



Tire change on the fly: The 911 GT3 RSR of Flying Lizard Motorsports during a pit stop at Road Atlanta

SPORTS

# DOUBLE CHEERS

*During the 2010 season Porsche has once again won both the American Le Mans Series and the Le Mans Series in Europe. The recipe for success: the peerless 911 GT3 RSR and the teamwork on both sides of the pit wall.*

By Claus-Peter Andorka  
Photos by Bob Chapman, Ulli Upietz



**The battle for seconds** is a matter of honor. The pit crew of Flying Lizard Motorsports is trained to send the Porsche 911 GT3 RSR with the starting number 45 back on the track as swiftly as possible, fully refueled and with fresh tires. Once these sharp young guys with their impact wrenches get busy in outfits that make them look like space-bound astronauts, they become totally absorbed in the job. It makes no difference to them that, in this final phase, the 1,000-mile race on the familiar Road Atlanta road course has already been decided and that the Porsche factory drivers Jörg Bergmeister and Patrick Long are virtually certain to win the American Le Mans Series. “They want to be the best, and they



THE 911 GT3 RSR  
BOUND FOR SUCCESS:  
BRIGHT OUTLOOK  
AT ROAD ATLANTA



give their all to be successful,” says Porsche engineer Roland Kussmaul, who has an excellent vantage point on the command post above the pit wall. “In the pit you can make up a lot of time, but you also can lose a lot of time. These lads have embedded that in their mindset, so they simply can’t shift down into a lower gear.”

The world’s fastest sports cars star in the long-distance races of the American Le Mans Series and the Le Mans Series in Europe, but the permanent stars in the strategists’ planning schemes are the pit crews. They labor against the clock and under a high level of stress. Each one of them must be able to rely on every other one. One false move, a single wheel nut untightened—some races are lost along the narrow concrete lane just off the racetrack. Pit stops are the textbook example of teamwork in motorsport. To become as fail-safe as possible even under maximum pressure, the rapid reaction force of Flying Lizard trained hard throughout the winter. By the time the season started, they had already completed more than one hundred pit stops. The dry runs paid off. “Considering

GOOD  
STRATEGY AND  
FAST PIT STOPS:  
THE KEY  
TO SUCCESS



the season as a whole, we had by far the best team. The combination of a good strategy and fast pit stops enabled us time and again to cross the finish line as the winner,” says Jörg Bergmeister. He won four races this season in the most fiercely competitive GT Class of the American Le Mans Series and successfully defended his title together with Patrick Long. Their fellow factory drivers Marc Lieb and Richard Lietz achieved the same triumph with the 911 GT3 RSR of the Felbermayr-Proton team in the Le Mans Series.

This dual set of victories was possible because Porsche customer teams view motorsport as a team sport. And because the drivers, though naturally more inclined to be individual competitors, share this attitude without exception. And they do not have to get bent out of shape to do it—quite the contrary. “For me, Jörg isn’t a teammate but a really good friend,” says Long. “We help each other. Each of us knows what makes the other one tick. Whenever we encounter a problem, we discuss it openly. There are no secrets, and there is no envy.” The fact that they are on such good terms is by no means due merely to the fact that they are suc-

cessful together or that they work in concert when they are fine-tuning the 911 GT3 RSR. It is because each of them knows how good he is, so they don’t have to prove anything to each other. And it is precisely this attitude that allows Lieb and Lietz to work so smoothly together. “We get along well together, and we also have a great deal of fun off the racetrack,” says Lietz. Lieb especially appreciates his teammate’s infectiously pleasant disposition: “He is



Fast service: Winners of the Felbermayr-Proton team



Having fun also matters: Marc Lieb (left) and Richard Lietz

always relaxed, even when things aren’t going so well. I can depend on him a hundred percent.”

When the drivers see eye to eye it also makes the engineers’ work easier. “It really makes things more difficult when the drivers make conflicting statements and the team has to decide whom to listen to,” says Kussmaul. “It’s a lot simpler when the drivers agree.”



All-out friends: Jörg Bergmeister (left) and Patrick Long

This motorsport veteran regularly steps out of retirement for the race in the United States, much to the pleasure of Bergmeister, who since 2005 has worked successfully with the brilliant engineer. "Between races we talk on the phone almost daily," he confesses. "And it always makes us think of something we can do even better."

The implementation and the finishing touches are taken care of by the engineers at the Weissach Research and Development Center, who also deserve a great deal of credit for the success. They have made the 911 GT3 RSR the most successful GT race car of this season, which in addition to the two championship titles has also won the 24-hour races at Le Mans, Spa, and Dubai.

"The development that this car has undergone is certainly impressive," says Lieb, who works for Porsche not only as a driver but also as an engineer, and for that reason has access to a wealth of firsthand information. "The lap times show that despite all of the restrictions by the racing rules it's been getting faster and faster. This development, I am sure, will continue in 2011 as well." ●



Porsche on course:  
Welcome to Road Atlanta!  
Scan this code with your cell phone camera and you can view the 911 GT3 R Hybrid at the race. See page 9 for more information.



911 GT3 R HYBRID

## A Drive System for the Future



**The first race** of the 911 GT3 R Hybrid in the United States excited more than just the fans: major newspapers like *USA Today* and *The Wall Street Journal* published detailed reports about the performance of the innovative race car at Road Atlanta. Fox News and other TV channels broadcast live from the Porsche pit. Even Kathleen Hogan from the U.S. Department of Energy, who had made a special trip to the race from Washington, D.C., was lavish in her praise. With this vehicle, she said, Porsche is showing the way to the future of motorsport.

After its gala premiere at the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring,

the 911 GT3 R Hybrid also met all expectations during the 1,000-mile classic in the state of Georgia. With the Le Mans winners Timo Bernhard, Romain Dumas, and Mike Rockenfeller at the wheel, the 911 GT3 R Hybrid once again demonstrated its reliability, performance, and efficiency on this challenging course.

"I am proud that this innovative system kept working smoothly for the whole nine hours," Porsche Motorsport Chief Hartmut Kristen said, summing up the superb results of this test-drive. "Once again it provided our development engineers with a mass of important data." ●