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The Porsche Podcast

Transcript episode 2: The GT Myth: Racing cars with road credentials

Guests:

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Host:

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Intro [00:00 – 00:18]

Sebastian Rudolph: Welcome to a new episode of the Porsche podcast. My name is **Sebastian Rudolph** and I'm vice president, communications, sustainability and politics at Porsche. With this audio magazine, we would like to share an insight into the world of Porsche and deal with some exciting issues. We've set up our podcast studio today in the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart Zuffenhausen. From here, we have a beautiful view of the Porsche Platz with a sculpture in the centre, from which three white 911 sports cars reach into the sky.

Today's episode deals with a highly topical subject and an integral part of the Porsche DNA. It's about a special myth embodied by two letters: GT. Road cars with racing credentials. To get to the bottom of these high-performance sports cars and the legend behind them, we have two experts as guests: Frank-Steffen Walliser and Mark Webber. Before we start, we will introduce the two of them briefly.

[01:22] **Clip:** The career of Frank-Steffen Walliser, born in 1969, has taken the racing line without any unscheduled pit stops. After studying mechanical engineering, the Stuttgart native arrived at Porsche in 1995 as an intern, graduate student and then doctoral candidate. From 2003 to 2008, he held the position of general manager of motorsports strategies and was one of the innovators in the successful campaign of the Porsche RS Spyder in the American Le Mans series. In October 2014 – after working as project manager for the 918 Spyder – he was given



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the additional responsibility of head of Porsche Motorsports for worldwide GT Motorsports and for GT production sports cars. In 2019, Frank-Steffen Walliser took over the 911 and 718 model series, including the GT cars. Walliser lives near Weissach, and is a real family man. He drives a 911: an air-cooled 993.

Mark Webber was born in 1976 in New South Wales, Australia. He began his racing career in karting at the age of 12. As a 19-year-old, he left his Australian hometown with the clear goal of developing his racing career in England. He drove Formula Three and Formula 3000, and earned a place in the Mercedes sports car programme – his entry for the GT class. Mark was forced to withdraw after a serious accident at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The tide turned with a successful career, during which he achieved nine Grand Prix victories, 13 pole positions and finished third in the World Drivers' Championship in 2010, 2011 and 2013. In 2013 he finally found his home at Porsche. As early as 2015, he followed this up with the world championship title at the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) in the Le Mans Prototype 919 Hybrid. Mark Webber ended his active racing career at the end of 2016 and has been a Porsche brand ambassador ever since.

[05:03] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Frank and I are in the studio today while Mark joins us via video call from Australia. Hi, Frank, hi Mark. Happy to have you here.

[05:06] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Hi, Sebastian. Good morning.

[00:05:12] **Mark Webber:** Hi, Sebastian.

[00:05:13] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Frank. Let's start with you. I heard that your favorite holiday destination is Australia. What is it like to drive down under?

[00:05:23] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Well, it's a long time since I was in Australia. It was our honeymoon, so some years ago. It was a good time. I enjoyed Fraser Island.



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[00:05:36] **Mark Webber:** I hope so, Frank. Yes, well, that's 50 kilometres from where I'm sitting. Not even that, actually, probably 15 kilometres. So, yeah, we have to get you back out here, Frank.

[00:05:42] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** I will come.

[00:05:46] **Sebastian Rudolph:** So Frank, you were responsible for the 911 and 718 models. And before that you were also ahead of Porsche Motorsport for several years. So tell us, what do the letters 'GT' mean to you?

[00:06:03] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Well, if I'm honest, sometimes it's giant trouble. But GT is such an important part of Porsche and especially of the Porsche sports cars, as it developed over many, many years, for sure by the original meaning, Gran Turismo. It's the sports car category where we have been racing for many, many years. It's also an international racing category, but in the case of Porsche, I think it's way more. It's really the DNA of the company. It's also the DNA of the 911, it melts everything down – what the 911 and the sports car is about. And if we are very proud of the product, if we feel it's worth the stickers, we say it's a GT car.

[00:06:48] **Sebastian Rudolph:** And tell us something about the people behind the letters. What's the mindset of the people working to make, for instance, the 911 GT3 even better and better and better over the years?

[00:07:01] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** I think that's maybe a big difference to other companies. GT within Porsche is not only the product – it's not only the letters on the car. It is also the team and the spirit. It's a small group. It's an integral part of Porsche motorsport. So where we have racing cars and road cars combined. The same people are working on this and the spirit of this team – I will not say that in other parts of Porsche we have a different spirit – is really very focused. At the end of the day, it's a lot about performance, and it's really pushing the boundaries. It's making the next cool car and, as always, it's lap times, it's drivability. The Nürburgring is such an important racetrack for us as a way to measure the results of all the work. But I will underline that it's also the team spirit.



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[00:07:52] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Team spirit, Mark. You also know GT cars, not from the engineering side, but from the racing driver's side. What memories come to mind when you think about GT races?

[00:08:05] **Mark Webber:** Yeah, well, Sebastian, I was very young in my career when I raced GT cars and it was still at a pretty high level, actually. So for me, it was a tough initiation because there was a huge endurance factor to it because I came from single seater racing in the junior categories. And then you go into endurance racing. It's incredible, as Frank touched on: the team spirit, the momentum, the sleep deprivation, the passion, the drive and the teamwork and trust. Ultimately, you have to have two or three drivers working together, so the transparency is absolutely crucial. And I think that there are so many small hurdles when you're on the racetrack that can bring you undone. And all of your preparation and effort can be found out very, very easily if you're not prepared and organised. So I was so fortunate to have some exposure that young in my career, and I put tremendous discipline into my racing. I was lucky to work with good people. And I think that's, you know, the cornerstone –the link between what we do on the racetrack in that style of racing and then into the road cars is pivotal, particularly for a brand like Porsche. Because we have the highest bar that is totally possible when it comes to the build quality, the reliability and all the key tolerances in areas that we want to focus on from track to road. And I'm completely confident that no other brand has the ability that we have at Porsche in that transition.

[00:09:23] **Sebastian Rudolph:** You're talking about the highest bar with your racing experience. What kind of tips can you provide to engineers to set the highest bar even higher?

[00:09:35] **Mark Webber:** Well, naturally, that's a marriage that has to happen. Obviously, drivers work in one department, but obviously we have to work with lots of different departments because they are very important for us. So as gluing the challenge together, what are we trying to do? Frank touched on it before: it's all about performance. It's orientated around: "the stopwatch never lies, ever." And the trophy cabinet is also important. So you know when you've got those two things, that's measuring your performance, the competition keeps



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you on your toes. So for our relationship with the engineers, sometimes it can be stressed because sometimes they're measuring certain components on the car or whether it's aerodynamic or break temperatures or engine parameters or gearbox. And those things need to be measured. And they're incredible – the detail that goes into those is phenomenal. But we are the end user, and we have to be confident in putting the car on the limit repeatedly and have the consistency with that. So it's often a beautiful marriage. Sometimes it can be a bit strange, but we've all got the same common goal, and that is performance and making a better product, which we can push to the limits and have champagne in our veins at the end of the results.

[00:10:41] **Sebastian Rudolph:** And the stopwatch never lies. I keep this in mind. Frank, let's talk about the transfer from motorsport to serious production – how does this exactly work? I mean, different teams, different angles. How can you connect the dots to a powerful team that at the end earns victories?

[00:11:03] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Well, for sure, GT road cars, that is big teamwork. And we have a, I always call it, a natural technology transfer. Of course, if the same guys are working on an RSR in the same aerotunnel and on the other hand, are working on a GT road car, they do not forget something when they switch between the different challenges. For sure they know the boundaries. What's possible once it's street allocation. On the other side, there are technical regulations from a racing series. But the methods, the tools they are using, also the spirit they have, that's exactly the same. And I think that's a big driver of bringing innovations. And if the same technical deciding board is sitting together and they say if we put a double wishbone front axle in a GT3, we have a big benefit on our racing car and maybe we can use the parts for the very first time on the racing car and then transfer to the road car. And this has not to be organised, and I think that's the key point. I will not say it just happens. But the surrounding is designed so that it can happen, and it happens.

[00:12:08] **Sebastian Rudolph:** You touch the word innovations, and that brings me to the word heritage. So innovations, timeless design. It all has a foundation called heritage. Frank, do you remember any Porsche GT models, the genes of which still point the way forward today?



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[00:12:27] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** From my perspective, it starts really in the 1950s, because a GT car was always light, relatively small, and in the Porsche case it was – and that's maybe part of the spirit that is still in the company – in the 1950s, it was the big players. It was the Ferraris and the British cars, big engines and all not possible for Porsche. So Porsche made small cars. Relatively small engines but very nimble cars, with good drivability, very good endurance capabilities, and then it made the work through it. This is still part of the spirit. And we have iconic cars, GT cars, the 904 GTS, still one of the most beautiful GT cars ever. And then, for sure, the big variety and the long list of iconic 911 variants. And honestly, I'm proud that over the last 20 years there have also been some of the cars that are still a benchmark like, not so old a car, but a 911 is a wonderful example of a proper GT car. Maybe not the quickest, but one of the coolest.

[00:13:29] **Sebastian Rudolph:** I have to pass the ball to Mark because Frank mentioned the 904 Carrera GTS, which is a dream, literally. But you took it for a spin. Tell us, did you have sticky palms?

[00:13:41] **Mark Webber:** Yeah, I was lucky to drive the car, and I think as you just touched on it, as soon as the stable of history that we have there, it just takes you straight back to the journey that the brain has gone on, the smells, the lack of technology, which was clearly at its time absolutely pioneering and trailblazing. But obviously, when you submerge yourself into that environment now, or that sort of type of car, you're like, ok, this is a bit of a time warp, but you have absolute respect for the engineers, for the drivers, for the journey. As I said, the brain went on, and I think that the style and the tooling and all of the things that they had to deal with and still be competitive and still race those type of cars in a very different way as Frank touched on, you know, the other brands were going at a very different fashion. But Porsche went in a very nimble, agile, really reliable, and that was a very easy car to use. And I felt that as soon as I got in it. The economics, the steering position, the clutch, the gearbox. Everything was just driver friendly. But you want to put it up on his tippy toes and get it on the limit, and it still lets you do that. So that's the beautiful thing about Porsche in general. The envelope of the cars has always been very, very big. Where some of our British friends back then, obviously, they probably had



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no brakes after a few laps, and that was something they had to deal with, where Porsche they had plenty of breaks because the cars are beautifully light.

[00:15:00] **Sebastian Rudolph:** In general, whether it's Ferrari or Porsche, what do the history and the regions of a brand mean to raise drivers like you, Mark?

[00:15:08] **Mark Webber:** Well, a lot. I think that any driver, whether you're competing at the highest level, whether you've gone through Formula One, whether you've raced at the highest level of Le Mans, you know, we all have a tremendous affinity for what's gone before us. And I think that the drivers are all ears. We sit down and listen to the legends, and that's something we love. Hearing the stories and the bravery, of course, the danger involved, which was incredibly, you know, at the forefront of our minds we are not competing, obviously. So that was amazing. The sport has just changed so much, and the track designs and all those things help. As engineers from Porsche, they've had to design something different as well, because the rules of engagement have changed so much. So I think when we look back – you know, I'm not a guy, that looks back too much – but I do like to look back, and particularly for a brand like Porsche. The journey that they've gone on and the sheer bravery about going and never shying away from a challenge. All the cars, and that's why there has been so many over the decades in the stable of GT cars, which is what we're talking about today, whether it's the GT1, whether it's the Carrera GT, you know, and then GT3, GT2 and all the rest. They have that racing in them, the racetrack origins, and they're actually thoroughbreds of racehorses, and they represent the brand so well.

[00:16:22] **Sebastian Rudolph:** We are going to talk about GT cars in more detail. But first, let's listen to a few facts.

[00:16:33] **Clip:** 'GT' stands for Gran Turismo and can therefore be loosely translated as 'great ride'. They are appropriately comfortable weight-reduced and well-powered sports cars that are suitable for long distance racing. Initially, these races were classics such as the Targa Florio. Today, GT cars are more typically found competing in 24-hour endurance races. For example, at Le Mans.



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At Porsche, GT really means a racing car with road approval. In 1956, the 356 A/1500 GT coupé was the first Porsche to receive this special abbreviation. This was later followed by the 904 Carrera GTS, 911 GT2, 911 GT1, 911 GT3 and Carrera GT models, among others.

911 GT3 cars are production vehicles created in close cooperation with the engineers from Porsche's Motorsport department at the Weissach Development Centre. The first generation was launched in 1999 and was the first road going sports car to complete the Nürburgring Nordschleife in under eight minutes. The brand-new GT3 has just demonstrated its impressive performance there, too. In the course of the final set-up work, it circled the track 17.5 seconds faster than its predecessor.

[00:18:12] **Sebastian Rudolph:** The stopwatch never lies, Mark said. And last week I discussed the topic of the GT myth in the German podcast, with Andy Preuninger from Porsche and Jörg Bergmeister, another brand ambassador. Andy said something interesting about fast laps. He says, on the one side of the medal, there is lots of pressure on racing drivers saying, hey, that's the bar, jump over [it] please. On the flip side of the medal, there is lots of fun that creates a uniqueness, a team spirit. Mark, you have been experiencing fast laps for the whole of your life. How do you see the GT performance on the Nordschleife? What is special about it for racing drivers like you?

[00:18:56] **Mark Webber:** Well, first of all, what racing drivers love, is a brand that is not frightened of challenges. You know, you go to the toughest track in the world for decades and decades and decades. So all of us know that we're investing in cracking a really difficult nut, which is a tough circuit, which has every combination you can think of in terms of vehicle dynamics and top speeds and braking. The confidence involved in putting that car in that envelope is extremely, extremely demanding. That's why it's been our backyard to test to such vigorous levels. And then you have to have the last little ingredient, which of course is the man behind the wheel or the driver behind the wheel. And that's something which is at your right. It's the emotion, it's the passion, it's the respect of driving such a quick car. I mean sub-seven minutes, it is just extraordinary how quick that lap time is. And of course, we're very, very proud of that. And the team have put a tremendous effort in. But you don't just go there. We're talking about that 17 seconds. That is, over time of iteration and constantly improving from the



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previous generation to make sure where we can strip that time out. Now there are goals, of course, and you want to drop onto some special lap times. Maybe it was 7.02, maybe 7.03. Of course we saw it and we have been happy with that, but it's still cracked. It started with a six, which was just truly phenomenal and a great effort. But the situation and the marriage I keep talking about between the engineers and the drivers and the trust. Something we don't make, are the tyres. That's one of the only things we don't make. But when you think about the trust there, we need those tyres to be beautifully prepared, and all of those things which enable us to perform at, you know, we are the brand that has the highest bar and on the Nordschleife, we crossed all of our model lines. And also performance, that's why it had so much press, so much interest. Because again, we are giving the opposition headaches in a really authentic way. Because, you know, talk is cheap, actions speak louder than words. Go there, put the car on the track, on the hardest track with the most difficult conditions and then put the stopwatch on. And as I said, the stopwatch does the business for you.

[00:21:04] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Frank, the marriage between racing driver and team. That's interesting. What's your view on it?

[00:21:11] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Mark points it out. And for sure, racing is a lot about this marriage. Engineers, car designers, tyres – tyres are very important on all Mark said. For me, and especially in my role as head of Motorsport, it was always about making the driver feel that there is trust, that he feels good. If this is an entry, you normally get a result back, and at the end of the day, once the driver leaves the pit lane, it's in his hands. We can give advice, we can look at data, we know, how to make it better and how to manage the traffic. And we have nice information on the radio. But it's in the driver's hand. He has to decide, he has to make decisions in less than a second. Going left or right, or passing or not passing. The experienced one, and that you can see, I think that's in endurance racing. If you're a little bit older, you have some more experience. You just need laps and you need hundreds and thousands of laps of racing experience to make a proper judgment. Can I go or do I have to brake? And that makes champions at the end of the day, but also gives the trust back and give the results back. I think you have always to be aware that the driver is out there alone. He has to make the decisions and we have to be thankful for that and also handle it like that. It's not just another number, another



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name. Sometimes you have the impression, some racing teams act like this. I never do that. Highest respect for the job out there and make them feel happy and have some fun. That also helps. If there's too much pressure on, it will not work, like everywhere in professional work. Some fun helps.

[00:22:55] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Jörg Bergmeister also told us that there is a safety component in the car because of the balance mark. How do you feel the balance of a car that leads to more safety, to make faster laps and to give you the confidence to be safe on the road?

[00:23:15] **Mark Webber:** Well, naturally again, with the racing history that we have and the way that we want to design the racing car, to have industry car, to have the driver, the usability of the car to be predictable. And if you have a car that sometimes gives you some little surprises and catches you out every now and again, it's going to be like, ok, it will knock your confidence around a little bit, so you want to make sure that the car is not going to do anything funky or anything that really surprises you. Yes, I mean, we're talking about some seriously quick cars here that we're producing and to put them on the limit is not for everyone. But we give them the chance to go up to that limit and operate well underneath it, which is fine. And even at seven out of ten, at six out of ten, at five out of ten, the car will give you confidence, and it will continue to be there for you. But it won't drive itself, obviously. That's the great reason that we still love to produce these sports cars because we want people to have a very visceral and a very emotional attachment to driving the car, whether it's on the road or on the track. If they want to do some track days or they want to go and have some fun, then that's the car for them. But balance is crucial, and that's something, of course, that we constantly rely on. We have to have that predictability on the brakes. You know the car is, what we say, 'plum' – is driving straight and turning in, and it's got that calm nature about it. Whatever, how much pressure you're putting on tyres or the suspension with aerodynamic sort of scenarios of the car. So very, very important. I would say, just quickly, for example, like the GT2 RS, the last car that we did, that's a pretty tricky car on the track in terms of, you know, it's got a lot of power, it's hard to keep the tyre pressures down because it's just a tremendously quick car. The balance is maybe not quite as in sync as the GT3 RS because of just the way that the car is designed and because it's an absolute missile. It's the most power that we have. 700 horsepower is hard to tame, but it's not



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for everyone, and it's a really, really challenging car to drive on the limit. But we know the rules. It's advertised on the tin. That's what it says on the tin of GT2 RS and it gives it plenty of respect. So even trying to balance a car like that is not for any manufacturer. They struggle, but we do our best to balance 700 horsepower as best as we can.

[00:25:21] **Sebastian Rudolph:** You talked about challenges. Let's switch back about 20 years, go back to the year 1999 and Mark, you experienced two dramatic accidents in a row at two of your last GT races. Take us to this period of time. What did you learn from it?

[00:25:41] **Mark Webber:** Well, no question about it, it was the toughest weekend in my career, emotionally and professionally. You know, it's not every time that you're in an accident where you think that it might go either way. The windscreens are very thin on those cars. If you're going into the trees, then it's very, very dangerous, and I was lucky to walk away from those accidents. But I often refer to this when I talk to people or young kids trying to go on to have some racing career in the future: that there are going to be some incredibly tough moments. The junior categories were the toughest moments in my career. When you turn professional, then you're with professional people and you really sink together. And then, of course, you've got to be professional and work hard. But the tough moments are really what make you and make you have that resilience in the desire and focus to try and get yourself out of that. So I was unemployed for seven months. Actually, I followed Eddie Jordan, the Formula One driver, to a petrol station because his personal assistant wouldn't put me through to him. So I said, forget it, I'll follow him to a petrol station and he has to get fuel at some point. So I spoke to him and said, Eddie, give me a chance and he introduced me to Paul Stoddart, who then gave me a seat in the Minardi Formula One team. So I went through a really hard moment there and also on the trust side, because at that moment we felt those cars were safe and ultimately they weren't safe. They were letting the drivers down. They were very unpredictable cars because the engine department did quite a poor job on the power. So when you have bad power at Le Mans, you have to make the car very thin on downforce. And when the car is low on downforce, the car is very unstable at high speed. So all those things you learn as a young driver, like ok, we're starting to put ourselves in a scenario that could be quite flaky here, but when you're young, you have to go for it. So, yeah, tough learnings. But I think that the measure of getting out of a tricky



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situation is something that you need to have to be able to do. And also it's a long flight home. So I didn't want to come home just then, I had unfinished business.

[00:27:24] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Thanks for the inside story, Mark. We stay in the year 1999. The first GT3 was presented in that year and, at that time Frank, you had just completed your first Porsche years, intern, diploma students, doctoral student. So what were these years all about, for you?

[00:27:44] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Well, for me, it was starting in the company highly motivated and learning a lot of things. And it was just the introduction of the 996 generation, a very important step for Porsche. It was a big transition from small sports car manufacturer, to – well, with the Boxster, the second sports car model line – to get out of the crisis and to establish as a brand and as a company again. We already could see the Cayenne on the horizons. Then there was the GT3 and the presentation of the GT3, and the headlines in the newspaper had been 'the 911 is back' and that was really the starting point of a wonderful strategy. The essence of a 911 is definitely a GT3. I will never forget in my life this first test, because I was keen to get a lap on our track in Weissach, and I could convince a guy who had access to a car and he came. We did two laps with the GT3 on the test track in Weissach and immediately, it was a completely different feeling. It was the engine sound and everything. Unbelievable experience these days. And if you consider it today, it had no power, no downforce, nothing. But it has, and I think that's so important on the GT cars ... We talked a lot about lap times and stopwatches, but fun of driving involvement with the car is also crucial for a GT Car. It's not only the lap time, it's also this day-to-day usability, and this deep involvement you have with the car. You can really enjoy every mile, every kilometre you drive and it's something that makes you smile. That's a big difference to other cars.

[00:29:17] **Sebastian Rudolph:** It sounds like a great journey, fulfilling dreams. And now the GT3 is in its seventh edition. Frank, what connects the first moments you talked about to the present, or how do they differ?



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[00:29:34] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** I think, number one, we could keep the essentials. The DNA of the car is still the same. It's driver involvement, it's performance, it's drivability, it's predictable. Maybe today a little bit more than it was in the past. The perfection of the car improved a lot. It's razor sharp in driving, and I really love this. But the effort in today's environment in all the rules we have to fulfill for worldwide allocations. Nearly in every market the GT3 is available. It's huge. You cannot compare it to what it was 20 years ago. The effort we have to take to fulfil emission regulations, noise regulations, safety regulations. Everything around makes it so complicated to make a car and electronics. It's crucial to fulfil. But the philosophy is, don't let the driver feel. It must be in the background. It must give you a stable background and a platform. But on the main stage there must be the car and the drivability of the car and the involvement with the car. That's why we offered a stick shift. Why we still stay with the naturally aspirated engine. What is completely crazy if I look at the effort and everything, but it makes the cars unique and we carry over the racing technology. That stiff valve train, single butterfly bodies and everything we put on technology-wise, we're still raving 9000 rpm. What makes the car completely different to everything else you can buy, and that makes it so special. And it still feels like a modern interpretation of what the journey started with 20 years ago.

[00:31:07] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Mark, let's take a jump into the future. Sustainability and electrification of powertrains. I mean, you were in the 2015 world drivers' championship. And yeah, you nailed it with a Porsche 919 Hybrid. Give us an impression. What combustion engines combined with hybrid or powerful hybrids are all about.

[00:31:33] **Mark Webber:** Well, I must say I was a little bit skeptical when I heard, you know, I knew I was coming to Porsche. I was finishing my Formula One career in 2013, and we're talking about this very small two-litre, four-cylinder turbo engine. I'm like, "wow, how small is this engine?" And then I'm like "it's got some electric power". I'm like "mega cool". I said, "that's going to be interesting". And I remember going straight from the Interlagos track, my last Formula One race, and I went straight to Portimão. I remember my first lap was at night and I drove out of the pit lane and I was straight away on the e-mode, on the front axle. Just pulling me down the pit lane and I'm like, this is unbelievably unique. I wasn't ready for that. And then



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when I got going, the full drive capability was just absolutely astonishing – how much power the front E-motor had. And of course, we had to think of that then with combustion in it and so I think that whether it was a fluke or not, but of course, by regulation we had eight megajoules, which was obviously incredibly optimistic at the time. The 800 volt battery, again phenomenal, which we have in the Taycan at the moment, which we're proud of. But when I talk about the fluke having a very small combustion engine and then having to think that with basically a sledgehammer of a serious amount of power from the electrical component, we had to then blend this type of power and sinking all of this together was a tremendous journey and a tremendous learning process for the guys and for the drivers. And some headaches. But ultimately that was the toughest and the hardest lesson for us to understand: how can we get the performance out of this thing in an efficient way, in a safe way to drive on the limit and all the rest of it wants to be consistent in that type of vehicle? I think that all of us drivers were of course so proud of that technology to be involved in it. Because, of course, it was absolutely mind-blowing. I mean, Frank was involved in 2010 with the 911. We had the hybrid there as well at the Nordschleife. So it wasn't our first attempt, of course, in hybrid racing cars, but in terms of the experience around, that was truly extraordinary. And then, of course, it goes out into the road cars, which is not on our GT cars, which Frank maybe can allude to at some other point in the future. But at the moment we have a Taycan and the rest of it. Every position is getting stronger. But racing gave us confidence and the drivers loved it. And we're not easy to please. We are very fussy when it comes to converting onto new technologies and disrupting something is very different. It was a great experience and something that we all will never forget in our lives. And we're proud that we sort-of turbocharged that confidence within the company to try new things.

[00:34:01] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Great experience Mark was talking about. Frank, how do you think the topic of electrification of powertrains will develop in racing and on the road?

[00:34:11] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Well, in racing, it's maybe easier. We will see more electrification in the future also to have this playground for the engineers to learn things. And as Mark said, I think the learnings from the 919 had been really great, and now it's up to us to make the transfer possible again. All the learnings from the 919 and the technology we will



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maybe find one day in a road car. On a GT car, it gets more difficult, as I talked about. That's a lot about the feeling and the involvement. If we can keep this feeling, if we can keep this involvement, electrification of the powertrain, nothing against it. But it's always a big fight against weight. Weight is crucial for these cars. It's not only power to weight ratio as we have the tyres and the tyres absolutely depend on weight, so it's really very tricky to make this happen. We did a 918 Spyder. That was a three-and-a-half-year fight against weight. I think the outcome was really good. But if I look at the technology we're using, where everything is made in carbon fibre, not everything fits in the price range of a GT car where we expect it, also for the number of cars we want to do. So tricky. I have nothing on the table at the moment where we can say this is exactly right. And we have to be very, very careful to not just put a powerful powertrain in and say, that's it, now. It's a GT car, because it has more power. We really have to keep the DNA and that gives us some headaches, but we're not giving up.

[00:35:42] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Good mindset. You said keep this feeling and keep the DNA. I want to jump to combustion engines and the topic of e-fuels. We started a pilot project recently, to get deeper into the production and also the usage of e-fuels. How do you assess this, Frank?

[00:36:05] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** As we are part of the transportation sector, we have to – I think that's the task for the engineers to look for solutions and to bring down CO2 emissions. One is definitely the electric car, as we can use sustainable green current to charge them. But we have also an existing fleet, and we have special cars, and it takes time to make this transformation from combustion engines. I'm talking worldwide. We are producing 80 million cars a year, so that takes 20 years to replace all the cars. I think we do not have 20 years to wait and see. I think we have to hurry up a little bit, and these synthetic fuels are the main driver for the existing fleet because you can just use another fuel and you bring down the CO2 emissions by significant amounts. For sure, you have to look at the global scale on it. Where do you have the highest wind and sun? I do not believe that we can put solar panels in the south of the Black Forest and solve our world energy problems. A global effort – and I think that's what Porsche is doing – we're looking at it globally, not just a local solution. And so we can bring down, with this fuel, the CO2 impact of the transportation sector. Everybody is talking about price. Yes, for sure.



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But CO2 has a cost, and I think we should spend every penny to save this world. And for sports cars, it would be a very, very good solution to make these cars, and I consider them also as part of our culture, to save them and to bring them to the future with a very good solution.

[00:37:38] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Engineers always look for answers and so do racing drivers. You look for solutions on the racetrack and now you need this expertise because I want to play a little game with both of you. It's all about the engine sounds of famous Porsche cars. I play the sounds first, and then I raise the questions. So three sounds, please listen. Mark and Frank, behind which engine sound is the new 911 GT3 hiding?

[00:38:33] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Mark, I think one of these cars was a racing car. The shifting was very short.

[00:38:38] **Mark Webber:** Yeah, the middle one was a car that I know, well.

[00:38:43] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** But there have been two normally aspirated engines. It's not so easy, but one sounds more like a 911.

[00:38:51] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Do you want to listen to it again?

[00:38:53] **Mark Webber:** Oh, I think, well, maybe C.

[00:38:57] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** I would also opt for C.

[00:38:59] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Right. It was answer three. 992 GT3 and the second one was the 919 Hybrid. So the Le Mans racing car.

[00:39:11] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Your company car.

[00:39:12] **Mark Webber:** Yeah. Done plenty of laps in that baby.

[00:39:16] **Sebastian Rudolph:** And for all the listeners, the first sound was the Cayman GT4, by the way. So now we turn historically to a very special car. I play the sound and then you tell me if you have an idea which car is hiding behind it. Mark, guess what?



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[00:39:47] **Mark Webber:** I'm in trouble. It's old. It sounds old.

[00:39:54] **Sebastian Rudolph:** And then imagine your sticky palms back then.

[00:39:58] **Mark Webber:** Yes, I know, I know. You're giving me a hint. Well, Frank can give the answer, I think.

[00:40:04] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** It's difficult, Mark. All these cars are older than we are. So how could we know?

[00:40:13] **Mark Webber:** Has it got a zero in the middle? Yes. Oh, Frank. And

[00:40:15] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Yes.

[00:40:16] **Mark Webber:** Then Frank can fill the rest.

[00:40:17] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** It's an easy one, haha. Is it a 904 Carrera GTS?

[00:40:26] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Yeah, it is. I could have given you some options, but I didn't want to, because you're experts. But yeah, it is the 904.

[00:40:38] **Mark Webber:** Tough master.

[00:40:39] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** But you know, we are going for challenges. That's ok.

[00:40:43] **Sebastian Rudolph:** So I have another one. Which of the two sounds is the first 911 GT3 from 1999 and which is the 911 Turbo? From an expert's point of view, what is the audible difference between a natural aspirated engine and a turbo engine? Frank, what do you think?

[00:41:10] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Well, I think, as the difference is so big, the first one is the normally aspirated engine. And for me, a turbo always reflects a mighty car, and in the case of a 911 turbo, it's a super-mighty car. This is the best daily driver you can have. There is no better car, either if there is snow, or heavy rain or sunny country roads. The 911 Turbo is a mighty answer to that. The normally aspirated engine is not mighty, it's tiny, but it is this high revving, high emotional sound and this very, very special sound. There's nothing else [like it] in the world.



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[00:41:29] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Mark, do you want to add to this?

[00:41:31] **Mark Webber:** Yeah, I'm with Frank. I mean, actually, the first Porsche I bought was a 997 Turbo S, it was my daily. In complete contrast to the brand that I was driving with at the time, but that's another topic. But I loved that car. I thought to myself: "Why have I been buying this other rubbish in the meantime?" This was an absolute, you know, in my head, I had total game changer for a daily, as Frank touched on in the full drive capability, and just the versatility was still, of course, everything that a Porsche is. We know that in the seating position, all the rest of it. I love that. I have some GT3 cars. I love them. I love it when the needle is going past 12 o'clock, because that's when they come alive, obviously, and that's not always easy to do on the road. But you can do it, particularly in your country. You can do it quite a bit, which is beautiful. But you know, whether it's my favorite GT3 RS, which is the 997 4-litre I'm very, very fortunate to have one. I love driving that car. And it's tiny, nimble, and it's a piece of jewellery and I love it. But of course, GT3s for me, are my favourite RS cars that we make, they are my favorites. They are my daily, the Turbo S is still ... By the way, was that a racing car? The audio for the GT3, it sounds like a racing car, and it was a road car for the Turbo S because we don't have a Turbo S race car, so it's a pretty unfair battle as well.

[00:43:21] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** I think that was a 996 GT3. The noise emissions these days had been different to today.

[00:43:29] **Mark Webber:** Ok.

[00:43:30] **Sebastian Rudolph:** You managed to jump over every hurdle I put out, so well done, Mark and Frank. Now it's your turn, dear listeners, you once again have the chance to win in this episode of our Porsche podcast.

[00:43:37] **Clip:** Porsche AG is giving away three model cars of the brand new 911 GT3 on a scale of 1 to 43. The competition will run from now until the release date of the next Porsche podcast episode. Simply send an email with your answer to our question to podcast@porsche.de. Porsche will choose the winner from all correct entries. Anyone aged 18 or older may take part. You can find the entry details in the Porsche Newsroom at newsroom.porsche.com/podcasts, along with a few clues. Good luck.



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[00:44:13] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Now all that's missing is the question, and Mark and Frank are not allowed to help. Here it comes: what is the exact lap time of the new 911 GT3 on the complete Nordschleife of the Nürburgring? Simply send your answer by email to podcast@porsche.de. We are curious. Mark and Frank, we now come to the conclusion. Today's podcast episode is coming to an end. Time flew by. What does the GT myth look like today? And what will it look like, for instance, in 50 years, Frank? Let's take this look into the future. Will it last the same? Will it be even better? What is your view on it?

[00:44:36] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Fifty years is really difficult. If I'm honest, I will say, no, they will not be still with us. Ten years is already difficult as the automotive world is changing so quickly and so much at the moment, it is not really predictable, what will happen, looking at markets. If I look at the customer wishes, I would clearly say yes. Customers also want this in the future in the next 10 years, 20 years. And I can promise you we do everything to keep it alive. Whatever it takes, we will do it. But the boundaries are getting tougher. I talked about worldwide homologation as this is part of our daily job. Doesn't make it easier. It's a niche product, so we have for sure in public and in politics, not the biggest supporters. But I think it's really worth every effort to take, to keep it alive, to bring it to the future and we do, as I said, whatever it takes.

[00:45:33] **Sebastian Rudolph:** The beauty of a niche product, Mark, what is your look into the future?

[00:45:39] **Mark Webber:** Well, I think in 50 years, I know I'll be 94. So I will remember that.

[00:45:45] **Frank-Steffen Walliser:** Mark, we then do a podcast.

[00:45:46] **Mark Webber:** Yeah, let's do a podcast if they still do podcast, because I think it's going to be very different. But maybe Porsche, I mean for sure, we have to be off the ground at some point in 50 years, so we need to be doing a bit of vertical stuff. But I will never forget whatever side I am of the ground, I will never forget the 9000 rpm revs that we have in our life now because that's something that you never forget. So I'm stoked that I experienced it in the



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middle of my life. Fifty years, my God, I'm happy to get to 94 and to be able to remember what I did at this point in my life. But that's optimistic, but we can focus on now. And we're absolutely, you know, we don't rest on our laurels. We're hitting it out of the park. We've got a beautiful brand and the cars are absolutely iconic. And we continue to improve a masterpiece. And we should be happy with that in the GT sector.

[00:47:06] **Sebastian Rudolph:** Well, Mark and Frank thanks so much for the conversation. I really enjoyed it. And dear listeners, I hope you enjoyed it as well. If you have any suggestions or feedback, please send them via email to podcast@porsche.de. I'm looking forward to our next episode and I hope you will join me again. Until then, stay safe and goodbye. Thanks.