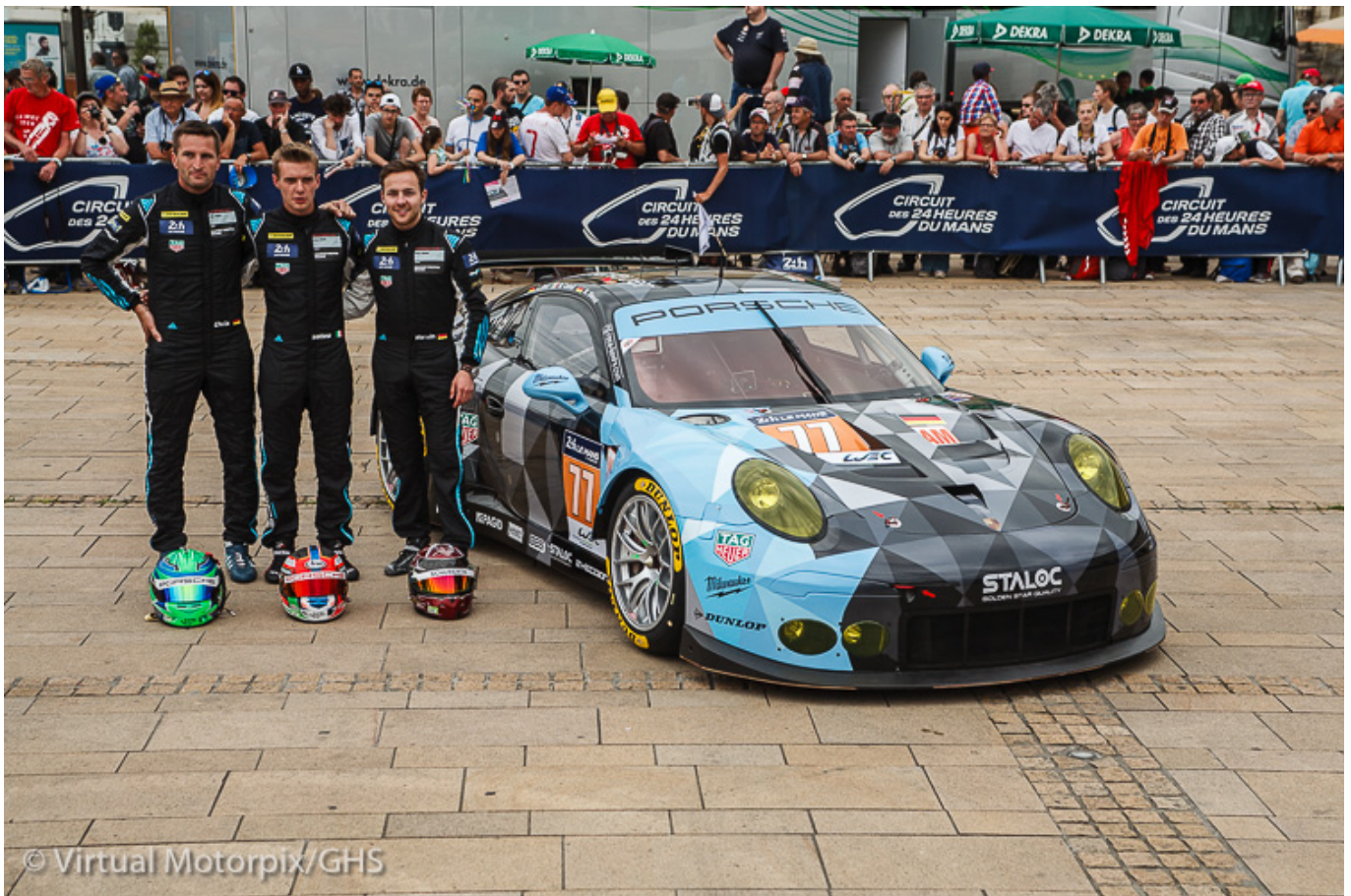


## Proton Competition – steeped in Porsche race cars

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24H of Le Mans, 11 June 2017: The #77 Dempsey Proton Porsche 911 RSR (2015) driven by: (from L-R) Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst. This shows the team during Scrutineering the weekend before the race

Located in the town of Ummendorf, approximately 130km south east of Stuttgart, Proton Competition has been working on Porsche race cars for twenty-one years. Motor racing started in the family when Gerold Ried, father to Michael and Christian, began racing with some friends in 1994 and 1995 with a Porsche 964 RS. It was after the first two seasons of racing that Proton Competition was born in 1996. The company is today owned by Michael

Ried who is heavily involved on the technical and preparation side, but it is Christian who you are likely to find behind the wheel of a race car.

“The company is owned by my brother, Michael, and it is just a racing company, so the only thing we do is prepare racing cars and provide a service on and off the racetrack. It is just racing, we have nothing to do with streetcars,” Christian Ried told the author in the pit lane at the 2017 Le Mans 24 Hours.

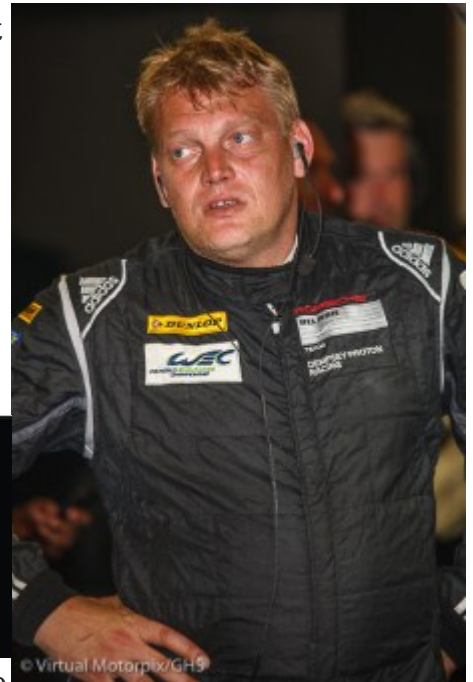
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Today Christian Ried is a very accomplished racer, but where did it all start? “I still remember the first race I saw was in ‘96, the BPR at Paul Ricard with the 993 GT2, Ferrari F40, Venturi LM and the McLaren F1. This was the moment when I said that this is cool, I would like to do this. But it took me three years to get my father to allow me to race because he said ‘No!’”

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Christian Ried first started racing for Proton Competition in 1999 at age 20 years, and his first race was behind the wheel of a 993 GT2 in the Monza FIA GT race. The team’s best season was in 2010 when they won the ELMS (European Le Mans Series), they also won the ILMC (Intercontinental Le Mans Cup) as well as the 24 Hours of Le Mans in one season. The Le Mans win saw them winning the LM GT2 class with a 4-litre Porsche 997 GT3 RSR for Team Felbermayr-Proton with drivers Marc Lieb/Richard Lietz/Wolf Henzler – all of whom are today Porsche contracted works drivers.



24H of Le Mans, 14 June 2017: Michael Ried of Proton Competition



24H of Le Mans Test Weekend, 4 June 2017:  
The #77 Dempsey Proton Porsche 911 RSR  
(2015) at speed along the Mulsanne Straight  
driven by Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and  
Marvin Dienst during a test run

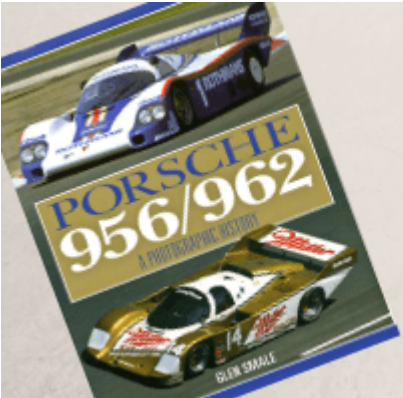


24H of Le Mans, 11 June 2017: Matteo  
Cairoli, Marvin Dienst and Christian Ried,  
drivers of the #77 Dempsey-Proton Porsche  
911 RSR (2015) pranking around during  
Scrutineering - note the #LEMANS24H sign  
which is being held upside down!

His favourite track and the most challenging is Spa, but for pure character and history,

nothing can beat the Le Mans 24 Hours, the scene of Christian Ried's finest result, a second place in 2014 (with Al Qubaisi/Bachler). When asked why the 24-hour race holds such a strong attraction, Ried replied, "Le Mans is special, you cannot compare this race to the others, it is just different. Driving through the night and in the morning, it is special and for sure, it is very emotional." And which is his favourite racing car, "A 993 GT2, because it was the car with which I started racing," he replied without hesitation.

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24H of Le Mans, 13 June 2017: The #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) in the pit garage between practice sessions. This car was driven by Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst



24H of Le Mans, 14 June 2017: The #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) of Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst rounds Indianapolis during practice (FP1)

Over the years, Proton Competition has had many famous names behind the wheel of its race cars. These include: Marc Lieb, Richard Lietz, Nick Tandy, Romain Dumas, Klaus Bachler, Martin Ragginger, Marco Holzer, Wolf Henzler, Patrick Long and others. But at Le Mans in 2017, it was two 'young guns' who would accompany Christian Ried in the #77 Porsche 911 RSR, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst, both first-timers in the legendary race. For Cairoli, this was his fourth 24-hour race this year (together with Dubai, Daytona and the Nürburgring), but for Dienst, it was his first twice around the clock race, and it would certainly be a baptism of fire. The trio finished sixth in the GTE Am class in 2017.



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24H of Le Mans, 17 June 2017: There is no going back now - the #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) of Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst is pushed onto the starting grid before the race on Saturday afternoon



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24H of Le Mans, 17 June 2017: A proud moment - the crew of the #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) driven by Ried/Cairoli/Dienst pose alongside their car on the starting grid ahead of the race on Saturday afternoon. Michael Ried is third from the left

So, does Ried see himself as a mentor to these two young drivers? “The idea with the Dempsey-Proton program is to give young drivers a chance to step up to endurance racing. Matteo has come up through the Porsche Junior Program, so he did the Carrera Cup and the Supercup. The second driver is Marvin who did a shootout with some other drivers and the idea was to bring them into endurance racing before going onto a factory program and to keep them with us for one season or maybe two seasons, we will see. I cannot say I am their teacher because they are already driving quite well, but I can explain to them what is important here at Le Mans. It is not important to do the fastest lap or to risk the car, but it is important to stay out of trouble for 24 hours. Nobody cares about the fastest lap time or who was leading in the first two hours. The result will be the result on Sunday!”



24H of Le Mans, 13 June 2017: Matteo Cairoli, driver in the #77 Dempsey Proton Competition Porsche 911 RSR (2015), in contemplative mood between practice sessions at the 24H of Le Mans



24H of Le Mans, 14 June 2017: Norbert Singer shares some of his vast wisdom with Christian Ried of Proton Competition in the pit garage at the 24H of Le Mans

Although the race team only has seven full time employees, including Michael Ried, at Le Mans in 2017 the team was running three customer cars, requiring a total of 82 personnel. The Dempsey-Proton Racing #77 Porsche 911 RSR (2015 model) is the team's main race car, although Patrick Dempsey is not racing the car this year due to his filming schedule. "At the moment Patrick is not driving, but he is still in contact and he loves racing. It is a passion of his, and I am pretty sure he will be back in the car in the near future," Ried explained.





24H of Le Mans, 17 June 2017: The #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) driven by Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst taken from the outside of the Esses on Saturday afternoon



24H of Le Mans, 17 June 2017: The #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) driven by Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst taken from the inside of the track, just before Tertre Rouge, on Saturday evening

Over the years, Porsche's motorsport history shows that it has been well supported by

numerous top-flight privateer teams. With the achievements listed above, Proton Competition has joined those ranks, and will no doubt go on to add many more victories to its already impressive list.



24H of Le Mans, 18 June 2017: The #77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (2015) driven by Christian Ried, Matteo Cairoli and Marvin Dienst crests the hill under the Dunlop Bridge at 06h00, sunrise on Sunday morning

*Written by: Glen Smale*

*Images by: Virtual Motorpix/Glen Smale & John Mountney*

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