

Mark Webber – a mature team player

Mark Webber is not only a successful Formula One racer, but also won the World Endurance Championship in the LMP1 class. Since ending his motor racing career, he has maintained close links with Porsche as an ambassador.

At the end of 2013, it took nothing more than a firm handshake with a few men in Weissach with a passion for motor racing and an informal record of the most important details for a future contract – Mark Webber had become a Porsche works driver. ‘This was a homecoming,’ says Webber. ‘Porsche has always been the marque I love the most and that suits me best.’ With 215 Formula One races in twelve years, nine victories, 42 podium finishes and 19 fastest laps, the Australian had been involved in the World Endurance Championship from the first race with the Porsche 919 Hybrid in the LMP1 class.

For him, seeking a new challenge in motor racing was a personal decision. ‘You have to be a complete egoist in the world of Formula One,’ says Webber. ‘In endurance racing, though, you have to mature into a team player. That is a very valuable experience at a human level.’ Webber shared the Porsche cockpit for three years with his teammates Brendon Hartley and Timo Bernhard. The trio became endurance world champions in 2015 and went on to win individual races in 2016 as well. Le Mans was the only victory the trio did not claim together, mainly because good fortune was never on their side. In 2015, the long-standing trio of friends took second place in the classic endurance race. ‘However, I’ve helped to make the 919 Hybrid competitive, and I’m very proud of that. In a certain way, you could say I had a small victory at Le Mans after all,’ the farmer’s son explains.

When Mark Webber announced his retirement from active motor racing in 2016, he was one of the fastest drivers in the Porsche LMP1 team. ‘I’ll miss the sheer speed, downforce and competition – the adrenaline after a good race,’ he says, aware of the withdrawal symptoms. He adds, ‘Every year it’s getting harder and harder to keep my motivation and energy levels at their peak.’ Webber therefore believes the time has come to stop racing at the highest level. He remains closely connected with Porsche as an ambassador, just like Walter Röhrl. ‘Mark Webber stands for everything that makes Porsche so special: excellent sportsmanship, perseverance, approachability and a concentrated focus on success. I am pleased that he will keep a close connection with Porsche in the future,’ says Oliver Blume, CEO of Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG.