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## MOTORSPORTS

# Road warriors

Singapore racing team reign supreme in Merdeka challenge

**LEONG WEE KEAT IN SEPANG**  
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SINGAPORE'S motorsports enthusiasts created history while revving up a storm at the annual Merdeka Millennium Endurance race over the weekend.

Not only were there more Singaporean outfits and drivers qualifying for the start, a team from the Republic also drove off with the overall title.

Team Porsche Club Singapore, representing some 300 owners of the German-made sports car, became the first foreign team in the race's nine-year history to be named overall winners.

The trio of Mok Weng Sun, Darryl O'Young and Alexander Davison, racing in Class O, also set a new record when their Porsche 997 RSR completed 308 laps over 12 gruelling hours on the 5.543-kilometre Sepang Circuit.

Another Singapore team, backed by car tuner and parallel sports car importer Garage R, almost followed Team Porsche into the record books.

Racing in Class A (production cars



Teams such as Garage R's pit crew go through regular pit crew training sessions to allow the team to save on precious time. **LEONG WEE KEAT**

above 1,900cc), the team were in second place and just 30 seconds behind the leaders heading into the final hour of the race, before a jammed gearbox saw them slip down to fourth. But the team's Honda Integra DC5 recovered well to finish third after completing 277 laps.

Garage R team director Lawrence Lee was happy with his team's overall performance. He said: "To complete a 12-hour race and finish on the podium showed we could produce a reliable car."

A total of 77 cars took to the start and only 40 were left after the 12 hour-long race. More than 100 cars had entered for the race but only 77 qualified for Saturday's start.

Samuel Tan, owner of ST Powered who

entered two cars this year, told Today that the race has become more competitive over the years, with teams from Japan, Slovakia, Hong Kong and Thailand in the mix.

He added that there was also an increase in Singapore motorsports enthusiasts taking part, with 10 cars lining up this year compared to two in 2004.

More could be heading here next year for the annual race, held to celebrate Malaysia's National Day.

Car workshop Choon's MotorWorks, taking part for the first time, are keen to return.

"Everyone's addicted to this. We will be back," said owner Eddie Ng, whose Honda Civic VTi EG6 finished eighth in Class C for cars below 1,600cc.

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