

McNish Backs Hong Kong's Le Mans Project

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([PRWEB](#)) April 24, 2005 -- Le Mans 24 Hours winner Allan McNish has thrown his support behind the Hong Kong team bidding to race in the endurance classic.

SAR driver Matthew Marsh is spearheading an ambitious project that will see a Hong Kong-owned, sponsored and driven car -- a Porsche GT3 RSR -- take part in the famous race for the first time.

"It's fantastic news that a Hong Kong racing team is mounting a Le Mans campaign and I wish Matthew and his partners every success," said Scotsman McNish, one of the victorious three-man driving team the last time Porsche won the race in 1998.

"Winning Le Mans for Porsche is the highlight of my career so far, even including starting my first Formula One Grand Prix. It stands up there with the Indianapolis 500 and Monaco Formula One Grand Prix as the races to have on your CV and it is all the more important if you are driving for a marque like Porsche that has such heritage there."

McNish, currently racing in touring cars in Europe, has been a regular visitor to the SAR throughout his career. "My first trip to Hong Kong was when I raced in Macau for Teddy Yip's Theodore Racing in 1989 and it has always been one of my favourite destinations. It still has the same buzz I found back in '89."

Further backing for Marsh's \$12 million Le Mans campaign has come from the Hong Kong Automobile Association, the governing body for motorsport in the SAR.

"This is marvellous news," said HKAA chief executive officer Andrew Windebank. "We welcome this project with open arms and we will do anything we can to ensure its success. It's also great to see the corporate community getting behind the team. The fact is, sponsorship is not a gift, it's about business, and this is a great business opportunity."

Marsh, the reigning Porsche Infineon Carrera Cup Asia champion, has secured backing from two Hong Kong companies -- Noble Group and the William E Connor Group -- and the Chinese-owned GruppeM Racing team, which is based in the UK.

The Hong Kong team, Noble Group-GruppeM Racing, will take part in four races this year in the Le Mans Endurance Series in Europe -- each event is 1,000km and lasts about six hours -- followed by a trip to the 12 Hours of Sebring race in Florida next March. Good results in those five outings will be enough to secure an invitation to the Le Mans 24 Hours in June 2006.

The team's Porsche will feature a distinctive yellow, white and red livery with a large bauhinia on the roof. Marsh expects to announce his two co-drivers within the next few weeks.

Windebank insisted the Hong Kong team would be highly competitive. "The whole project is extremely well structured, the sponsors have the right attitude, the racing team is well known and very experienced and the car



itself is excellent for endurance racing,Â he said.

Â Knowing Matthew and the co-drivers he is aiming to recruit, I believe this is a team that is totally capable of bringing this car home to a class win.Â

Released by Two Up Front, the official media relations partner of Noble Group-GruppeM Racing.

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