

CLASSIC DRIVER

Cold starting into the new racing season with the GP Ice Race crew

Lead

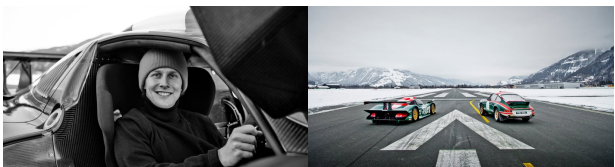
The next GP Ice Race to feature an audience will not take place again until 2022. But that didn't prevent Ferdi Porsche and the organisers from testing the snow and doing a few laps on the new ice rink with friends.



Even under normal conditions, a cold start is not a good idea - and certainly not when it comes to a situation where demanding race engines and temperatures are in the double-digit minus range. But Ferdi Porsche, Constantin Klein and the team at GP Ice Race decided in favour of it, after they had to postpone the third edition of the fun event on the slopes in front of a large audience until 2022, due to the corona pandemic. They dared to venture out on to the ice under the motto 'Cold Start by GP'. After a lockdown winter on the couch, the sports drivers started to feel their 'gas foot' get a little itchy. And since the runway on the new site at Zell am See airport had already been groomed, it would have been a shame to let the beautiful snow simply thaw unused. The legend that is Walter Röhrl ran a few laps on the racing track - behind the wheel of the legendary Rothmans Porsche 953 that won the Paris Dakar Rally in 1984.



Of course, it didn't take long before the Dakar athlete was converted into a ski pull using a rope. And Ferdi Porsche and the Norwegian Ski World Cup Champion Aksel Lund Svindal let themselves be pulled around the snow-covered circuit while skijoring. After all, the discipline in Zell am See has been part of the winter fitness program since the 1950s - how could you break with such a beautiful tradition?



However, the appearance of another racing icon from Zuffenhausen took our breath away: The Porsche 911 GT1 Evolution that started in the 1998 racing season for the Zakspeed team in the Frisian-bitter livery of Jever actually rolled down the airport runway. The huge, dark green long-tail racing car with the red and white striped cockpit roof is an eye-catcher in itself - with the snowy mountain slopes in the background and illuminated by the light of the evening sun, the GT1 was an overwhelming sight. However, the delicate racing car was spared drifting across the ice for the time being.



Collector Philip Kadoorie is also a great admirer of the Jever Porsche - he had his Safari 911 designed in the livery of the GT1. The off-road 911 built in England by specialist Richard Tuthill has already made waves on Instagram. In the end, Kadoorie drove 'Bandit' to fourth place at the Safari Classic Rally in Kenya and Tanzania and also demonstrated the off-roader's flying skills on numerous occasions.



Now 'Bandit' was actually on the runway in Zell am See. And after the photo shoot it was time to cool off the tires on the snow course.



Meanwhile, the Porsche 911 of the GP team alternated between zebra à la Serengeti and psychedelic pasha pattern. The Art Car was designed by Porsche artist Jeffrey Docherty. The Yeti on the flank of the 911 is something like the mascot of the GP Ice Race - and if a real snowman had stepped out of the cockpit with the valance in his hand that day, we probably wouldn't even have been surprised.



For Porsche fans, the GP Ice Race is something like a birthday and Christmas on one day - even if you can only celebrate virtually this year. The 'Cold Start by GP' also kicked off the 25th anniversary of the Porsche Boxster: For its birthday, Zuffenhausen had sent the new anniversary edition to Zell am See, which would certainly have blown out all 25 candles in one go with its rapid drift performance.



With their virtual “Cold Start by GP” event, Ferdi Porsche and his team not only gave their fans some wonderfully carefree winter sports impressions, but also fueled the anticipation for the coming year. "The elements that make the GP Ice Race so unique are the community spirit, the openness - and the desire to make motorsport so tangible and authentic," Ferdi Porsche told us with a view to the next year. "This recipe was already in the original ice races and our goal is to sustainably expand this legacy." And his colleague Constantin Klein added: "We love our fans and know that we have to think further than the next big race and not just consider cars. The GP Ice Race has grown into a unique brand in a very short time, which we will continue to promote".



The GP Ice Race should be even bigger and more impressive when it takes place around the Zell am See airfield in early 2022. New, currently still top secret, program items are also planned. And even if the line-up of this unofficial training round has already made a lasting impression on us, we are sure that the GP family will conjure up a few more surprises for the next edition.

Photos: Stefan Bogner / Curves © 2021

Gallery

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