



At the 2023 Hankook 12H MUGELLO, long-time Herberth Motorsport teammates Alfred Renauer and Daniel Allemann will start their 50th race with CREVENTIC. We caught up with them in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, respectively, to discuss a tenure spanning more than a decade, multiple championship spoils, and career-defining wins at the Hankook 24H DUBAI.



Alfred Renauer

0 Races ♦ 50 Races ♦



Daniel Allemann

Alfred, a lot of your early racing career was spent in the Porsche Carrera Cup and ADAC GT Masters. What inspired the jump to endurance racing with CREVENTIC?

AR: "It was always on our list to do more endurance racing because we" – that would be Alfred and his twin brother Robert, both team principals at Herberth Motorsport – "had been doing sprint racing for so long. We wanted to try something different, something where we could [create] more team spirit and work together with other drivers."

"Since the beginning we've driven with Daniel and Ralf [Bohn] in the 24H SERIES. That's a really long relationship, and we're very happy with that. Hopefully we can do it for more years together."

Herberth Motorsport made its series debut at Mugello in 2015. And won! Did you expect that level of success so early on?

AR: "At that time, we didn't know, exactly, what was possible, and to win was definitely a great start for us. After that, we won a lot of races, with the Porsche..."

Actually, on that note, Herberth has won close to 20 CREVENTIC events outright, making it one of the most successful teams on the grid. What do you put that success down to?

AR: "I think in the end, you need to have a lot of good luck: if you're struggling at the beginning of a race, maybe with a Code 60 that comes out at the wrong time, that can give you a really bad rhythm for the rest of the race. You can lose one or two laps easily, especially in Dubai where there is always a lot of good cars and it's really hard to come back. But if you have two or three Code 60s early on, and you make the most of them, that can set you up for a good race."

There must be more to it than good luck though, surely...?

AR: "I mean, for sure, we take a lot of care preparing our cars, and we've all worked together for a long time. And it's important to have a strategy beforehand. But you →



Daniel, we'd assumed that you made your 24H SERIES debut with Herberth Motorsport in 2015. But you were actually on the grid much earlier than that...

DA: "Yes, I actually started my CREVENTIC career with FACH Auto Tech, and we did Dubai in 2012 just for fun! That was my first big race."

What are your memories of your first 24H DUBAI?

DA: "Before that I had a private car [for track days], and one day got the chance to drive an old Porsche Cup car. There was a big difference between my streetcar and the Cup car. I already knew Alex Fach, and I asked him, 'is it possible to drive with you for one race?' and he said okay. So, he got me, three other 'beginners,' and one SEMI-PRO driver [Martin Ragginger] in for Dubai."

"In 2012, our goal was not to go any faster than 2m 07s*, and because, for me, driving a 997 GT3 R was so different to the Carrera Cup, my first five or six laps were around 2m 09s or 2m 10s while everyone around me was doing 2m 02s. I do remember [Sven Dolenc] had a big accident with a BMW, and we lost the left rear. That cost us two hours. It was crazy, but it was fun too."

*In an effort to keep competition tight in 2012 and 2013, A6-Am runners had to stick to a pre-determined laptime, with only five 'joker' laps permitted across the full 24 hours. Despite this and its early delay, the #17 FACH Auto Porsche still finished 13th.

Fast forward to Mugello in 2015, and you're back in the 24H SERIES, now with Herberth Motorsport...

DA: "Yes. Before that in 2013, I was doing the Porsche Carrera Cup in Germany, and my business partner Ralf [Bohn] said, 'I'll come do Carrera Cup with you.' He'd never driven a race car before! But we did Carrera Cup together in 2014 with Robert Renauer. It was good, we quickly learned how to drive these Porsches, and we decided to try a longer race together. Robert and Herberth had a 997 GT3 R, so we lined up at Mugello for our first race together." →



need to speak with your drivers too, because the engineers are good but they cannot see everything on the monitors. They may not know what's happening when the yellow flags come out. As a driver, you can 'feel' if a Code 60 will happen or not. And this is just down to experience. We've been doing this for a long time."

As you mentioned, most of your 24H SERIES races have been completed with Ralf and Daniel, and of course your brother Robert. What can you tell us about them as teammates?

AR: "We are big friends. Really big friends, and they've been with us since we started in the 24H SERIES. We've done it together. There was just one moment last year when Daniel was not sure if he would stay with us anymore after his big accident." – *Daniel discusses his accident in his interview.* – "It was just one moment when he was thinking about retiring, but his wife told him he should carry on. And in the end, he decided he would. And, for sure this was good for us. We spend a lot of time together outside of racing. It's a good partnership. A special one."

So, Herberth takes its first win in 2015, follows that up with three more wins in 2016, and you start 2017 by winning the Hankook 24H DUBAI, with two-time Le Mans winner Brendon Hartley, for the first time. What did that weekend mean to the team?

AR: "This was a pretty cool weekend! We didn't actually know Brendon before that weekend, but he was really easy to work with. There have been many drivers over the years, thinking maybe they were more professional or they knew everything." – *Pro that he is, Alfred doesn't name names.* – "But with Brendon, it was just a case of getting in the car and driving fast."

"That was actually his first time in a GT car. Ever! When Porsche ended its LMP1 program, Brendon wasn't sure where he would go. He thought maybe he needed to go to GT racing, so Dubai was a pretty good experience for Brendon too. The funny thing is, one or two months after Dubai, he got his contract with Toro Rosso in F1."



And you won!

DA: "And we won! It was unbelievable!"

Did any of you expect your first race to go so well?

DA: "No. Well, I mean, the team probably did, but Ralf and I? No. I remember we had to do a lot of training for that race, and we also needed a lot of luck! But it was a great race: no mistakes, nothing broken on the car. I think we earned that win."

You've done most of your 24H SERIES races with Ralf and the Renauer twins. What are they like as teammates?

DA: "The Renauers are crazy!" *[Laughs]* "I mean, we've driven together so many times – all of them, if you don't count those 2012 races – and Ralf and I have learned a lot from them. And I'm 65, so that helps! We just have a lot of fun together."

"We lined up at Mugello for our first race together. And we won!"

Fast-forward to 2017, and you start that season with your first win at the Hankook 24H DUBAI. Would you say that is the team's best result to-date?

DA: "That was the special race for us, yes. We got a lot of support from Porsche that weekend, and, I remember, Brendon *[Hartley]* was coming straight from Porsche that weekend, but he'd never driven the 911 R before. Never! So when he got in the car for the first time, he wasn't that quick. I probably shouldn't say that!" *[Laughs]* "But after two days? Wow! He was so good!"

"That year, there was a field of more than 90 cars, and more than 30 in *[A6]*. But again, we didn't make any mistakes and nothing broke on the car. For sure, that's our best win."

So, Brendon Hartley owes his Formula 1 career to Herberth Motorsport...?!

AR: *[Laughs]* "I'm not sure about that! But for him it was important to get that experience in a GT car. At that point, it really looked like he was going to be racing an RSR. But everything turned around great!"

At the end of 2017, Herberth has won four races and is crowned Overall GT Teams' 'Continents' champion. Did you expect that title to come sooner rather than later after such a successful start with CREVENTIC?

AR: "It was nice to have it, but honestly, during the season, we were always thinking about this race, or the next one. Because they're such long distance, so many things can happen in 12 or 24 hours, so we never really look at the championship. For sure it's very cool to win it, but for us, the focus is always on the races themselves and doing our best in them."

"After all of our bad luck in 2022, 2nd place in Dubai felt like a win!"

Let's skip forward to 2019. Even though Scuderia Praha won more races, that year was one of the most consistent for Herberth in terms of podiums. The objective is always a title win, but was 2019 still a satisfying year for the team in terms of performance?

AR: "Oh for sure. I mean, every year has been special... or maybe, most years have been special!" – *Yes, we will be coming back to that!* – "We've competed with a lot of different guys: in the beginning it was mostly the Ram *[Racing]* Mercedes and Black Falcon, and after that, it was the Scuderia Praha Ferrari for a long time. And it's been nice, for two →

It's interesting you mention how good the 911 GT3 R was, because you've raced a Porsche for most of your 24H SERIES career...

DA: "Actually, there was one race" – *in Dubai 2016* – "where we had a Lamborghini. That was a crazy race! During first practice, the fuel *[filler cap]* was not correctly fixed, fuel leaked out, over the motor, and the whole car burned up at turn one while Robert was driving. He was okay, but this was a brand-new car and it was gone. Now we had no Porsche, and we had to change to a *[Huracán GT3]* for the race."

And what was that like to drive compared with the Porsche?

DA: "Well, firstly the Lamborghini is mid-engined, which means it's very 'neutral' to drive. In the Porsche, the motor is behind you, so it's a very different 'kind' of driving. Plus, there's a lot of traction. In the 911.2, the front is better. The old Porsche was faster on the straights, but now we have very, very strong brakes, and in the old car, we had a lot of understeer. So this generation is much easier to drive."

"What impressed me, in Dubai *[2016]*, was that the team got spare parts from Germany, and fixed the Porsche over a night and a day, which was unbelievable!"

Even though Scuderia Praha won more races in 2019, that year was one of the most consistent for Herberth in terms of podiums. Do you look on that season a success as far as performance goes?

DA: "That Ferrari was better than the Porsche that year, mainly because of the *[balance of performance]*. So in many ways, 2019 was a 'normal' season for us, but that Ferrari was really strong. Also, you need a lot of luck across a season: sometimes you have that, sometimes you don't."

Like at Spa...?

DA: "Oh, you mean with the refueling?!" *[Claps hands]* "Unbelievable! That was absolutely unbelievable!" That last pit stop was actually a security stop for us: we →





years now I think, racing against the Phoenix Racing Audi. That's what makes this series interesting. Even if you are 2nd, you've still worked hard to be on the podium at a 12 or 24-hour race against some really tough teams. So, for sure, 2019 was a good year for us.

"To be honest, every race starts at zero. And I think we have a strong enough line-up that we can fight for the win at every race. And this is what makes it nice for us, knowing, quite early on, whether a weekend will be good, or not so good, for us. Even this race [in Abu Dhabi], we can fight for victory with our 'sister' car."

**After it's runner-up spot in Dubai, Herberth Motorsport finished an incredibly close 2023 Hankook 6H ABU DHABI just 10 seconds behind its 'sister' Pure RACING Porsche, securing GT3 honours in CREVENTIC's Middle East Trophy in the process.*

Herberth Motorsport won in Portimão and Monza in 2020, the first two 24H SERIES races held after the outbreak of Covid-19. How different did the paddock feel, or was the focus just on the race itself?

AR: "That's usually how we go into each race weekend. During the Covid times, for sure, things felt very different in the paddock, but all our drivers and engineers, mechanics, etc., were so happy to be back to 'normal' life – I mean, it wasn't normal... – and being able to focus on racing and not on what was happening in the world. That was the main reason the guys wanted to be back. So, in a lot of ways, it was a big relief."

You also took your third win at the 24H BARCELONA in 2021, something no other GT team has done. What is it about that event that's helped Herberth be so successful there?

AR: "Well, for us, it's a good race because we've won it three times! But we've also had races there where it was really not good. 2015, our first year at Barcelona, was a nightmare with three broken gearboxes and a broken seat. One of our mechanics broke his leg when he fell off the pitwall too. So, for sure, Barcelona has been one of our good tracks, but when we have a bad year there, it's been really bad!"

probably had enough fuel to get to the end. And what happened was the guy at the station saw our car, activated the refueling 'tag' maybe too quickly – we never really found out what happened – and nothing happened when he tried to put the fuel in. So he had to start again... waiting, waiting... before he could start refueling. And that 10 seconds felt like a very long time!

"Then, oh, there's the Ferrari, coming out of La Source. Our car's coming out the pits, and..." – Daniel mimes the amazing moment the Ferrari, his left hand, moves ahead of the Porsche, his right hand, on the exit of Raidillon. – "We are a team. We win together as a team and lose together as a team. But that was such a crazy finish!"

**In an incredible finish to the 2019 Hankook 12H SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Scuderia Praha took the lead from Herberth Motorsport on the penultimate lap, just as the Porsche was emerging from its final pit stop.*

2020 was an odd season for everyone, understandably. But Herberth Motorsport was among the first teams to come back for the first two races in Portimão and Monza...

DA: "Yes, things were very different. But we thought, 'we are here, it's a race. Let's get on with it.' And Monza was very exciting for me. A lot easier for us as 'AM' drivers: chicane, straight, chicane, left, right, straight. Five, six corners! But it's really fast, which was good for our car..."

Actually Herberth Motorsport finished 1-2-3...

DA: "Ah, so it was really good for us! And you really feel the history when you're there. That was really a special track."

Herberth took three wins in 2020, and won four more in 2021, taking the title both years. How do those championships compare with your title-winning year in 2017?

DA: "2017, for me, is more special. And yes, it's mostly because of Dubai! But that whole

ironically, that seems to be the case with the Hankook 12H MUGELLO as well: Herberth has won three times overall, but retired very early in 2016 and 2017...

AR: "It's stranger than you think! Daniel, for example, had two moments at Arabbia when the engine went off and wouldn't start again. Same corner. Same stint. One year after the other! And this was with different cars!"

Is it safe to say then that Daniel won't be invited back to Mugello by Herberth...?!

AR: [Laughs] "No. But we will for sure put someone else in for the second stint!"

"Suddenly the engine went off and wouldn't start again. Same corner. Same stint. One year after the other!"

This weekend marks your 50th race with CREVENTIC. Is there one particular 24H SERIES race that stands out to you, for good or bad reasons?

AR: "For sure, Dubai in 2017. Dubai is always really hard to win because of all the fast GT3 cars and good line-ups, but it's what we look forward to every year: to try and win Dubai again. This year we were really close" – Herberth finished just 31 seconds behind Team WRT at the 2023 Hankook 24H DUBAI. – "and we're really, really happy with 2nd place this year. All the drivers, all the engineers did a really good job with the Code 60s, and our performance was really strong. After all of our bad luck in 2022, it felt like a win, to be honest!" ■

season was very special for us, with the new 991 GT3 R. Actually, I bought that car at the end of the season, and it's now in my garage in Switzerland!"

You also took your third win at the 24H BARCELONA in 2021, something no other GT team has done. What is it about that event that's helped Herberth be so successful there?

DA: "We've had a lot of luck, I think. But also, we like this track a lot. It's very good for the Porsche because you need traction. And, as a driver, Barcelona is one of my favourite tracks. Imola is the best – also Dubai is a lot of fun – but I really like Barcelona. Plus, in Barcelona, there's always a lot of competition."

Ironically, one of your best seasons together – 2021 – was followed by one of your worst in 2022...

DA: "It didn't start very well, because I had a very big accident in Dubai. Very big during Free Practice. Unbelievable, at turn eight, the left-hander. I overtook one car, but he changed direction, touched me on the right rear, and we went off together into the wall at 160kph. And that was it. The car was completely done, so we couldn't even start."

Was there a specific reason behind the team's poor fortunes in 2022?

DA: "We just had a lot of mechanical problems. A lot of issues with the gearbox, but also the ABS, and we're not sure why. Some of these problems, we'd never had before. Never! And you can't change every part, every time. Plus, this is not normal for Herberth because they always prepare their cars really, really well."

No doubt you'll want to put 2022 behind you this season...

DA: "We hope so, yes! Over the years, we've had a lot of great races, and a lot of luck. Then in 2022, we had all our bad luck all together!" [Laughs] "So, in a way, in 2023, we're starting over." ■

Notable results

2012

- » First series start – Daniel
- » 24H DUBAI – 13th (in A6, with FACH AUTO TECH)
- » First 24H SERIES class podium
- » 12H ZANDVOORT – 3rd (in 997, with Car Collection Motorsport)

2015

- » First series start – Alfred
- » 12H MUGELLO – 1st (in A6-Pro)
- » First 24H SERIES win
- » 12H MUGELLO

2016

- » 3 wins (Zandvoort / Paul Ricard / Barcelona)

2017

- » Overall GT Drivers' champions – Continents
- » 4 wins (Dubai / Red Bull Ring / Paul Ricard / COTA)

2018

- » 2 overall wins (Imola / Barcelona) and 1 overall podium (COTA)

2019

- Daniel**
- » 2 A6-Am class wins (Spa-Francorchamps / Brno)
- » 5 overall podiums (Mugello / Spa / Brno / Barcelona / COTA)

Alfred

- » 5 A6-Pro / A6-Am podiums (Dubai / Mugello / Spa / Portimão / COTA)
- » 2 overall podiums (Mugello / COTA)

2020

- Daniel**
- » GT3-Pro Drivers' champion – Europe
- » 1 overall win (Mugello) and 2 overall podiums (Portimão / Monza)

Alfred

- » GT3-Pro Drivers' champion – Continents
- » 1 overall win (Monza) and 1 overall podium (Portimão)

2021

- » GT3-AM Drivers' champion – Alfred
- » 4 overall wins (Mugello / Paul Ricard / Barcelona / Hungary)
- » 1 overall podium (Sebring)