG GT3
 Michael Kroll
 Roland Eggimann
 Kenneth Heyer
 Christiaan Frankenhout

#10 Ruffier Racing
Porsche 997 Cup
 Patrice Lafargue
 Paul Lafargue
 Franck Racinet
 Gabriel Abergel

#63 MDM Motorsport
BMW 320D
 Rob de Laat
 Theo de Prenter
 Tristan Boorsma
 Mark Bus

2012

#3 Lapidus Racing
McLaren MP4-12 GT3
 Klaas Hummel
 Adam Christodoulou
 Phil Quaife
 Tim Mullen

#4 Russian Bears Motorsport 1
Ferrari 458 Italia GT3
 Miguel Toril
 Dmitry Samorukov
 Boris Rotenberg
 Maurizio Mediani
 Sergey Zlobin

#7 ARC Bratislava
Porsche 997 Cup
 Miro Komopka
 Ivo Breukers
 Mato Konopka
 Wolf Nathan
 Jaap van Lagen

2011

#2 Schubert Motorsport
BMW Z4 GT3
 Edward Sandström
 Michael Outzen
 Peter Posavac
 Lars Stugemo

#7 Bovi Motorsport
Brokernet Silversting
 Kalman Bodis
 Istvan Racz
 Wolfgang Kaufmann
 Jaap van Lagen

#9 Equipe Verschuur 1
Renault Mégane Trophy
 Jeroen Schothorst
 Bas Schothorst
 Raymand Coronel
 Tom Coronel
 Pieter Schothorst

2009

#7 Sunred Seven
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Borja Veiga
 Manuel Saez-Merino
 Ferran Monje
 Óscar Nogués

#6 PCR Sport
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Antoni Forné
 Marcos de Diego
 Manel Lao
 Marc Aldavert

#1 Zener Racing Team
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Francesc Gutiérrez
 Manel Cerqueda Díez
 Antonio Puig
 Alfredo Palencia

2008

#3 Zener Racing Team
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Eduardo Balcázar
 Francesc Gutiérrez
 Alfredo Palencia
 Antonio Puig

Top Speed
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Ferran Monje
 Dani Clos
 José Manuel Pérez-Aicart
 Leonardo Soldevila
 Luis Villamil

#7 Sunred - Seven
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Óscar Nogués
 Manuel Saez-Merino
 Borja Veiga

2007

#14 Gevicar
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Albert Vilanova
 Daniel Vilanova
 Cristian Cano
 Carles Vilarrubí

#15 Escudería Osona
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Santi Anglada
 Jaume Colldevall
 Rafael Colomer

#25 Top Speed
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Alejandro Laquidain
 José Manuel Pérez-Aicart
 Leonardo Soldevila
 Luis Villamil

1

2006

#5 Zener Racing Team
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Tom Puig
 Eduardo Balcázar
 Alfredo Palencia

2

#1 Nostrum
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Manel Cerqueda Donadeu
 Manel Cerqueda Díez
 Luis Pérez Sala
 Marcel Costa

3

#8 Proauto Competición 1
SEAT Leon Supercopa
 Antoni Forné
 Luis Carlos Maurel
 Cristian Cano

2005

#10 Nostrum
SEAT Leon Cupra R
 Manel Cerqueda Donadeu
 Luis Pérez Sala
 Manel Cerqueda Díez
 Marcel Costa

#9 Frytop
SEAT Leon Cupra R
 Mario Pons
 Eduard Pons
 Jacint Vives
 Aleix Costa

#1 SR2 Racing
SEAT Leon Cupra R
 Óscar Nogués
 Jordi Nogués
 Sergi Ruiz

2004

#36 Pujolar Racing
Renault Clio RS 2.0 16V
 Óscar Nogués
 Jordi Nogués
 Sergi Ruiz

#21 Motor Competición
Renault Clio RS 2.0 16V
 Javier Buch
 Francesc Gutiérrez
 Joan Piferrer
 Luis Villalba

#33 Cracs 1
Renault Clio RS 2.0 16V
 Aleix Bozal
 Joan Capsi
 Álvaro Rodríguez

2003

#1 Team Codony Sport
Renault Clio RS 2.0
 Enric Codony
 Jordi Codony
 Anselm Llovera
 Óscar Nogués

#14 Kärcher Siegu Racing
Renault Clio RS 2.0
 Lluís Cardús
 Carles Cosín
 Rossend Rabat

#7 Baporo Motorsport 2
SEAT Leon Cupra R
 Marcel Costa
 Aleix Costa
 Domingo Mesas
 José María Roger

2002

#19 Team Codony Sport
Renault Clio RS 2.0
 Enric Codony
 Jordi Codony
 Anselm Llovera
 Óscar Nogués

#8 Team Elías
SEAT Leon Cupra R
 Juan Cano
 Pedro Paiva
 Luis Miguel Reyes
 José Paz

#4 Jordi Puig Herrera
SEAT Leon Cupra R
 Francesc Bargalló
 Manel Dengrà
 Jordi Puig
 Carlos Sendrós

2001

#1 RACC
Volkswagen Golf
 Joaquín Folch-Rusiñol
 Jordi Gené
 Carlos Palau
 Carles Vilarrubí

#71 Karcher Procurve I
Renault Mégane
 Jordi Rojas
 Josep Rojas
 Lluís Sastre
 Pere Viñolas

#70 Escudería Terrassa
Citroën ZX
 Xavier Domènech
 Enric Gustems
 Xavier Jardí
 Josep Enric Valletbó

2000

#25 Superwagen - Philips 1
Volkswagen Golf
 Joaquín Folch-Rusiñol
 Jordi Gené
 Jordi Serra
 Vilarrubí

#8 Team Codony Sport
Renault Clio RS
 Enric Codony
 Jordi Codony
 Anselm Llovera
 Óscar Nogués

#27 Team Racing Egara
Renault Mégane
 Didac Aznar
 Javier Gorina
 Manel Lao
 Carlos Solano

1999

#4 Escudería GM-R
Honda Civic
 Pasqual Germán
 Ramon Naquet
 Albert Roquet
 Lluís Umbert

#3 Escudería GM-R
Honda Integra
 Javier Buch
 Francesc Gutiérrez
 Santiago Puig
 Joan Piferrer

#36 Sportkart
Citroën Saxo Cup
 Javier Arenas
 Juan Cano
 Carlos Gil
 Luis Carlos Maurel

1998

#25 Auto Bétulo
BMW M3
 Javier Buch
 Francesc Gutiérrez
 Santiago Puig
 Pau Romero

#26 Catalunya Motor
SEAT Ibiza TDI
 Oriol Cañellas
 Salvador Cañellas Sr.
 Salvador Cañellas Jr.

#9 Carles García Otín
Citroën Saxo 16
 Siro Calvo
 Carlos G. Otín
 Joaquín Reyes
 Luis Miguel Reyes

STEPPING UP

In 2023, then-reigning 991 Teams' champion E2P Racing made the jump to CREVENTIC's GT3 category. And heading into this year's Hankook 24H BARCELONA, the Madrid-based outfit is on course to reach the mountain top once again.

CREVENTIC caught up with E2P Racing teammates Antonio Sainero and Pablo Burguera to discuss an instructive maiden campaign with Porsche's 991.2 GT3 R, their first GT3 win at Spa-Francorchamps, and the accident that could have ended their season in Mugello.

Images - Petr Fryba / Nico Mombaerts



Pablo, you did three 24H SERIES races with E2P in 2022, and Antonio, you did one. Then you both committed to the Porsche 991.2 GT3 R with the team for 2023. How difficult was it switching from the Porsche Cup car to the GT3 R?

P: "Oh I thought it was easier!"

A: "It's a very different car, but, yeah, the GT3 has traction control, anti-lock brakes... there's just MORE on the GT3 than on the Cup car. So in terms of driving, it's a little bit easier. But in terms of getting to the last tenth, it's quite difficult."

Is GT3 racing more physically demanding?

A: "I think so, yes. Plus the GT3 is more money."

P: "Definitely more demanding on your bank account!"

2023 unfortunately started with transmission issues in Mugello and a collision at Spa, but you had a great run after that with four GT3-AM podiums...

P: "Yes, we had podiums at Spa, Monza..."

A: "Estoril."

P: "Two at Estoril. Unfortunately that was it, because in Barcelona, we had gearbox failure, as we had the previous year with the Cup car. Barcelona has always been very mean to us!"

Was there a change, behind the scenes, that helped kickstart that run of podiums?

A: "I just think we were more consistent. We're always thinking about avoiding problems and keeping our pace. Suddenly we were more focused on that than failing."

P: "We usually have, before each race, a team briefing. And we always insist that the only goal is to bring the car home and to try to avoid any trouble. Sometimes it's difficult - I had a little touch with another car this morning [during free practice for the 2024 Hankook 12H MISANO] - but it's a racetrack. Sometimes there are misunderstandings between drivers: sometimes we make mistakes, and other times, we're involved in other people's mistakes. That's just part of the game."

A: "But this is endurance. Bringing the car home is the most important thing."



On the way to 3rd in-class at the 2023 Hankook 12H Monza



On the podium again! The 2023 Hankook 12H ESTORIL

A tough weekend at Barcelona aside, what would you say was the main thing you learnt from the 2023 season?

A: "Oh, so many things! I don't know... maybe, how to control the whole race. The mental... how can I explain..."

P: "Aspect."

A: "Yes, mental aspect of endurance racing. I started with shorter sprint races where I always focused on pushing. Now, for endurance racing, it's completely different."

“Álvaro's a great driver, and he's been a very good addition to the team.

Was it difficult, changing that mindset from 'sprint racing' to 'endurance'...?

A: "I think it was the main difficulty."

P: "Not for me!" [Antonio laughs] "I only raced in the MINI for one year,* so basically all of my racing has been in endurance. And that's always been less stressful for me."

A: "No stress?!"

P: "Well... no, okay. I do find it stressful, but not as stressful as sprint racing. I did some sprint racing in Spain with a BMW M2 this year" - in Copa Racer - "but I like this [the 24H SERIES] much better. At the start of the race, you know you have 12 hours of this, or 24 hours of this, so you always have to leave something [in reserve]. I find that easier to work with."

**Prior to his 24H SERIES debut, Pablo raced a MINI in Spain's Copa Cooper, promoted by E2P Events.*

Álvaro Parente joined you as a PRO driver for 2024. How helpful has that been?

A: "SO much, man!"

P: "He's a great driver, and he's been a very good addition to the team. Not only because of his skills and his background."

"First of all, he's a very nice guy. He's a good team player, and he understands why he is here. And his feedback has been extremely helpful. Observing him on the [onboard] camera - how he drives, how he deals with traffic - it's been a different story. I mean, you can do this with YouTube, with onboard videos. But when you have all the cameras and the [telemetry] that we have in the garage, it's amazing! You learn so much from his experience."

A: "Also, in terms of setup and the evolution of the car, he's been very important. I've learned a lot from Álvaro."

How different is it racing with Álvaro rather than with team boss Javier?

A: "For me, it's quite similar. I don't notice any difference. They are both fast guys, so for me, it's similar."

P: "Oh for me, there's a big difference!"

A: "Oh really?"

P: "During a race, Javier is always on the radio telling me something!" [Both laugh] "He used to be more tired when he raced and would take a little rest. Now he's on the mic 24/7!"

Let's hope he doesn't read this before the race...!

P: "Javier is a nice guy, and he's an honest guy. He... he's like our 'spiritual leader,' let's put it that way."

A: "Spiritual leader?!"

P: "It's like when you go to the doctor, and you put yourself in the hands of someone who knows. You follow his advice because he knows what he's talking about. And so far, since I started working with Javier, all the advice he's given me has been right."

Antonio, you had an enormous accident at this year's European season opener in Mugello. Could you tell us what happened...

A: "Yeah, we had about half an hour left to the finish. It was raining, and there was a lot of standing water. Suddenly I could feel the car aquaplaning, on the straight, at, like, 260kph, and I couldn't control it. I crashed heavily."

"The worst thing was, not the crash or the physical issues, but the weeks after the crash because the team had to rebuild the car completely. At the time, they didn't know if we were able to go to Spa. For me, the crash, I think, was the worst moment of my career." ➔

The first race of 2024 in Mugello would not end well...



Mid-term report, with Álvaro Parente

Ahead of the 2024 season, E2P Racing announced that Bathurst 12 Hours winner Álvaro Parente would step aboard the #90 Porsche 991.2 GT3 as both the Spanish team's PRO driver and the driver coach for Pablo Burguera and Antonio Sainero. Four rounds and 48 collective racing hours into their first season together, Álvaro gives his thoughts on his teammates', and their first season together.

"With Antonio, from all the feedback I had about his performance last year, he's really stepped up his game and he is at his highest level yet. He's a talented driver, and he's still learning a lot."

"He's had some very challenging moments this year. The race start at Spa for example, he did great. The visibility was almost zero, but he made no mistakes. After his incident in Mugello, that was really well played by him. He did an incredible job."

"Also, Pablo did a mega stint in Spa in damp conditions. A really, really good stint there. I think that was probably his best stint so far. This is, I think, only Pablo's third season in motorsport. Driving these cars, in a competitive field, there's a lot to learn, and he's been doing great."

"Obviously [Pablo] is very ambitious and wants to be at a higher level than we're at now. Which is great, and we're working hard on his progression. When you see the work with your teammates paying off, it's very, very satisfying."

Asked about his debut season with E2P Racing, Álvaro was similarly enthusiastic about both the Spanish team's performance and the ambience behind the scenes.

"It's been great! There's a big family atmosphere at the team, we all get along well, and I've been enjoying myself. I'm always trying to help but I still want to keep learning, even though I've been doing this for many years! You always want to be better and I'm always very hungry to bring this car - our car - to the highest position possible." ■



At Spa this year, E2P Racing finally too its first GT3 win in the 24H SERIES

about 100 metres. I managed to get back [on-track], but by then, everyone was shouting and screaming on the radio! 'Easy!' 'Slow it down!' I finally made it to the chequered flag."

"On that day, the car was perfect: from the very first lap, to the last one. Also, it was a 12-hour race, and it was just Javier and I driving. I think I did something like seven hours!"

And Antonio, Spa was your first win in the 24H SERIES. You also took the chequered flag! After your Mugello accident, how much did that win mean?

A: "The start of the race was psychologically very challenging for me. The conditions were very similar, but when the team suggested me to take the start, I didn't hesitate. I don't regret the decision. Personally, I feel very proud of facing those circumstances."

"On the other hand, finishing the race in that way was the most important thing. Without a doubt, it was the most rewarding victory of my career."

You're back for the Hankook 24H BARCELONA again this year. Unfortunately, E2P Racing had mechanical problems in 2022 and 2023...

A: "Very similar ones, yeah, with the gearbox."

Is there something about this event, compared with other 24H SERIES races, that just doesn't suit E2P Racing?!

A: "That would explain a lot!" [Laughs]

P: "No. I think it's just luck. We have two gearboxes, we have two

engines, and we try to use them in a rational way. We never take them to the limit. But apparently, the gearbox we used last year had been rebuilt, or revamped, for Barcelona by someone else. And it was not repaired well. So we had the same issue. Now we do all our gearboxes in-house. So at least we have no-one to blame!"

A: "No pressure then!"

Speaking of which, does racing 'at home' add more pressure?

A: "I don't think so. This is the best weekend for us because we have more people, more friends and our families coming to watch. It's a special race for us. It doesn't bring us more pressure."

P: "And remember, it's not 'home,' because we're from Madrid!" [Both laugh]

You're at the top of the GT3-PRO/AM standings heading into Barcelona. After taking your first win together, how much would it mean to secure a GT3 title for E2P Racing as well?

P: "It would be fantastic to win the GT3 PRO/AM category with E2P. It's been a tough year with a major accident, an engine failure, and a silly race incident that ruined our chances in Misano."

"But the team's attitude has always been exemplary and they deserve this title."

A: "Winning the championship would be the best reward for all the work we've put in over these past two years."

"Personally, this year has had some great moments, but also some very challenging ones, so I think all the guys at E2P deserve it. It would be wonderful to end the season by lifting the trophy." ■

Did you have any doubts about competing again?

A: "No, not really."

P: "He even did the start at Spa. And those onboard were crazy! Antonio didn't want to do it, but he did it."

A: "I did force myself, yes!"

At Spa, you finished 5th overall and took your first GT3 class win....

A: "That was a great day!"

P: "Winning in Spa is always nice..."

A: "Yes."

P: "...but it was a very tough race. We had rain, snow, hail..."

A: "Sun. Sand!"

P: "...and cold. REALLY cold. It was tough. After every Code 60, you had to warm up the tyres. So it was a very nice race to win."

How much confidence did that win give you both for the rest of the season?

P: "Winning is always very rewarding, because it boosts your spirit and it pushes you. And the best thing about winning at Spa? It was

Endurance racing is a team effort



“For me, the crash, I think, was the worst moment of my career.”

a very nice prize for the mechanics. They made such an effort to get the car ready in three weeks."

A: "There was no time to put on a livery, or anything. It was amazing."

P: "We were lucky too because Porsche was extremely understanding. They had one chassis available, and they sent it within four days of the crash. They were awesome!"

Does something like that help you appreciate E2P's mechanics and engineers that much more...?

P: "These races are won by the mechanics, really. These guys spend so much time, after we've been on-track, fixing things or trying to [improve] something. Keeping a car alive for 12 hours, or 24 hours, without any issues requires a lot of work from them. We then have to do what we are able to do, and make sure we don't do anything stupid. So there's still a lot of responsibility."

A: "But so much of these results are down to the team. The guys worked very hard to make it possible for us to race [at Spa]. They really deserved that win."

Pablo, as you mentioned, you took a GTX-class win at Hockenheim in 2022. How did the victory at Spa compare?

P: "Ah, Hockenheim was a great weekend! The weather was beautiful, perfect temperature. We didn't have a single issue during the weekend. And, it was funny, because I almost killed them all with a heart attack!"

"We were a part of the GTX class because there were no older Cup cars racing. And with 10 minutes to go, the Lamborghini that was leading had some issues. We managed to take the lead, and with only a few laps to go, I messed up and went through the gravel for



Under the Lid

Álvaro Parente

Following his full-time switch to GT racing in 2012, former British Formula 3 and Formula Renault 3.5 champion Álvaro Parente earned works driver status with McLaren, and quickly established himself as a frontrunner in the FIA GT Series, Blancpain's GT and Endurance Series, the International GT Open, and IMSA among many others.

In 2016, Parente took arguably the biggest win of his GT career at that year's Bathurst 12 Hours. Small wonder then that Mount Panorama is up there among his favourite circuits, and that he's had his fair share of on-track incidents with kangaroos...

Name?

"Álvaro Parente."

Age? You can lie about that if you want...

"I'm 39 years old."

Where and when was your first ever car race, and how old were you?

"My first actual car race was in Formula 3 in Spain, so directly from karting into Formula 3. And I think I was 16 years old..."

"...no, wait, the first test was in Spain. In Jarama, if I'm not mistaken. My first race was at Estoril in Portugal. A home race!"

And how did that race go?

"I started 6th, which was pretty good because it was a very competitive field. I think there was around 25 cars. But then I spun on the formation lap! I recovered to my original grid position. At the time, if you did that before [the field] made it to the last corner, it was fine. But I don't think I had a great race. I ended up 10th or something like that." *

* *Álvaro's Formula 3 Spain debut in 2001, at which he actually took two 9th place finishes, was his only race with G-Tec, as he switched to E.V. Racing (named for Emilio de Villota) for the remainder of that season. He'd score one win the following year before jumping to British and Euro Formula 3.*

What is the best moment of your racing career so far?

"Bwoar! Man that's a tough one!" [Pause] "I did more or less 10 years in Formula racing, and I've been in GT racing for 14 years, so there are a lot of 'top' moments."

"Winning Monaco was a very special feeling, in World Series by Renault in 2007. Not everyone gets the chance to do that. Also, Sebastian Vettel was P2, so that's a special one!"

"Winning the championship in my first season in US racing is another: the Pirelli World Challenge in a McLaren GT. Most of the tracks were new to me, and it was very different to what I was used to. But I ended up winning the championship at the last race on the last lap! So that was pretty cool. Lots of emotion and everything. 2016, I think that was. And probably my Bathurst 12 Hours win that year too. That was a big one for me."

"Other moments..." [Pause] "...ah, in my first race of GP2 - it's called 'Formula 2' now - I won, in Barcelona. Not many rookies have done that, even nowadays. That was pretty special."

Apart from the Nürburgring, which is your favourite circuit and why?

"I actually like Bathurst more than the Nordschleife. A lot more! In terms of favourites, honestly, it's difficult for me to put the Nürburgring up there. But if I was to choose three? Suzuka, Spa-Francorchamps, and Bathurst."

"Or, maybe, Bathurst, Suzuka, and Spa. I love all three."

How about Portimão?

"Yep. Let's add Portimão too! And probably Monza. Road America is also very nice."

Describe the strangest thing that's ever happened to you at a motor race...

"Once, in Formula 3, I hit a pheasant! It was stuck on my front wing, so that

was not very nice. This was back in 2005, or 2004, or something like that."

"Actually, on the Nordschleife, in 2014, I hit a rabbit. And at the next race, the team glued some white paper ears onto my helmet without me seeing. That was funny!"

"Kangaroos are very typical in Bathurst, and one year [2020] the race got interrupted because there was a kangaroo going up the hill, in sector two. We were all behind the safety car, and this kangaroo, was on the track. He couldn't get out, so was going up the hill. Alllll the way. He must have been exhausted!"

Describe your helmet design to us, and what it signifies...

"It's interesting. This design is very similar to what my dad had. He did all his career with these colours. He even had a car painted like that - a Fiat - and... they were the Portuguese colours, but he would always say they were the Italian colours too! I inherited that design, and I just adapted a few things. But always with the same base colours. It's been like that my whole career."

What is your greatest strength?

[Pause] "Honestly, I'm not the right guy to answer that question. I'm very down to earth, but I know my values and I give it my all, inside and outside the car, to the sport that I really love."

"I do like qualifying sessions. I also like the consistency of racing. I very much like working with [Antonio and Pablo], trying to help them go quicker with coaching. Actually, yeah, go ask them!"

If Hollywood made a movie about you, which actor would play you and why?

[Laughs] "I don't know!" [Pause] "Oh... what's his name...? I don't know much about him, but my wife likes him very much. He's been in a lot of movies... God, I'm terrible at names!"*

* *After some post-interview Google searches, it turns out Mrs Parente is a big fan of Ryan Gosling.*

What would you like to achieve before retiring?

"Probably a big win at Le Mans or the Spa 24 Hours. I've had some good results at those races, but never a win."

"I'd also like to keep the progress going with [Antonio and Pablo]. They're good guys. I feel good here, and I like the team very much. If we had the chance to try and win a race overall in the 24H SERIES this year... yeah, that would be an immediate goal: to try and win a race overall with Pablo and Antonio, and E2P Racing. I mean, we still have one [round] to go, so who knows what could happen."

Tell us a random fact about yourself that your fans might not know...

"I'm usually pretty good in 24-hour races, from 3am until the end of the race. I suffer less than most!"

Finally, what do you enjoy most about competing in the 24H SERIES?

"I think it's well-structured. I mean, I'm used to putting the fuel in the car at our garage, but it makes things more interesting!"

"I'm enjoying myself a lot. It's a very friendly environment for gentlemen drivers, but it's still very competitive. That's what you want. It gives them the opportunity to drive a lot, and we can help them when we see that progression. It's very rewarding when they do well." ■

STANDINGS

24H SERIES

POWERED BY  **HANKOOK**

GT3

1	Herberth Motorsport (91)	140
2	Sainteloc Junior Team (18)	108
3	E2P Racing (90)	92

GT3-AM

1	Herberth Motorsport (91)	156
2	HOFOR Racing (11)	88
3	CP Racing (85)	76

GT3-PRO/AM

1	E2P Racing (90)	148
2	Sainteloc Junior Team (18)	130
3	Juta Racing (71)	104

992

1	Red Ant Racing (903)	140
2	Red Ant Racing (904)	122
3	RPM Racing (907)	84

992-AM

1	PM Racing (907)	124
2	Orchid Racing Team (917)	116
3	Seblajoux Racing by DUWO Racing (908)	110

GTX

1	Vortex V8 (701)	176
2	9und11 Racing (719)	72
3	Vortex V8 (702)	36

GT4

1	Buggyra ZM Racing (416)	178
2	Lionspeed GP (424)	108
3	W AUTOSPORT (491)	56

TCE

1	CWS Engineering (178)	76
2	PR-V (125)	60
3	SR Motorsport (111)	40

TCX

1	CWS Engineering (178)	76
2	PR-V (125)	60
3	SR Motorsport (111)	40



Scan the QR code for the full team and driver standings

Points structure 24H SERIES POWERED BY Hankook 2024

Race duration	PIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
12H		40	36	32	28	24	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2
24H halfway mark		20	18	16	14	12	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
24H at final result		40	36	32	28	24	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2



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ENTRY LIST



24H BARCELONA



4
GT3

OPTIMUM MOTORSPORT MCLAREN 720S GT3 EVO

🇺🇸 Todd Coleman 🇺🇸 Aaron Telitz
 🇺🇸 Robert Megennis 🇩🇰 Frederik Schandorff

9
GT3

RED CAMEL BY JUTA RACING AUDI R8 LMS GT3 EVO II

🇧🇪 Ivo Breukers 🇧🇪 Luc Breukers 🇧🇪 Rik Breukers 🇨🇭 Fabian Danz

@redcamelracing

11
GT3

HOFOR RACING MERCEDES-AMG GT3

🇨🇭 Michael Kroll 🇨🇭 Chantal Prinz 🇩🇪 Alexander Prinz
 🇩🇪 Maximilian Partl 🇩🇪 Kenneth Heyer

@hofor_racing

14
GT3

POULSEN MOTORSPORT BMW M4 GT3

🇩🇰 Kristian Poulsen 🇩🇰 Roland Poulsen 🇸🇪 Alfred Nilsson 🇩🇪 Jens Klingmann

18
GT3

SAINTELOC JUNIOR TEAM AUDI R8 LMS GT3 EVO II

🇩🇪 Michael Doppelmayr 🇩🇪 Pierre Kaffer 🇩🇪 Elia Erhart
 🇫🇷 Stephane Tribaudini 🇩🇪 Christer Jöns

@sainteloc_racing

34
GT3

LAND MOTORSPORT AUDI R8 LMS GT3 EVO II

🇩🇪 Dr. Johannes Kirchhoff 🇩🇪 Ingo Vogler 🇩🇪 Tim Vogler
 🇩🇪 Wiggo Dalmo 🇩🇪 Elmar Grimm

@landmotorsport

44
GT3

ARC BRATISLAVA LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN GT3 EVO

🇨🇪 Miro Konopka 🇨🇪 Adam Konopka 🇨🇪 Zdeno Mikulasko
 🇵🇱 Andrzej Lewandowski 🇨🇪 Petr Brecka

@arcbratislava

69
GT3

RD SIGNS - SIAULIAI RACING TEAM LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN GT3 EVO

🇱🇹 Audrius Butkevicius 🇮🇹 Nicola Michelon 🇱🇹 Paulius Paskevicius
 🇱🇹 Ramunas Capkauskas 🇱🇹 Paulius Ruskys

@rdsignsracingteam

71
GT3

JUTA RACING AUDI R8 LMS GT3 EVO II

🇱🇹 Arunas Geciauskas 🇱🇹 Aurimas Jablonskis 🇱🇹 Sigitas Ambrasevicius
 🇵🇱 Martin Ryba 🇫🇷 Francois Beziac

@juta_racing

90
GT3

E2P RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 R (991 II)

🇪🇸 Pablo Burguera 🇪🇸 Antonio Sainero
 🇪🇸 Alvaro Parente 🇪🇸 Javier Morcillo

@e2p_group

91
GT3

HERBERTH MOTORSPORT PORSCHE 911 GT3 R (992)

🇺🇸 Scott Noble 🇩🇪 Ralf Bohn
 🇺🇸 Jason Hart 🇺🇸 Dustin Blattner

@herberthmotorsport

701
GTX

VORTEX V8 VORTEX 2.0

🇫🇷 Philippe Bonnel 🇫🇷 Solenn Amrouche
 🇫🇷 Gilles Courtois 🇫🇷 Lionel Amrouche

@vortexsas_officiel

918
992

MÜHLNER MOTORSPORT PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇺🇸 Bryan Sircely 🇨🇷 Antal Zsigo

@muhlnermotorsport

931
992

QMMF BY HRT PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇲🇵 Abdulla Ali Al Khelaifi 🇲🇵 Ghanim Al Ali
 🇲🇵 Ibrahim Al Abdulghani 🇩🇪 Julian Hanses

@hrt_performance

702
GTX

VORTEX V8 VORTEX 2.0

🇫🇷 Lucas Sugliano 🇫🇷 Cyril Calmon
 🇫🇷 Miguel Moiola 🇫🇷 Pierre Fontaine

@vortexsas_officiel

714
GTX

RAZOOK - MORE THAN RACING KTM X-BOW GTX

🇨🇪 Artur Chwist 🇨🇪 Christian Loimayr
 🇨🇪 Daniel Drexel 🇨🇪 Simon Birch

@razook_more_than_racing

949
992

ROAD TO LE MANS PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇪🇸 Agustin Sanabria Crespo 🇪🇸 Pablo Bras Silvero 🇪🇸 Fernando Gonzalez Gonzalez
 🇪🇸 Pedro Miguel Lourinho Bras 🇪🇸 Francesc Gutierrez Agüi

967
992

HRT PERFORMANCE PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇬🇧 David Holloway 🇮🇪 Jon Kearny

@hrt_performance

902
992

HOLMGAARD MOTORSPORT PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇩🇰 Magnus Holmgaard 🇩🇰 Jonas Holmgaard 🇩🇰 Martin Vedel Mortensen
 🇫🇷 Stephane Perrin 🇨🇦 Michel Sallenbach

@holmgaardmotorsport

903
992

RED ANT RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇧🇪 Ayrton Redant 🇧🇪 Yannick Redant 🇧🇪 Kobe de Breucker

@redant_racing

988
992

MRS GT-RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

Rolando Saca Amadeo Quiros 🇫🇮 Jukka Honkavuori
 🇫🇮 Antti Rammo 🇮🇹 Charlie Fonseca

@molitorracingsystems

989
992

MRS GT-RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇸🇦 Shaun Thong 🇮🇪 Terence Tse 🇩🇪 Marco Müller

@molitorracingsystems

904
992

RED ANT RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇧🇪 Brent Verheyen 🇧🇪 Peter Guelinckx 🇬🇧 Gavin Pickering

@redant_racing

907
992

RPM RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇺🇸 Tracy Krohn 🇸🇪 Niclas Jönsson
 🇩🇪 Philip Hamprecht 🇩🇪 Patrick Huisman

@rpm.racing.official

992
992

NKPP RACING BY BAS KOETEN RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇳🇱 Gijs Bessem 🇳🇱 Harry Hilders
 🇳🇱 Bob Herber 🇳🇱 Mark van der Aa

@baskoetenracing

405
GT4

GSR MOTORSPORT GINETTA G56 GT4

🇱🇹 Mindaugas Liatukas 🇱🇹 Rokas Kvedaras 🇱🇹 Aras Kvedaras
 Dovydas Ketvirtis 🇱🇹 Egidijus Gelūnas

908
992

SEBLAJOUX RACING BY DUWO RACING PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇫🇷 Lauris Nauroy 🇫🇷 Sebastien Lajoux

@seblajoux_racing

917
992

ORCHID RACING TEAM PORSCHE 911 GT3 CUP (992)

🇫🇷 Laurent Misbach 🇨🇮 Antonio Garzon
 🇨🇮 Jeremy Brodard 🇨🇮 Alexandre Mottet

@orchidracingteam_official

414
GT4

APEX MP RACING KTM X-BOW GT4 (2018)

🇲🇪 Milos Pavlovic 🇬🇧 Petar Matic
 🇮🇹 Alessio Ruffini 🇲🇪 Mihael Ambroz

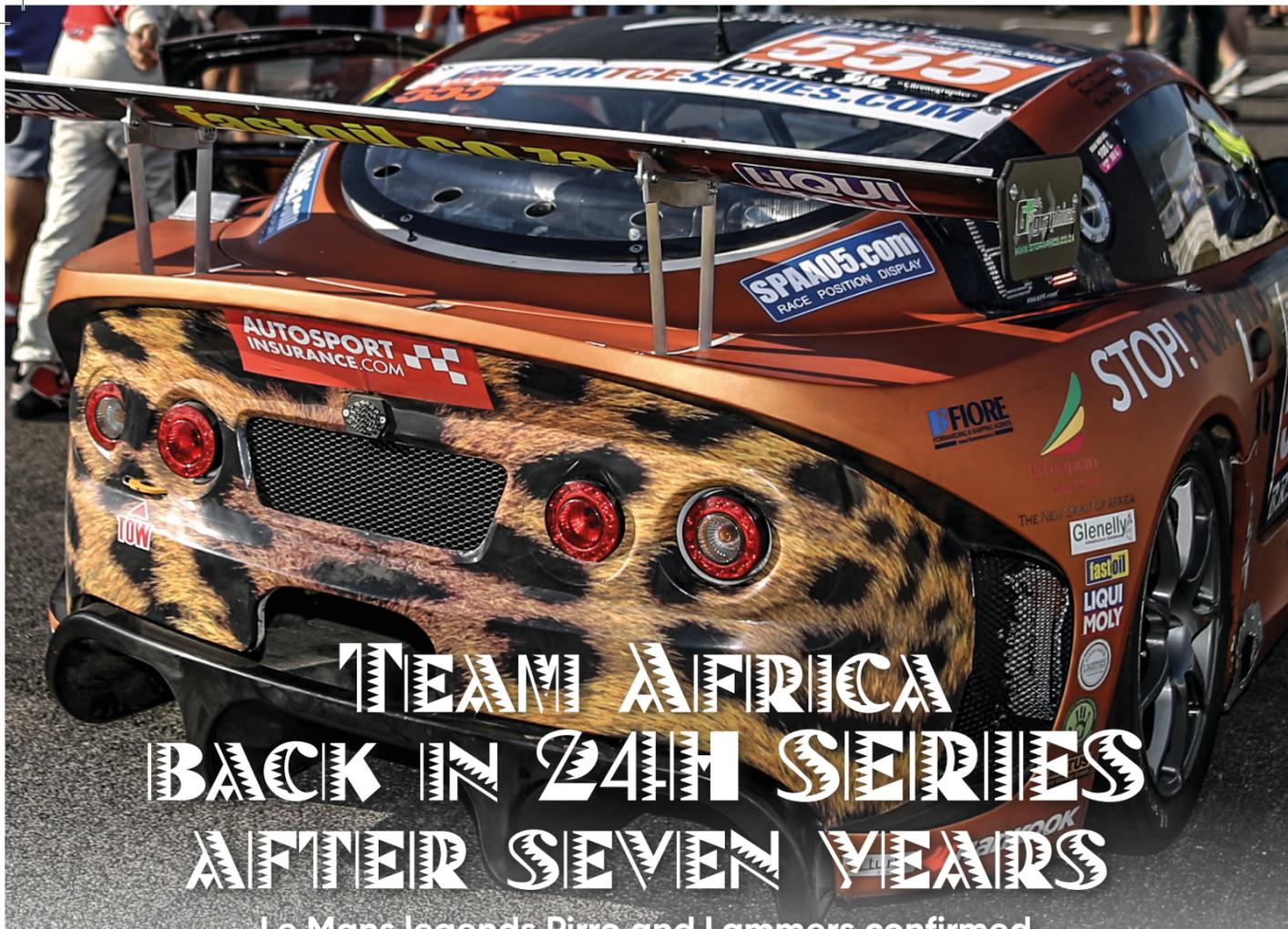
@razook_more_than_racing

415
GT4

NM RACING TEAM MERCEDES-AMG GT4

🇺🇸 Keith Gatehouse 🇮🇪 Igor Sorokin 🇪🇸 Guillermo Aso
 Manel Lao 🇩🇪 Max Huber

@nmracingteam_



TEAM AFRICA BACK IN 24H SERIES AFTER SEVEN YEARS

Le Mans legends Pirro and Lammers confirmed

After a seven-year hiatus, Team Africa Le Mans makes its return to the 24H SERIES at this weekend's Hankook 24H BARCELONA, doing so with overall 24 Hours of Le Mans winners Emanuele Pirro and Jan Lammers.

The South African privateer most recently competed with CREVENTIC in 2017, during which it contested the Hankook 12H IMOLA and the TCE-only Hankook 24H MISANO on consecutive weekends in Italy. For its 24H SERIES return, Team Africa Le Mans confirmed that 1988 Le Mans winner Jan Lammers and five-time overall winner Emanuele Pirro will compete at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya with record three-time Hankook 24H DUBAI Jeroen Bleekemolen (also a Le Mans LMP2 class winner in 2008), team founder Greg Mills and Pirro's son Cris, a performance engineer with Sauber / Stake F1.

"It is a great honour for us to be lining up at a 24H SERIES race, a series that always makes us feel at home," Greg Mills explained. "It's a special privilege to once more be racing with the likes of Jan, Emanuele and Jeroen, all winners at Le Mans and across multiple other sports-car races and disciplines.

"Perhaps," he adds, "Team Africa Le Mans is a throwback to a different age!"

Established in 2015 in a bid "to carry the continent's flag into international competition," Team Africa Le Mans has also run a prominent 'Stop Poaching' livery in its previous races in support of a charitable anti-poaching cause in South Africa, and will do so again in Barcelona.

As in its previous entries, Team Africa Le Mans will run a Ginetta G55 GT4 – "bought as a bit of a wreck and rebuilt by the same team of friends, while being based at Midway Garage in Witchford, UK" – in the GT4 category.

"Team Africa Le Mans prides itself on being a team of friends, all unpaid volunteers, including the mechanics and drivers, which contains some of the greatest names in the world of sportscar racing," Mills continues. "We

race for the love of the sport, and the fun of being on the grid. Whatever the case, we are thrilled to be giving it another try at Barcelona."

Interestingly, the 2024 Hankook 24H BARCELONA marks only fourth international endurance event for Team Africa Le Mans, three of which have been with CREVENTIC. Prior to its 2017 run (sadly a potential class win at Imola was lost to differential failure), the South African team debuted at the Hankook 24H CIRCUIT PAUL RICARD in 2016 – also with a Ginetta G55 GT4. Mills and Lammers, who competed at the event with Nick Adcock, Terry Wilford and 11-time South African Rally champion Sarel van der Merwe, went on to finish on the SP3 podium.

This weekend also marks the second 24H SERIES entry together for Pirro and Lammers, the Le Mans legends having competed at the Hankook 24H MISANO in 2017. Despite suffering two broken ball joints, two failed differentials, AND a loose power steering hose, Pirro and Lammers, competing that weekend with Mills, van der Merwe and Graham Vos, battled on to an eventual 3rd place in SP3-GT4. ■



Jan Lammers



Emanuele Pirro

421
GT4
VENTURE ENGINEERING MERCEDES-AMG GT4
Neville Jones Chris Jones
Matt George Owen Hizey

424
GT4
LIONSPEED GP PORSCHE 718 CAYMAN GT4
José Garcia Daniel Miller
Patrick Kolb Dennis Bohn
@lionspeed_gp

428
GT4
ST RACING BMW M4 GT4 (G82)
Samantha Tan Neil Verhagen Jon Miller
Pippa Mann Fabian Duffieux

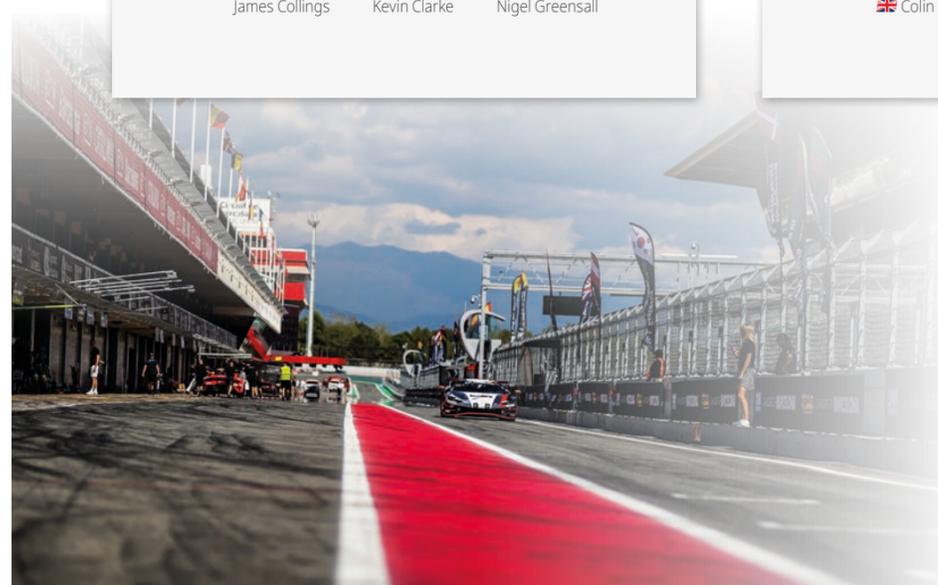
455
GT4
TEAM AFRICA LE MANS GINETTA G55 GT4
Emanuele Pirro Jan Lammers Greg Mills
Jeroen Bleekemolen Cris Pirro

101
TCE-TCX
ASBEST RACING SEAT LEON CUP RACER
Junichi Umemoto Thomas Ardelt

127
TCE-TCX
SRS TEAM SORG RENNSPORT PORSCHE 718 CAYMAN GT4 CS
Henning Eschweiler Benito Tagle
Tommy Gråberg Richard Jodexnis
@sorgrennsport

133
TCE-TCX
J-MEC ENGINEERING BMW M3 E46
James Collings Kevin Clarke Nigel Greensall

178
TCE-TCX
CWS ENGINEERING GINETTA G55
Colin White Daniel Morris Paul Buccini
@cwsracing



scan the QR code for the most up-to-date entry list

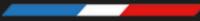




ALPINE

elf 

CUP SERIES



Alpine's motorsport ventures has earned it a special place in the heart of racing fans. The 'A' arrowed brand has also spawned interest and enthusiasm from many amateur drivers, keen to enjoy themselves behind the wheel of attractive, light and agile cars.

In this spirit, Alpine created the A110 Cup, introduced in 2018 within the Alpine Elf Europa Cup, an FIA-approved international series recalling the Alpine Europa Cup held between 1985 and 1988 with the Alpine GTA V6 Turbo.

Organised and promoted by Signatech, the structure responsible for the Alpine Elf Endurance Team's current and future operations in the FIA World Endurance Championship, the newly-renamed Alpine Elf Cup Series produces exciting and hotly-contested races. It also meets Alpine's demanding standards, with a professional, meticulous organisation on-track and a passionate, friendly atmosphere in the paddock.

Firmly established in the landscape of international motorsport, the Alpine Elf Cup Series is contested over six meetings and 12 races. Now into its seventh season, the calendar visits six great racetracks in Europe, bringing the contenders to Nogaro, Portimão, Spa-Francorchamps, Barcelona, Circuit Paul Ricard and Monza.

Each meeting features two free practice sessions, two qualifying sessions and two races, with a total track time of three hours. At the base of each car is a precise chassis, a 270hp engine for a weight of 1,050kg (3.9kg/hp), and boasts uncompromising safety features and endurance-inspired on-board electronics to deliver efficiency and performance.

With several titles on the line, everything is still to play for, and our drivers are ready to give it their all this weekend in Catalunya! ■

www.alpineelfcupseries.com

CLIO CUP

SERIES

Since the introduction of the R8 Gordini Cup in 1966, Renault has maintained a constant presence on tracks worldwide. Spearheading the single-make cups since 1991, the Clio Cup brims with innovations in 2024 as the teams tackle an ambitious campaign across Europe, with a product renowned for its performance, reliability and affordability.

This season, the fifth-generation Clio Cup adopts the new, more assertive and elegant styling of its production counterpart. This is most noticeable in a front end that combines technical sophistication with dynamism, an entirely redesigned light signature, and taut, precise and effective lines that give the car an even more distinctive character.

The ideal springboard since its creation, the Clio Cup continues to confirm its status as a popular sporting success, revealing talented competitors over the decades. With its experience in promotional formulas and one-make series, Renault offers its savoir-faire and expertise to experienced and amateur drivers by providing them with a product adapted to their needs.

The calendar features nine meetings and 18 races at some of Europe's most prestigious and renowned circuits. Bringing together the Clio Cup Series, Clio Cup España, Clio Cup France, Clio Cup Italia and Clio Cup Mid-Europe, the calendar is carefully devised to ensure competitive grids.

Drivers can also fight against each other within three classes, including the Juniors Cup (for drivers born in 2001 or later), the Gentlemen Cup (born before 1979) and the Challengers Cup (born between 1979 and 2000, without titles within Clio Cup or similar categories).

The best-known single-make cup also offers an attractive prize system, with drivers and teams competing for a total prize fund of more than €270,000. The future Clio Cup Series winner will win a brand-new Clio Cup, or three race weekends in the 2025 Alpine Europa Cup season if they wish to climb the GT ladder. ■

www.cliocup.fr





Behind Garage Doors

with Joe Bradley

At what is traditionally one of the hottest events on the 24H SERIES calendar, Joe considers how drivers on this year's grid might prepare for 24 hours in the stifling Catalan heat. And has a, er, novel tip for our competitors this weekend...

Everyone involved in motor sport tends to focus on the machinery. The cars, the nuts and bolts, and how they go together will inevitably be at the forefront of the vast majority of conversations taking place in the paddock and hotel bars in the week leading up to the race. We usually overlook one of the most important factors behind a good result in any motor race: the drivers. And in particular the fitness and preparation of the human element before and during the event.

Mental preparation, 'getting your head right,' and 'getting in the zone' are a vitally important part of any race weekend. A lot of drivers I've worked with had their own personal methods of getting themselves ready for their stint behind the wheel.

One of the most common methods of mental preparation is visualisation. We often see drivers lined up on the starting grid, eyes closed moving their head from side-to-side, visualising driving their car around the lap. We see drivers waiting patiently for their team mate to bring their car into the pits for them to takeover behind the wheel. We see all sorts of behavior, from stretching and visualising, to jumping up and down. The jumping up and down is especially popular if its cold!

“ Clear-coloured urine is the target.

I doubt the cold will be a factor in Catalunya this weekend though. In fact, the complete opposite will undoubtedly be the case, and managing the high temperatures will be one of the major considerations of driver preparations going into race week. Hydration, and indeed re-hydration, will be the order of the day.

It's vital for drivers to stay hydrated during the race. The physicality of driving the car raises the body temperature considerably. Add in fireproof suits, helmets, closed cockpits and heat radiation from the engine, and they all combine to make the situation much worse than in other sports. In extreme situations, drivers can lose up to one litre of fluid per hour. Most drivers don't need laboratory conditions to monitor their rate of re-hydration, they simply look for the colour of their urine. Clear-coloured is the target to achieve, indicating that you are well hydrated.

And on that cheery note, we wish all of our drivers the best of luck in this year's event. Here is to clear coloured urine for everyone!

Located in the Montmeló, the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya was inaugurated on 10 September 1991. It was a project driven by the Catalan government, the Royal Automobile Club of Catalonia and the Montmeló town council. The circuit hosted its first

race only five days after the inauguration – a round of the Spanish Touring Car Championship – while the first Formula 1 Grand Prix was staged a few weeks later. The first running of the 24-hour event here was for touring cars, although, 27 years later, it has now become a stalwart race for the GT community.

A brief reminder of last year's event saw 725 laps completed across 24 hours by the IMSA LS Group Performance Porsche. It finished 1min and 37 seconds ahead of the Haas RT Audi, which in turn was two laps ahead of the Herberth Motorsport Porsche. A gap of just over 97 seconds over the course of 24 hours is what we would consider a close finish.

Given that a laptime of two minutes and three seconds was achieved in qualifying trim last year, 96 seconds can disappear in several blinks of an eye. ■

24H SERIES

Spirit of the Race award winners

- Fulgenzi Racing - 12H MISANO, 2024
- Buggyra ZM Racing - 24H PORTIMAO, 2024
- E2P Racing - 12H SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, 2024
- Tracy Krohn - 12H MUGELLO, 2024
- Team Parker Racing - 24H DUBAI, 2024
- Grove Racing - 6H ABU DHABI, 2024

- Vortex V8 - 12H KUWAIT, 2023
- Richardson Racing - 24H BARCELONA, 2023
- Grégory Servais - 12H ESTORIL, 2023
- 9und11 Racing - 12H MONZA, 2023
- PB Racing - 12H SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, 2023
- Willi Motorsport by Ebimotors - 12H MUGELLO, 2023
- RABDAN Motorsport - 24H DUBAI, 2023

- Razoon-more than racing - 12H KUWAIT, 2022
- Hofor-Racing - 24H BARCELONA, 2022
- TEAM ACP - Tangerine Associates - 24H PORTIMAO, 2022
- Holmgaard Motorsport - 12H HOCKENHEIMRING, 2022
- WEC Motorsport - 12H SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, 2022
- Vortex V8 - 12H MUGELLO, 2022

24H SERIES Middle East Trophy returns for 2024/2025

CREVENTIC is pleased to announce that the 24H SERIES Middle East Trophy will return for a third consecutive season in 2024/2025, and does so with additional testing opportunities and a revised two-round format.

First introduced during the winter of 2022 / 2023, the 24H SERIES' Middle East Trophy provides teams with an opportunity to extend their racing programs into the new year, simultaneously offering customers further on-track preparation time ahead of the European season.

Following positive feedback from 24H SERIES teams, drivers and fans alike, the Middle East Trophy will return for 2024/2025, and has now been streamlined to include only the 20th edition of the Michelin 24H DUBAI on 10-11-12 January and the Michelin 6H ABU DHABI one week later on 17-18-19 January.

Both the 24-hour and six-hour events will run uninterrupted, and will be preceded by extensive Free Practice and Qualifying sessions the day before the green flag drops.

Unlike previous years, teams are required to complete each round of the 24H SERIES Middle East Trophy for championship eligibility. As in 2022/2023

and 2023/2024, title honours will be awarded to teams and drivers per their respective categories.

As part of a new incentive for registered teams, CREVENTIC will also host two additional 'Track Days' at the Dubai Autodrome on 17-18 December in lieu of a third Middle East race. Offering up to seven hours of track time apiece, both Track Days present teams with an opportunity to test Michelin's new compounds for 2025 as the multinational tyre manufacturer readies itself for its first official season as the 24H SERIES' official title sponsor and exclusive tyre supplier.

Pricing for the Track Days in December start from €4,950 per day. This entry fee includes refueling as required, service and maintenance assistance from official Michelin engineers on the ground at the Autodrome, and shared use of a pitbox (exclusive use of a garage is available for an additional €500 per day). Grounding and loading of each team's container at the Dubai Autodrome is also included.

Further information regarding the 2024/2025 24H SERIES Middle East Trophy and Track Day registration can be found at 24hseries.com/teams, and through CREVENTIC directly. ■

CALENDAR



TRACK DAYS DUBAI AUTODROME

17-18 December 2024

DUBAI AUTODROME



MICHELIN 24H DUBAI

10-12 January 2025

DUBAI AUTODROME



MICHELLIN 6H ABU DHABI

17-19 JANUARY 2025

YAS MARINA CIRCUIT

In at the deep end

This weekend, the driver development program officially supported by the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation makes its first European start in the 24H SERIES. That it does so at one of the toughest European events on the calendar makes the challenge that much tougher. But as QMMF executive director Amro Al-Hamad explains to CREVENTIC, it's also an invaluable opportunity.

Images - Nico Mombaerts

"I want a Qatari team, with Qatari drivers, with the Qatari flag and Qatari logos, to go out there and contend. And this is my plan: to deliver what I could not during my time racing. To command and conquer."

The above is from our first chat, at last year's Hankook 6H ABU DHABI, with Amro Al-Hamad, executive director of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation. At the time, the first endurance racing program officially supported by the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation, had just concluded. Certainly Amro was convinced that the fledgling program had done enough to warrant a second shot at the 24H SERIES' Middle East Trophy in 2023/2024. Hopes were also high that, one day, the 'QMMF' would be officially represented in an FIA-accredited, international motor race.

This weekend in Barcelona, 'QMMF by HRT' makes that hope a reality. "The idea is not just to have drivers on the start grid and just send out a press release: 'oh, yeah, we have a Qatari team!' No, I want these guys to actually go and compete. To have European drivers sit up and take notice: 'oh, hey, I got beat by the Qatari guy in qualifying,' or 'the Qatari guys got a couple of really good moves on me during the race.' These things stay in your memory."

"And I don't want European competitors to respect just one Qatari driver. I want them to respect a whole Qatari team! Endurance racing is a great way to do that."

Far from empty posturing, these impassioned words reflect a very genuine enthusiasm. On top of his QMMF role after all, Amro is CEO of the Losail International Circuit and, as of May this year, the World Motor Sport Council's vice president of its single seater committee.

He's keen to put his words into action. To showcase Qatar and its athletes within motor racing. And now has a very commanding position in which to do so.

But there's more to it than that. So very much more.

In years gone by, Amro actually represented his beloved Qatar on-track. Indeed, before joining the QMMF full-time in 2017, and after several seasons of Qatar National Road Racing, Amro competed in the Radical Middle East Cup, and went on to win the regional one-make series in 2013/2014 (tellingly, his Shell-sponsored SR3 featured the QMMF logo prominently). He's contested the Gulf 12 Hours, the 24 Hours of Zolder, and, closer to home, he's an alumnus of the 24H SERIES, having competed at the Hankook 24H DUBAI (twice), the Hankook 12H ZANDVOORT (twice), and even the inaugural, prototype-focused Hankook 3x3H DUBAI in 2017. Successfully too: across five entries, Amro took a class win, two class podiums, and was the first Qatari driver to stand on the Hankook 24H DUBAI podium. Something he wears as a badge of honour to this very day.

These five starts in fact were the cornerstone for an insatiable enthusiasm for both endurance racing as a whole and the 24H SERIES



in particular. Where better then to get an endurance racing program, greenlit and supported by the QMMF, off the ground in 2022...?

"The reality is that the 24H SERIES is a really very good mixed-drivers and mixed-category championship," Amro continues. "It's a great launchpad for drivers to get into and develop before moving on to higher levels of endurance racing."

"It's very good, especially for drivers in the Middle East, to start with the series here. Dubai for instance, where the conditions are very good and always dry, minus what happened in 2020." - Unprecedented levels of rain caused that year's Hankook 24H DUBAI to be red-flagged and not restarted. - "I don't want to get these young drivers, who are still learning, and just throw them into a race in Europe where the weather changes constantly. That gives them too much to concentrate on."

"With CREVENTIC, there's an opportunity to take part in a massive endurance event, in Dubai, where they can learn a lot in 24 hours without feeling completely overwhelmed. So it's a very good platform."

Of course, the path to this weekend's Hankook 24H BARCELONA has been a long one for QMMF. Indeed, only a month before CREVENTIC's chat with Amro, 'QMMF by HRT' was gearing up for its first official start at the inaugural Hankook 12H KUWAIT...

"The whole program started way before Kuwait. We found a pool of →

drivers in Qatar that, we thought, might be able to start in that field. Not all of them were on the same level, so it was a very thorough selection process to find the best of the best in Qatar. In the end, we went with two cars to Kuwait, and we also did the [Hankook] 24H DUBAI, and there was a competition between both cars. We knew, and they knew, that only one car would be coming to [the 2023 Hankook 6H] Abu Dhabi. I wanted all the drivers to compete against each other. To show how much they wanted this and how much they were learning. And that really increased their ambition to deliver the best. All of them, they did an excellent job.

"By the way, that program, and the plan that we put together from the beginning, will keep on going forward. The program was not like, 'right, we're doing this one selection process, and then we'll stop.' No. There will be other drivers coming in, maybe in a second car, so that we can test and support local talent.

"We also want to make this as big a pool as possible, so you will not see these guys just going into endurance racing. We want to develop a process that applies to every single discipline in motorsport. Whether it's rally, whether it's Baja, endurance, sprint racing, motocross, motorbikes, etc."

That weekend at Kuwait Motor City, the QMMF officially supported two Porsche 992 GT3 Cups entered by series staple, and Hankook 24H DUBAI class winner, HRT Performance: one for Qatar Touring Car Champion Abdulla Ali Al Khelaifi and QTCC rivals Abdullah Al-Abbasi and Ibrahim Al-Mannai, who drove together with HRT team owner Kim André Hauschild (#929); the other for Ghanim Al Ali, Ibrahim Al Abdulghani, and Hamad Saeed Al-Asam, supported by former WEC LMP2 podium finisher, Anders Fjordbach (#930).

'QMMF by HRT Thuraya Qatar' (#929) eventually led its sister 'QMMF by HRT Suhail Qatar' Porsche (#930) home 3rd and 4th in 992-AM in a solid debut weekend. One not without its faults admittedly, including an early puncture, an unscheduled pit stop to repair loose bodywork, and a moment in the gravel...

"To be honest, the drivers we have, these are not inexperienced drivers, or 'track day' drivers. These guys had been driving in Qatar's national championship. This is how they got selected, depending on their results. But they were all in different cars, so it was difficult to judge their levels. So it was great to put them all in the same car - same team, same setup, same everything - to find out who was on the top and who needed more development. In Kuwait for example, I saw their times in testing, and I knew, if they didn't make mistakes, they could end up on the podium.

"Now, there were a lot of mistakes because they did not have experience in a 12-hour race: our driver change for instance was

bad; there were a lot of track limit violations; we over-spiced in the pitlane. Without all these mistakes, I'm 100% sure they'd have had a better result.

"But they licked their wounds, they went into Dubai, and they did not miss a beat. They were on it from minute one. They showed me how solid they are, because I know how hard a 24-hour endurance race can be. People always assume that it's 'oh, it's 'just' double a 12-hour race.' It's not. It's four, five times as hard as a 12-hour as your concentration starts to go down. But they were all very responsible. They were all very professional. And they did not disappoint. And I am very, very proud of each one of them!"

Lessons learnt, Al Khelaifi and Al Abdulghani, now teaming with new teammate Ghanim Al Maadheed and SEMI-PRO coach Julian Hanses in the #929 Porsche, finished 2nd in 992-AM at both Dubai and Abu Dhabi in 2023. A crash at two-thirds distance sadly knocked the second car, driven by Al-Abbasi, Al-Mannai, new teammate Abdulaziz Al Jabri, and then-reigning GT4 Scandinavia class champion Daniel Roos out of contention for 5th in 992-Am, and out of the race altogether.

“ Last year they lacked the experience. Now their mindset is completely different. ”

One year on, and with that bloodying first endurance racing program now under their belts, Al Khelaifi, Al Abdulghani and the returning Ghanim Al Ali went one better at both Abu Dhabi and Dubai in January to secure the sole-entered 'QMMF by HRT' Porsche back-to-back 992-AM class wins. Impressively, the Qatari trio and SEMI-PRO Hanses finished top of the 992-AM standings in the 24H SERIES Middle East Trophy.

Validation not just for the Qatari nationals, but also the QMMF spearheaded project...?

"Absolutely! From what I've seen, in Abu Dhabi last year, I knew they had the fighting spirit to make it happen.

"I saw this in Abdulla [Ali Al Khelaifi], for example. Abdulla started the [Hankook] 6H ABU DHABI. We lost the radio on the first lap, we had no contact with him at all, and he was just acting on intuition. And he did an excellent job! I remember, we had the live stream, and there were six guys fighting with each other ahead of him. He just started picking them off one-by-one as they started losing their



tyres. He was doing exactly what any of us in the garage would do.

"And the other guys, they are learning. If they make a mistake in the race, or during quali, we see that these lessons are being implemented. I'm really happy to see it happen that way.

"Last year they lacked the experience. Now their mindset is completely different. They've built up, big time, since last year. It's not their first rodeo, they understand what it takes, they are listening more and more, and they're getting the results they deserve."

Proud as he undoubtedly is of his countrymen, Amro also gives due credit to Kim Hauschild and HRT Performance for the success of the 'QMMF' program so far...

"Only the best of the best from the very beginning! I knew Kim and HRT but I had not worked with them before. But we collected a lot of data, spoke with a lot of people who have driven with them, acquaintances that worked with them, and HRT came out on the top.

"And they did not disappoint! Last year in Dubai, we had our ups and downs, but everything was run and managed at a much higher level than even we expected. They exceeded our expectations by a long way, and we're really grateful for all the work that HRT is doing. Kim and his father, they don't give us problems, they give us solutions. That's how you run a successful team.

"And they actually care. It's not 'just' a business to them. They actually care about what they're doing. You really get the sense that the whole team is working together and want to succeed."

Despite the confidence-boosting progress made by his Qatari proteges, Amro, given his own experiences in Europe, is under no illusion how tough this weekend's Hankook 24H BARCELONA will be for Abdulla Ali Al Khelaifi, Ghanim Al Ali and Ibrahim Al Abdulghani. Al Khelaifi's six-round campaign in TCR Europe in 2019 (including two races at Barcelona, helpfully) constitutes most of the trio's European racing experience so far. As such, there's precious little circuit knowledge for the drivers to fall back on. Catalunya's typically scorching temperatures potentially being interrupted by rain is another big concern...

"No disrespect to Middle East racing at all, but Europe is a completely different standard. First time I went to race in Europe, I was a Middle East champion, and it was not easy! For the guys in Europe, these are their home circuits, just as, for us in the Middle East, Losail, the Autodrome, Yas Marina, etc, these are our home circuits. European drivers are very familiar with them because

they've had a lot of running there. We haven't. There's a completely different environment too. The first time it rained for me in Europe, I had to radio the team because I'd never used wipers in a race car before and I didn't know where they were!

Nevertheless, as reigning winners of the 24H SERIES Middle East Trophy, Al Khelaifi, Al Ali and Al Abdulghani have proven that they can learn, both individually and collectively, from their mistakes, and develop as a team. More is expected if the QMMF hopes to compete regularly, and on merit, on the international motor racing scene.

This weekend in Barcelona will be a tough hill to climb. But an important one to conquer.

"Again, Abdulla. I was managing his team" - QMMF by PCR Sport - "when he raced in TCR Europe. At the time, he was the fastest drive in Qatar, and he was... not even mid-pack, he was in the last quarter of the grid in those first few races. And he won't mind me saying this.

"But he understood: 'hey, I'm the best in Qatar, but I'm not the best here.' And you could see his development from minute one: his racecraft has changed dramatically. Sometimes, in the beginning, he would do well in qualifying, and then he would be eaten up in the race. By the end of that year, suddenly he was contending, and people were starting to take notice. That was just one of the things that made him who he is today.

"It's a proper heartbreak when you come to Europe, to race drivers at a way higher level, on tracks you've never seen before and you don't know inside out. But it's all about development. It's a very good thing to understand, 'hey, life is not rainbows and butterflies. I need to step up my game to get to that next level.' That's just part of life."



Patrick Kolb

LIONSPEED GP (#424)

When was you first race together? Which series and team were you competing with?

José: "I met Patrick when he was much younger, and much less experienced, at the Nordschleife. I think we were both racing, in some capacity, with Huber Motorsport."

What would you say is your best moment in the 24H SERIES whilst you have been teammates?

José: "I think my best moment with you [Patrick] was at Paul Ricard, when we finished 3rd overall. That was really a fantastic race, and not just because we got the chance to take an overall podium. I think it had a bit of everything, and the team did really well."*

Patrick: "That one, however, wasn't in the 24H SERIES..(!)"

José: "Oh, no, that was another 24-hour race!" [Both laugh] "Okay, let's try that again!"

"My favourite moment in that case has to be Dubai [earlier this year]. It was an exciting race, it was my first time doing the 24-hour race, the Autodrome was a wonderful venue, and we got a great result at the end."

Patrick: "Yep, absolutely. The [Hankook] 24H DUBAi is always a fun race to kick off the season and shorten the winter break. It was a race with lots of ups and downs, and we finished 2nd in-class [aboard an SRS Team Sorg Rennsport Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 CS], which was a great result."

*Patrick and José took a Porsche 964 Cup to 3rd place at the historic Les 2 Tours d'Horloge in 2022.

Head to Head

José Garcia

LIONSPEED GP (#424)

José which is Patrick's favourite track?

José: "Oh, it's the Nürburgring, for sure."

Patrick: "That is VERY true, yes!"

And Patrick, which is José's favourite track?

Patrick: "He has a love-hate relationship with the Nürburgring. That for sure is the most exciting track in the world, but I think you [José] probably feel most comfortable here at Spa."

José: "And Portimão. Portimão was my first official race ever, years ago! I like the track, I think it's very technical, and it's just a wonderful track to visit in a wonderful country."

Which circuit haven't you visited together, but would like to?

Patrick: "I think I can answer that one, and for sure, this would also be during the winter break because it's across the globe. It's Mount Panorama for the Bathurst 12 Hours. That I think is the only track which can keep up with the Nürburgring Nordschleife. Equally exciting, equally challenging... just a fantastic venue."

José: "Absolutely. Also, I'm from Spain, and I've always wanted to race at Barcelona. I never have, and I'm very much looking forward to the race this year."

José, what is Patrick's best quality as a driver?

José: "I think he's very reliable, in the sense that he's very stable. Very seldom do you see Patrick have a bad stint. He, somehow, always pulls it together and always produces a great result. "He's probably also the most proficient rain driver I've ever seen in my life!"

And Patrick, what is José's best quality?

Patrick: "This is an endurance sport, especially here in the 24H SERIES. And for sure one of José's strongest attributes is just putting everything together for an endurance run: clocking in equal lap times; being consistent; and very seldom ending up in trouble."

José, what is the most embarrassing thing Patrick has done during your time as teammates?

José: "Oh god! There's a lot of stuff we probably can't say, right?!" [Both laugh] "Probably you with your damn punctures! He's so used to driving GT3 cars, and when he drives GT3 or GT4 cars at the Nordschleife, he just beats them up. I've seen races where Patrick has four or five punctures just on his own!"

And Patrick, what's the most embarrassing thing José has done during your time as teammates?

Patrick: "I think, he has an uncanny ability to stain his race suits very, very quickly! We went from dark blue to white race suits two years ago, and I think every single white race suit he's had, he's managed to stain usually in the first weekend, or the second!"

*Fortunately for José, the weather at Spa-Francorchamps is cold enough during our interview that both of them have to keep their BLUE Lionspeed GP jackets on!

Quick fire round!

12 Hours, or 24 Hours?

Patrick: "24." José: "24."

Coffee, tea or Red Bull?

José: "Coffee." Patrick: "Tea."

Petrol or electric?

José: "Petrol." Patrick: "I don't understand the question!" [Both laugh] "Electric cars are for golf courses!"

Pineapple on pizza: yes or no?

Patrick: "Yes." José: "Yes."

Max, Lewis, Charles or Fernando?!

José: "Fernando!" Patrick: "Charles."

José, describe Patrick in one word.

José: "In only one word...?" [Cue mischievous laughter...] "...fast!"

And Patrick, describe José in one word.

Patrick: "Let's say... 'Ambitious!'"

José: "I'm not sure how to take that!"

And, finally, which one of you is fastest?!

José: "Patrick."

Patrick: "Depends where we are. In the mornings, on the way to the circuit and before he's had his coffee, it's definitely José!"

*José and Patrick were speaking with CREVENTIC shortly after qualifying for the Hankook 12H SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS. Despite the unpredictable conditions that weekend in the Ardennes, Lionspeed GP, in only its second event as a standalone entity, qualified 3rd in-class, led at the halfway mark, and went on to finish 2nd in GT4.

Roland Poulsen POULSEN MOTORSPORT (#14)

When was you first race together? Which series and team were you competing with?

Kristian: "Our first race together was in Denmark... in touring cars...? In 2009?"

Roland: "I think 2008. It was a long time ago!"

Kristian: "2008. And that was with our own team, and our own BMW [320si]."*

** This was during Poulsen Motorsport's second year of operation in 2008, when the team made sporadic appearances in the Danish Endurance Championship alongside its four-car campaign in the Danish Touring Car Challenge. Interestingly, Kristian, in his Porsche 911 GT3, and Roland, in his Renault Clio III, were on the same grid multiple other times that year, albeit in separate categories.*

What would you say is your best moment in the 24H SERIES whilst you have been teammates?

Kristian: "I would say the race we did together at Barcelona two years ago. That was our first race with the new BMW and it went really well."*

Roland: "Yeah, the M4 GT3. It's been a good car for us."

** Kristian, Roland, Christoffer Nygaard and Alfred Nilsson brought the BMW home 4th overall.*

Roland which is Kristian's favourite track?

Roland: "Favourite track? Le Mans."

Head to Head

Kristian: "Of course! Le Mans is something special if you get the chance to go there."

And Kristian, which is Roland's favourite track?

Kristian: "I think Barcelona, he thinks is a lot of fun."

Roland: "It's a LOT of fun!"

Kristian: "Also, Macau is really fun. Mugello is nice. Imola is nice. I like Monza as well.... Actually Italy has a lot of good tracks!"

Which circuit haven't you visited together, but would like to?

Roland: "Misano would be fun. We've never been there."

A bit of practice on the SIM before that...?

Roland: "No. We're too old for that!"

Roland, what is Kristian's best quality as a driver?

Roland: "It's dangerous to go first!" [Both laugh] "He is consistent, he never makes mistakes, and he's really experienced. I've learnt a lot from him. We look at the data together. We do the old-fashioned track walk together. He's good support for me. He's also really fast!"

And Kristian, what is Roland's best quality?

Kristian: "Yeah, Roland is also really consistent. He always takes each race step-by-step, also in practice. It's not like he drives around with his head out of the window acting crazy! And that's a good thing in endurance racing. It doesn't matter if you are one or two

seconds off. You just have to stay on-track, get the laps in, and just get to the finish."

Roland: "I think we learn a lot from each other."

Roland, what is the most embarrassing thing Kristian has done during your time as teammates?

Roland: "I would like to have a seat for the next race, so I will not answer that question!" [Both laugh]

In that case! Kristian, what's the most embarrassing thing Roland has done during your time as teammates?

Kristian: [Long pause] "Honestly, there's nothing much I can think of. There's plenty when he's outside the race car, but I would like to have him in the seat for the next race too, so...!" [Both laugh]

We think you're safe to give your answer Roland...!

Roland: "Actually, he's been doing this for almost 30 years. So with his experience, there really isn't a lot I can think of either."

Quick fire round!

12 Hours, or 24 Hours?

Roland: "24." Kristian: "24."

Coffee, tea or Red Bull?

Roland: "Coffee." Kristian: "Coffee."

Petrol or electric?

Roland: "Petrol." Kristian: "Petrol. That's an easy one!"

Kristian Poulsen POULSEN MOTORSPORT (#14)

Pineapple on pizza: yes or no?

Roland: "No." Kristian: "I can take it, but it's not my favourite."

Max, Lewis, Charles or Fernando?!

Kristian: "I'm old-school, so it's Fernando for me. But he's a Max Verstappen fan..."

Roland: "Yeah, Max for me. I think he might be one of the best there will ever be."

Roland, describe Kristian in one word.

Roland: "I know it's two words, but I think 'older brother' describes it best."

And Kristian, describe Roland in one word.

Kristian: "Roland's a funny guy to be around. I'm 10 years older, but we have a lot of fun together. So, yeah, 'fun.' He's got good spirit."

And finally, which one of you is fastest?!

Roland: "Kristian."

Kristian: "Ah, but I'm getting older. So maybe not for much longer!"

** Roland and Kristian were speaking with Bas Wetzler and Simon Gehem at the 2024 Hankook 12H MUGELLO. After a quiet run to 8th in qualifying, Poulsen Motorsport was running 5th overall at half-distance, and went on to finish 4th overall and on the podium in GT3-AM.*

“Our victories have proven that we can be competitive and perform well against renowned teams.”



In Barcelona, the Orchid Racing Team brings its first full endurance racing season in the 24H SERIES to a close. With a potential 992-AM Teams' championship win up for grabs, team principal Alexandre Mottet looks back on a hard-fought season. →

Images - Nico Mombaerts

Orchid Racing's 24H SERIES debut in 2019 could hardly have gone better. Even though the Swiss team had never previously competed in a 24-hour motor race, its Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 CS came home nine laps clear to win its class, first time out, at the Hankook 24H BARCELONA. That the Cayman did so with a purple-green livery reminiscent of Porsche's 'psychedelic' long-tail 917 was fitting.

Just under five years later, Orchid Racing has yet to replicate that fairy-tale GT4-class win. But, as team principal, and lead driver, Alexandre Mottet believes, there have been plenty of 'victories' for the Swiss outfit to celebrate since then.

Examples? Well, earlier this year in Mugello, two FIA world champions – one arguably the greatest rally driver of all-time, the other a Pikes Peak legend and a two-time Le Mans winner – made their 24H SERIES debuts aboard an Orchid Racing Porsche. A bold, and headline-grabbing statement of intent by the Geneva-based outfit, certainly.

Turn back the clock to Mugello 2022, and Orchid Racing was on the podium again at its second 24H SERIES race, the team's '71 Can-Am liveried 911 Cup (992) and 718 Cayman (GT4) both 2nd in-class.

In 2024 meanwhile, the Swiss team's first full endurance racing program with CREVENTIC no less, Orchid Racing has twice finished on the 992-AM podium – among the most combative classes in the 24H SERIES – and is within eight points of lifting the 992-AM Teams' crown at its first attempt.

"Our goal is always to bring the car back in good condition and reach the podium in every race," Alexandre explains to CREVENTIC. "Our victories have proven that we can be competitive and perform well against renowned teams."

Orchid Racing's championship-vying season is all the more commendable when you realize the Swiss team is still only seven events into its endurance racing tenure. And that, prior to this year's Hankook 12H MUGELLO, the Swiss team had completed almost exclusively in just one other series: Porsche's one-make, sprint-focused Sports Cup in Switzerland.

"Motorsport has always been a passion within the team at Porsche Centre Geneva," Alexandre continues, "and the decision to enter the Porsche Sport Cup Suisse in 2017 stemmed from a group of enthusiastic clients wanting to travel across Europe to race. Today, that passion remains. The team is more professional, and we offer our clients turnkey, 100 per cent Porsche experiences. So much so that drivers that have grown with the team now possess advanced driving skills."

After a solid outing in 2017, results improved significantly in 2018 – the team's first full season of motorsport – when the Orchid Racing Team, now entering SEVEN Cayman GT4 Clubsports in PSCS, took Group 3b class championship honours. A victory that has since confirmed Orchid Racing as a Sports Cup Suisse frontrunner, but which also got the Swiss team's proverbial endurance racing ball rolling...

Orchid Racing makes a distinctive 24H SERIES debut at Barcelona in 2019



“In endurance racing, nothing replaces experience, and this first season has been an important learning season.”

"Orchid Racing won the championship in 2018, 2021 and 2022 in the GT4 series, as well as in 2022 in GT3. Now, Porsche Sports Cup Suisse races are different from endurance racing, but that first victory in 2018 really reinforced the team's desire to do more, and the commitment to endurance racing emerged from a desire to explore a new discipline and take on new challenges."

Unsurprisingly, though a shock maiden win suggests otherwise, endurance racing proved a far trickier nut to crack on both a competitive and logistical level in 2019. Proud as he undoubtedly is of his team's progress since then, Alexandre admits that Orchid Racing's first full "learning season" of endurance racing in 2024 brought with it a number of unexpected challenges...

"In endurance racing, nothing replaces experience, and this first season has been an important learning season. The progression has been significant on several levels, representing a major challenge for a team like ours. We faced higher demands than in sprint racing."

"Logistically, an endurance season requires much more complex organization: car transport, spare parts management, etc. From a technical and mechanical standpoint, endurance racing requires much more thorough preparations, because the cars are prepared to be durable over longer periods, which is a key part of race strategy. The strategy is more complex too, because now we have to consider fuel management, tyre management, and pit stops. But the strategy also has to be flexible so we can adapt quickly to race conditions and unforeseen issues. Communication has been a major area of improvement to help maintain team coordination. And, of course, the drivers have to prepare for prolonged efforts during the day, during the night, and when it rains."

"This was an ambitious and demanding step, but I believe it demonstrates the team's desire to grow and succeed in more complex and prestigious racing formats."

The first of these "demanding steps" in 2024 was at this year's Hankook 12H MUGELLO, round one not only of Orchid Racing's first full European season with CREVENTIC, but also its first full season with Porsche's 992-generation GT3 Cup. Tellingly, the 'psychedelic' and Can-Am liveries were swapped out for a more conservative silver with teal-detailing.

Unsurprisingly, despite the team's double-podium in Mugello two years prior, the learning curve was almost vertical. Alexandre and two-time PSCS class champion Laurent Misbach had been on-board for all three of Orchid Racing's previous 24H SERIES outings, but Antonio Garzon had only two endurance race starts to his name, Villiger brothers Frank and Loic had just the one, and Switzerland's Daniel Gillioz had none at all. It also didn't help that the 16-car 992 field in Mugello was the then-highest for a 24H SERIES European event, and included class champions Ebimotors and Red Ant Racing, reigning outright series champion Atlas BX Motorsports (competing as 'Hankook Competition'), and series stalwarts Bas Koeten Racing and HRT Performance.



Runners-up spot in 992-AM at the Hankook 12H MUGELLO 2024 with WEC GOAT Sébastien Loeb



Bizarrely, yet further attention was drawn to Orchid Racing's still formative endurance racing program when it was announced that nine-time World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb and 2016 FIA World Endurance Champion Romain Dumas would make their 24H SERIES debuts with the team at that first event.

A rod for the team's back straight out the gates in Italy? Alexandre certainly doesn't think so...

"No, not at all. In fact, their presence was a real asset for our drivers. "Sébastien Loeb and Romain Dumas are friends of Porsche Centre Geneva." – Loeb contested the final round of the French GT4 Championship with Orchid Racing in 2019, while Dumas has been an ambassador for the dealership since 2018. – "Their experiences, I think, brought a wealth of knowledge and skills to the team. Our drivers benefited from additional motivation by learning alongside these champions. For amateur drivers, the opportunity to share the track with professionals of this calibre is an invaluable learning experience."

"Sébastien and Romain's presence also attracted increased media attention, and I believe that helped to boost our team's visibility and credibility. Of course, it added extra pressure, as we hoped to meet the expectations of all our drivers and secure a podium finish. And we did!"

Indeed, despite the #963 suffering transponder issues early on, Loeb (in his first Porsche Cup race since 2015), Dumas, Laurent, Alexandre and Loic Villiger qualified 4th in-class, were running 3rd in 992 after six hours, and eventually took the 992 runners-up spot behind only former champion Red Ant Racing.

As well as keeping the team's podium streak alive, that Mugello podium – another "victory" – gave the endurance racing newbies a much-needed confidence boost: "we are proud of our 2nd place in Mugello," Alexandre stated post-race. "Romain and Sébastien were invaluable assets, demonstrating once again their unrivalled talent and professionalism. This was also the result of exceptional teamwork, great dedication, and the passion that drives each and every member of our team."

Rounds two and three admittedly proved more character-building than Orchid Racing would have hoped. With no previous circuit experience to fall back on, and with the Ardennes' notoriously changeable



weather proving a thorn in everyone's side, the #917 finished a solid if underwhelming 10th at Spa-Francorchamps. One month later in Portimão, Orchid Racing hit its nadir thanks to a collision in qualifying, a post-session penalty AND engine failure for the #917. Misbach, the Villiger brothers, and Antoine Leclerc did at least salvage a potentially disastrous weekend by finishing 5th in the sister #963, but early coolant and brake issues meant even this was touch and go.

Arguably, few results proved as significant than at the recent Hankook 12H MISANO, at which the #917 snatched 'victory' from the jaws of defeat by finishing 3rd in-class and, incredibly, 5th overall. This, despite an "adrenaline-fuelled start" that included a clumsy collision with the Hamofa Racing BMW M4.

So proud is Alexandre of the result, he's quick to praise teammates Misbach, Garzon and Jeremy Brodard for "surpassing themselves physically" in the sweltering Adriatic heat. At some points, the mercury tipped 60 degrees in the car!

"Without a doubt, this year's podiums reflect the team's ambitions and consistency in each race, allowing us to climb the final standings."

All of which brings Orchid Racing to the Hankook 24H BARCELONA. Site of two of the Swiss team's six podiums thus far in the 24H SERIES, as well as their most recent win, and, potentially, a championship-winning one in 2024. That's only part of the story, however.

Orchid Racing's Cayman for instance may have won its class in 2019, but it had to overcome two separate punctures to do so, and an early collision meant the sister Porsche 991.2 GT3 Cup retired after just one lap. And while the team's second outing in Barcelona in 2023 produced an impressive comeback drive to 3rd in-class, more than an hour – and a potential class win – was lost to brake issues and wheel bracket failure.

Cause for concern? Hardly!

"Yes, it has already been five years since we celebrated our GT4 victory. But for Barcelona, the goal is to finish on the podium once again this year. More broadly, we are currently in 2nd place in the 992-AM category in the championship, so victory is still possible!"

Nor it seems have the hiccups at Spa or Portimão dampened Alexandre's enthusiasm for endurance racing. Indeed, be it as a championship defence or just the latest episode in a brand-new challenge, the Orchid Racing team principal is already looking ahead to another season in the 24H SERIES.

Not just against renowned teams. But as contemporaries.

"The passion that drives us makes us want to continue in endurance racing next year. The CREVENTIC organization is very professional and friendly, and we have thoroughly enjoyed this season. We would love to be back racing next year!" ■

Tell us about your helmet design...

Antonio Garzon

A relative newcomer to the 24H SERIES, Antonio Garzon cut his racing teeth in the GT4 ranks of the Porsche Sports Cup Suisse from 2020 to 2022 (during which he became a double champion) before moving on to the national Porsche Sprint Challenge in 2023. Since his 24H SERIES debut at Misano in 2022, and after a one-off run in the Dakar Classic – where he secured three stage victories in a Team Marisa-entered Toyota HDJ 80 off-roader – Antonio has raced almost exclusively with the Orchid Racing Team. Be it onboard the 992-generation GT3 Cup or a 718 Cayman GT4. As you've probably guessed, he has quite an affinity for Porsche!



Antonio, you've opted for an open-face 'rally' helmet rather than fully enclosed. Was that a decision based on comfort?

"When I started racing cars, I mainly drove rally races. I have participated several times in historic rallies like the Panamericana and Monte Carlo, as well as races in Portugal and also the Paris-Beijing. So I'm used to these open-face types of helmets.

"One advantage of these for endurance races is that I can breathe more easily and get more air blowing on my face, which means I don't get as hot. They are also fully carbon and lightweight, which makes them even more comfortable."

Porsche obviously means a lot to you! What is it about the brand that appeals so much?

"As young boys, Porsche is one of the brands that made us dream. Even today, 80 percent of all Porsches ever produced are still up and running. Porsches are also very comfortable to drive while still being very sporty. I like that combination of performance and comfort. I also have the chance to drive with Porsche Geneva, with Alexandre [Mottet, teammate and general director] at the helm of the company, and passionate people like Maëva [Cottin, deputy director], not to mention, of course, the mechanics, engineers, and coaches. These are the people who allow us to participate in events like these."

You've included a number of distinct Le Mans liveries on your helmet that motor racing fans will immediately recognize...

"What we wanted to do with this helmet was to integrate a lot of the famous Porsche liveries that have participated in and won [the 24 Hours of] Le Mans. We designed this helmet together with Jean-Francois Van Laere. His Belgian company, BLANCHIMONT Manufacture, has done many helmets before this."

Do you have a favourite?

"Personally, I really like the 'Pink Pig' livery."*

*Alongside the 'Pink Pig' which Porsche ran on the 917/20 at Le Mans in 1971, Antonio's helmet pays tribute to the Gulf colours, the

1970 Le Mans-winning 'Salzburg Red', the 1982-winning Rothmans-liveried 956 C, the 1998-winning Porsche 911 GT1, the 'New Man' 1985-winning Joest Racing 956B, the 'Martini Racing' winner in 1971, and the psychedelic 'Porsche Hippie'.

Would you be expected to use a different design if, for example, you raced a Ferrari or a BMW? Or would you create a similar design using their famous colours?

"Of course! I would be prepared to adapt the design if I was driving different cars, depending on the history of the brand."

BMW have done a lot of 'art cars'...

"That could be fun!"

Do you change this design quite regularly? If so, where does the inspiration come from?

"I try to create a new design every year. Together with Jean-Francois [Van Laere], we always try to create a design that really symbolizes the Porsche brand. We're already thinking about the design for next year, which might contain some references to CREVENTIC!"

Oh really?! Like what...?

"You'll just have to wait and see!"

One of the reasons we like your helmet design is that there's a very clear theme. In your opinion, do you think helmet designs are too complicated these days?

"There are a lot of drivers with custom helmet designs, and personally, I like the adventure and process of designing helmets with artists and exchanging ideas. I've been doing these designs with Jean-Francois for a while now, which makes the process much simpler each time. Jean-Francois helps me find a new artist for each helmet design, which makes all of them unique."

Antonio was speaking with Simon Gehem at the 2024 Hankook 24H PORTIMAO.



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