

# News

Motorsports

## Mighty Milestone

**Porsche's one-hundredth victory in the American Le Mans Series came in the season's final race at Laguna Seca. For Hartmut Kristen, Porsche's head of motorsports, these wins and titles are proof that "the world's best sports cars come from Stuttgart."**

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In a show of enthusiasm, the elated fans climbed the barriers. And the post-race rocket flares shooting into the night sky above the Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca were but fancy sparklers in comparison with the scorching fireworks set off earlier by the drivers on the track. In particular, the final laps, a thrilling duel between Jörg Bergmeister in his Porsche 911 GT3 RSR and Jan Magnussen in his Cor-

vette C6R, made for breathtaking drama in the final race of the American Le Mans Series 2009 season. After all, the one-hundredth Porsche victory is the crowning point of a season that saw Porsche once again win every GT2 title awarded in the series featuring the world's fastest sports cars. "That was a race I'll never forget. I did everything for the win, and there were numerous situations where I

had to pull out all the stops to keep from flying off the track," says Bergmeister as he reflects on his hard-fought success.

With four championship titles to his name, the Porsche team driver is now the second most successful driver in the history of the American Le Mans Series. And his teammate, Patrick Long, is celebrating his second title. "In this season, we were the most consistent, and our team made the fewest mistakes," says Long. "We experienced a couple of very difficult races but remained cool. That was the key to our success."

With the 911 GT3 RSR, run by the U.S. Porsche customer team Flying Lizard Motorsports, they were the outstanding drivers of an extremely hard-fought season. Competing against teams supported by Ferrari, BMW, Chevrolet, and Ford, they won five races in a row. This record-breaking achievement secured a comfortable point advantage, and their sixth win of the season brought them the championship title in Laguna Seca, California. For Bergmeister, who had already won in ▶

Champions' League: Jörg Bergmeister (left) and Patrick Long (right) with Hartmut Kristen, head of Porsche Motorsport



Taking the lead: The 911 GT3 RSR proved its mettle against strong competitors, including Ferrari and BMW



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## The 2009 Champions

### American Le Mans Series

Jörg Bergmeister (left), Patrick Long



### Grand-Am Series

Leh Keen (left), Dirk Werner



### Le Mans Series

Richard Lietz (left), Marc Lieb



### FIA GT Championship

Richard Westbrook



2005, 2006, and 2008, this was his fourth master achievement in the American Le Mans Series; for Long, it was the second since 2005. Over the eleven years this racing series has taken place, Porsche has won nine GT titles. No other manufacturer can make that claim.

Just a few hours before the finale in Laguna Seca, thanks to the United States' coast-to-coast time difference, Porsche collected additional titles on the other side of the country. At the conclusion of the Grand-Am Series on the Homestead-Miami Speedway in Florida, Dirk Werner and Leh Keen, driving a 911 GT3 Cup, won the GT class drivers' title and, with the company's fourth season victory, the Manufacturers' Championship was secured. Porsche customer team Farnbacher Loles Racing won the team title. With their win in the prototype class, João Barbosa and Hurley Hayward in the Porsche Riley triumphantly concluded a season befittingly begun by Brumos Racing teammates David Donohue and Darren Law at Daytona, Florida. There, at the prestigious 24-hour race, Donohue and Law had won the 21st overall victory for Porsche.

Porsche expanded its trophy collection in Europe as well. In the Le Mans Series, Marc Lieb and Richard Lietz in the 911 GT3 RSR won the GT2 class drivers' title for Porsche, and the Felbermayr-Proton customer team secured the team title. Richard Westbrook won the FIA GT Championship (GT2 class). The Porsche RS Spyder driven by the Essex team in the 24 Hours of Le Mans sped to victory in the LMP2 class.

In addition to its championship titles, the finale of the American Le Mans Series gave Porsche yet another reason to celebrate: the "Michelin Green X Challenge" environmental award. The 911 GT3 RSR, which used E85 test fuel (85 percent ethanol) for the last two races at Road Atlanta and Laguna Seca, won this inaugural award. The award honors the vehicle with the highest overall efficiency, as measured by the ratio of lap times and fuel consumption. "To win the environmental award in addition to all of the titles in the GT2 class makes me very proud," says Kristen emphatically. "This is unquestionably the right signal for the future: to place greater value on vehicle efficiency in motorsports." ◀

First work, then play: Jörg Bergmeister's racing equipment gets a break

