



Taycan Turbo S vs 911 GT3RS



17th International Porsche Club Presidents' Meeting, Portimão, Portugal

Day 1 (Welcome Dinner): A rocky start as the final leg of our flight from Lisbon to Faro was delayed. After we boarded our flight, we were informed that the ground crew had found a crack in the fuselage of the plane and that we had to disembark and wait for a replacement aircraft to be prepared. After a delay of about 3 hrs, we boarded a replacement plane to be informed by the pilot that the previous plane had actually been damaged by a collision with a service vehicle!



As there were between 15 and 20 Porsche club representatives on the flight (obvious by their Porsche attire), the organisers kindly held up the welcome dinner until we arrived. At dinner, we met with some Aussie compatriots – Kevin Lyons, the President of the Porsche Club of Tasmania

and his wife Mary – and had a nice chat while feasting on some amazing food and wine. After the meal, we signed in and we were allocated our group for the activities to come. Due to there being nearly 200 representatives, we were divided into four groups of around 50 each. Each group with a different schedule of events, but all groups doing every event at different times or on different days. After the meal we returned our room where we pretty much crashed after the long tiring flights.

Day 2 (Full List of Events): After a relaxed breakfast where we chatted with a fellow from Latvia and another from Madiera, we headed out to the coaches to be taken to the Autódromo Internacional do Algarve, sometimes known as the Portimão Circuit, a top class racetrack where the



rest of the day's events for our group were to be held.

After the obligatory group photo and a short safety briefing, we then attended a workshop describing Porsches Motorsport offerings – including the Porsche GT Race Car Experience, where you can drive your own GT car (935 or GT2RS, Cup MR, GT3 R or 911

RSR) at four of Europe's most famous race tracks (Spa-Francorchamps, Hockenheimring, Hungaroring and Catalunya) or you can hire a fully prepared car. The price to hire a GT3R is a mere €27,911.00 per day (about AUD\$45,300.00), the cost for the 911 RSR is only on application (but, oh what an experience it would be)! Following the workshop, we were taken to view a GT3 Cup Car, a 911 RSR and a GT3R to compare the different levels of race cars.

Next, we were taken into the pits where there was a row of identical Taycan Turbo S's on one side and on the other side a row of GT3RS's. In my mind, this was the highlight of the day – driving both the Taycan Turbo S and then the GT3RS on the track, back-to-back. We were to all follow the leader (a qualified Porsche instructor) at a brisk pace around the track while the instructor showed us the correct lines and talked us around the track via radio, with the only rule being no overtaking unless directed by the instructor. Yvonne accompanied me for the first session in the Taycan but decided to sit out the remaining sessions as she said she wasn't feeling well and left me to drive the rest of the sessions on my own – I wonder if this was an indication of my driving?

After the first lap around, the instructor increased his (or her) speed and we were encouraged to try and keep up. Luckily, I was in one of the lead cars in each session and was not being held up by cars in front, allowing me to get a good feel for the cars handling and performance (though still at a relatively safe speed). All too soon, we were slowed down and told to stay off the brakes to let them cool and went back into the pits to change drivers before going back out again for another session. We did the same with both models of car.

While I find Porsche's naming of the Taycan Turbo S is a little awkward (electric cars don't have turbos!), there is no denying that the top of the range Taycan is a very rapid vehicle. At one point I momentarily saw an indicated 250 Km/h at the end of the long straight – a speed I was not able to attain in the GT3RS (though I feel this was mainly due to being held up a little while driving the GT3RS). The Taycan has a significant power advantage – 460 kW under normal conditions and 560 kW on "overboost" compared to "only" 383 kW in the naturally aspirated GT3RS. Where the GT3RS more than makes up for the power difference is in the corners. The Taycan's weight of around 2,300 kg is significant, though Porsche have done a typically masterful job of making it handle well and the brakes bring it to an easy stop time and time again (the brakes are huge!). The Taycan remains eerily quiet no matter how hard it is pushed, with only the slightest electric whine. It is just so effortless!

Next, we were let loose with the GT3RS's. The most obvious difference is the scream of the naturally aspirated engine at 9000 RPM. It is a marked, if not unpleasant, change from the Taycan's near silence. With the GT3RS's wearing new Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2



R tyres, they were absolutely masterful in the corners. Being the track fiend that I am, one powerball and I'd have one ordered in a flash!

After lunch in Porsche's Hospitality setup at the track, we were back in the Taycan's for an extended street drive down to the Sagres Fortress on the southwestern-most point of Portugal, giving us a chance to experience Porsches all-electric car in its natural environment. The Taycan is so very capable and comfortable, with a modern interior and fresh and engaging dash with a borderless look. While there is no Tachometer needed in an electric car, Porsche have stuck to their familiar

triple circular dial theme, directly in front of the driver, so it still feels familiar to any former or current Porsche owner, but with the centre dial displaying a digital speedo and power usage gauge around the outside of the dial. This displays power usage as an increasing amount of energy usage in red going clockwise under acceleration and recuperation in green going anti-clockwise from the 12 o'clock position while braking. These Taycan's were also fitted with the optional "Porsche Electric Sport Sound" that gave you at least some feedback when in Sport or Sport Plus modes. If it wasn't for this, there would be almost no sound heard inside the car at all. Porsche even had to increase the external noise to meet minimum levels in some countries to try and ensure that pedestrians



don't unwittingly step out in front of a Taycan! The Taycan is a very wide car – or at least it seemed that way on the narrow roads of Portugal – with lots of room in the very well-appointed interior.

While driving the Taycan, we kept up the tradition of many of the PCWA runs; yes, we managed to follow the wrong car at one point! Luckily, we realised

our mistake very quickly and turned around and rapidly caught back up to the tail-end of the row of Taycans. How embarrassing!

One minor issue I found is that it could be very easy to lose my licence in a Taycan. They are just so quick and effortless; you can rapidly find that you have exceeded the speed limit by a fair margin without noticing. The normal cues (engine and road noise) are simply not there unless you are in sport mode with the optional sport sound enabled, you must otherwise rely on visual cues alone.

After our return, we had another workshop describing the Taycan's construction and charging options available. It was disappointing to see that there are a number of options for charging on the road or at destinations all across the northern hemisphere, but nothing in the southern hemisphere. It isn't known when we might see facilities in Australia like they enjoy in Europe or North America.

Finally, the day was capped off by dinner at the track before returning to the resort around 8:00 pm very tired but exhilarated at the same time.

Day 3 (2nd Full Day of Events): Yet again, we started with a relaxed breakfast, before piling into the coaches to return to the racetrack where we were to climb into the GT3RS's for an extended road tour up to one of the highest points in the mountains overlooking the Algarve. We were all asked to ensure that the suspension setting on the GT3RS was set to full hard as there were a number of rough spots on the road that might otherwise result in front bumpers being damaged. The GT3RS was quite surprising on the road. I expected the ride to be quite choppy considering the suspension setting and the car's real purpose, but I was very pleasantly surprised. In fact, I wouldn't consider the ride to be any worse than my old 996 with 18" wheels. The drive was quite pleasant with villagers from the old town of Monchique coming out to see the string of Porsche's driving along their cobbled roads, heading up to the peak. The road to the top was very rewarding with lots of twists and turns. Yes, I fell in love with the GT3RS.



Returning from our drive in the hills, we returned to the Kart track adjacent to where we started. This was for a bit of fun in Electric Karts (yes, electric!) and a bit of competition between teams.



Some seemed to take it a little more seriously than others and while I initially managed to overtake a couple of karts when my turn came around to drive, I was eventually rear-ended which spun me around and dashed all my chances of glory.

After the kart racing, we were bussed back to the hotel for some further workshops. First up was a workshop looking at the current state of Porsche Clubs around the world.

Currently, there are 700 official clubs in 86 countries, totalling 230,000 members. There are 14 Porsche Clubs in Asia alone! Porsche Club of America (PCA) are by far the largest with a membership of 127,000, followed by Porsche Club Great Britain with 23,000 and Porsche Club Deutschland with 8,000. Porsche Club China is the fastest growing club with 6,394 members as of January 2019 after launching in April 2018 (we were informed by the President of Porsche Club China that this number is now over 8,000)! Earlier in the day, I had a short chat with the president of Porsche Club China to be surprised that he speaks English with an Australian accent – apparently, he grew up in Brisbane!

Sustainability is a top priority at Porsche AG with Porsche Club Great Britain (PCGB) being a shining example. PCGB have gone “Green” and are working toward becoming carbon neutral. They are on target to achieve this by 2021. They have their own coffee van that they bring along to events with their own branded coffee cups that are made from compostable materials. They use environmentally friendly printing, endeavour to only work with “Green” partners and will have a carbon offset for member usage at all events in 2020. All their other items (bags, flyers, etc) are also made from recyclable (or recycled) materials.

Porsche Club America (PCA) have a free PCA Juniors program for children with currently 4000 under 18's. They have a participation program for 16- and 17-year old's to participate in driving events. This permits licensed sons, daughters, nephews, nieces, stepchildren or grandchildren of PCA members to enter Autocross, Rally's and Gymkhanas. Younger children each get a welcome package with an age-appropriate gift and a PCA Juniors badge. They expect even faster growth after they start to promote the initiative!

In later short sessions, we also had a presentation from Porsche Design and their range of “Porsche Design for Porsche” watches that are now available to match newly purchased cars. You will be able to specify a matching watch directly in the Porsche configurator, that will be modelled on design cues of the car you are buying, complete with your chosen wheel style on the back of the watch, made specifically for you. This was followed by another short session introducing the new Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2R tyres – the ultimate track performance tyre for Porsche GT cars. These are the tyres that were used to set the fastest laps on the Nürburgring Nordschliefe in the GT2RS MR, GT2RS, and GT3RS. In the final session of the day we had a “deep dive” workshop on the Taycan technology where no pictures were allowed! Finally, we had an early finish to the day to allow everyone to get ready for the final farewell dinner in the ballroom.

With everyone dressed in their finest (the French contingent looked especially fine in their matching Club Blazers and Ties), we were all treated to a delicious dinner while our hosts gave us even more information about Porsche's Motorsport prowess while unveiling Porsche's new Formula E race car parked in the middle of the ballroom. Later, a small prize was awarded to the representatives that came the furthest to attend. Everyone in our table (all the Aussies) guessed it would be our friends from Tasmania, but it actually turned out to be Winston Leong and Rodney Loomes from New South Wales! We all had to double check that, but they were right, to our surprise Sydney was actually slightly further from Portimão as the crow flies.

Day 4 (Late Check Out and Return): The next morning was all to ourselves as we had a late checkout and weren't leaving for the airport until mid-afternoon. We took the opportunity to relax



and have a wander around the resort which we hadn't really had a chance to do before due to the busy schedule. If you are ever looking to go to the Algarve and want somewhere very nice to stay (in five-star luxury), you could not do better than the Vila Vita Parc. The location and the rooms are brilliant, the staff excellent and with 10 restaurants and six bars, the

food is to die for.

We were very lucky with the weather. It was a comfortable 20°C – 21°C every day with clear blue skies and about 10°C each night. All in all, it was an absolutely marvellous event and the Porsche Driving Experience personnel kept us all entertained and on schedule for the entire time. It was a trip of a lifetime!

Please check out all the photos from the event on the [club website photo gallery](#).