



2017 FIA/WEC Prologue

Published: April 3, 2017 By: Glen Smale

Online version: <https://www.virtualmotorpixblog.com/2017-fiawec-prologue/>



The #2 Porsche 919 Hybrid driven by Timo Bernhard, Earl Bamber and Brendon Hartley testing at the pre-season Prologue at the Autodromo Nazionale Monza, in preparation for the FIA/WEC 2017 season

The 2017 FIA/WEC Prologue at the Autodromo Nazionale Monza on 1st and 2nd April showcased its newest competitors and also some familiar team names. As well as being the first action of WEC racing season, it is also the last official opportunity the teams will have before the first race of the season at Silverstone, just a fortnight away on 15/16 April.



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

The #1 Porsche 919 Hybrid was driven by three previous Le Mans winners, Neel Jani, Andre Lotterer and Nick Tandy, on the occasion of the pre-season Prologue at the Autodromo Nazionale Monza

A total of 27 cars took the opportunity to test their cars, drivers, setups, equipment and logistics to see that everything is in tip top shape for Silverstone. While any test session will always be a test for the cars, it is to all intents and purposes too late in the day to start to test the endurance of any major components, it is more a case of tweaking what the teams already have.



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

The #7 Toyota TS050 Hybrid of Mike Conway
and Kamui Kobayashi



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

The #8 Toyota TS050 Hybrid of Anthony
Davidson and Kazuki Nakajima

Any thoughts of setting highly competitive lap times is likewise the stuff of fantasy as no team is going to reveal its hand at a pre-season test session, that will be reserved for race day. For some, there is the satisfaction in posting the fastest times because of the one-upmanship that goes with that statement. But in truth, it is all a bit of smoke and mirrors and even these fastest times are nowhere near a team's best, so it is rather meaningless.



© Virtual Motorpix/JM
Jackie Chan DC Racing #38 Oreca 07 Gibson driven by Ho-Pin Tung, Oliver Jarvis and Thomas Laurent during the Prologue at Monza on 1st April 2017

However, it did give our man, John the snapper, a chance to get up close and personal with some new names on the grid, as well as grabbing a few shots of the new cars being launched by the more familiar names. Both the Porsche and Toyota LMP1 teams wheeled out their new steeds for the season, and ByKolles will field just the one car in the LMP1 class.



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

#24 CEFC Manor TRS Racing Oreca 07
Gibson of Tor Graves, Roberto Gonzalez,
Jonathan Hirschi and Simon Trummer



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

#31 Vaillante Rebellion Oreca 07 Gibson of
Julien Canal and Bruno Senna, puts a foot in
the gravel at Monza 1st April 2017

Two successful and well-known racing teams in 2016 will combine for the new FIA World Endurance Championship season in 2017. The Chinese Jackie Chan DC Racing team and Jota Sport join forces for a two-car program with a pair of ORECA 07 LMP2 cars this year. Jackie Chan DC Racing was formed in 2015 and immediately tasted success after joint team founder David Cheng, along with teammate Ho-Pin Tung, claimed the 2015-16 Asian Le Mans LMP3 title adding to their championship triumphs in 2013 and 2014. The team was



co-founded by Hollywood action legend Jackie Chan and has created headlines around the world for its achievements and profile. The two LMP2 DC Racing cars will wear the numbers 37 and 38, both cars being present at the 2017 FIA/WEC Prologue.



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

First European outing for the #91 Porsche 911 RSR (MY 2017) driven by Richard Lietz and Frederic Makowiecki



© Virtual Motorpix/JM

The #92 Porsche 911 RSR (MY 2017) driven by Michael Christensen and Kevin Estre at Monza on 1st April 2017

Although the name Rebellion needs no introduction, this is their first season in the LMP2 class, having competed for a number of years in the LMP1 Privateer class. This year the



team is partnering with Vaillante and the two Vaillante Rebellion cars are numbered 13 and 31.



The #51 and #71 AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTEs were in action at Monza over the weekend. The #71 car is driven by Davide Rigon and Sam Bird



The AF Corse Swiss team, Spirit of Race, with the #54 Ferrari 488 GTE driven by Thomas Flohr and Franceseco Castellacci



The Ford Chip Ganassi Team will field two Ford GTs, the #66 is driven by Stefan Mucke and Olivier Pla

In 2017, the familiar team of Manor Racing is joined by the Chinese Talent Racing Sports organisation. China CEFC Energy Company Limited (CEFC), Baxi Ice Cream and TRS, have all come together to form the CEFC MANOR TRS RACING team, and they will field two ORECA 07 Gibsons. However, at the 2017 FIA/WEC Prologue, only one car was present and featured the number 24.



The #95 Aston Martin Vantage is driven by Marco Sorensen, Nicki Thiim and Richie Stanaway in the GTE PRO class



In the GTE AM class, the #98 Aston Martin V8 Vantage is piloted by Paul Dalla Lana, Pedro Lamy and Mathias Lauda

In the GTE Pro class, Ferrari, Ford, Porsche and Aston Martin will each roll out a pair of factory entered cars making a total of eight cars at Monza. Clearwater Racing, Dempsey-Proton Racing, Gulf Racing, and Aston Martin Racing are familiar GTE Am team names, and this year they are joined by Spirit of Race, the Swiss Ferrari racing team offshoot of the AF Corse team.



For more images from the pre-season Prologue at the Autodromo Nazionale Monza on 1st & 2nd April, click [here](#)

We are all set for an exciting WEC racing season!

Written by: Glen Smale

Images by: Virtual Motorpix/John Mountney

Share this: