

FIA WEC CONFIRMS “ROOKIE TEST” AWARD TO THE BEST WORLD SERIES FORMULA V8 3.5 DRIVERS IN BARHEIN

- › **The LMP1 Porsche 911 Hybrid awaits the Season 2017 winner!**
- › **The « End of Season Test Days » will follow in November (20 and 22)**

(25th October 2017) - **FIA WEC** has announced today the Frenchman **Thomas Laurent** (19) to take part in the Rookie Test with the **Toyota TS050 Hybrid**. The other three drivers who will be officially part of the WEC Rookie Test in Bahrain all come from **World Series Formula V8 3.5** but, with the drivers' championship not due to be settled until the final race of the season in Bahrain, their identity won't be confirmed until less than 24 hours before the test begins.

The eventual winner of the World Series Formula V8 3.5 championship will test the Porsche 919 Hybrid, the driver finishing second in the classification will test and ORECA 07 Gibson with the winner of the FIA Endurance Trophy for LMP2 Teams, and the driver finishing third in the classification will test with the team which has won the FIA Endurance Trophy for LMGTE Pro Teams.

Pietro Fittipaldi (BRA, 21), **Matevos Isaakyan** (RUS, 19), **Egor Orudzhev** (RUS, 23) and **Alfonso Celis Jr** (MEX, 21) are the current top four in the World Series Formula V8 3.5 championship standings and the three lucky participants in the WEC Rookie Test will come from within this group, although **Rene Binder** (AUT, 25) and **Roy Nissany** (ISR, 22) mathematically are still in the bid

Each of the four “Rookie” drivers will be awarded a minimum of 30 laps during the test day, and the five hours of track time is also available to other WEC competitors should they wish to profit from the opportunity to evaluate potential drivers for the 2018/2019 Super Season.

Gérard Neveu, CEO of the World Endurance Championship, said: “This is a fantastic opportunity for these up-and-coming drivers to show their talents to teams representing some of the world's leading automotive manufacturers. Just look at Porsche's Brendon Hartley now in F1 thanks to what he has learned in LMP1, and Mike Conway moving up from LMP2 to Toyota as perfect examples. This Rookie Test will give Thomas and the World Series Formula V8 3.5 drivers a bonus to their season, and potentially set them on a very positive career path within the endurance family.”

Jaime Alguersuari, Executive President – RPM MKTG, said: “When we decided to join the FIA WEC we believed the future of the World Series could be in the same path of this fantastic endurance program. With still two races to go we have six possible candidates to the Title! Today I feel glad to announce this special award from the FIA WEC to the three best drivers in 2017. The top awarded driver will test a Porsche in LMP1 the winner and this will a rich and unique experience that might be essential in his sporting CV. This test is part of the agreement we signed with Gerard Neveu as a CEO in the Word Endurance Championship”

An initial list of those due to attend the test will be released shortly, with the final entry list being available prior to the 6 Hours of Bahrain. Running times on the circuit on Sunday 19 November will be from 10am to Midday and 1pm to 4pm.