

1000 KM OF THE DONINGTON – QUALIFYING SESSIONS

Just a moment!

No more than one second covered the top eight qualifiers at Donington Park for the fourth round of the 2006 Le Mans Series, in a superb session that highlights the quality and strength of the series which is backed by the Automobile Club de l'Ouest. No fewer than 41 cars have qualified for Sunday's 1,000 Kilometre race, with new records to be established as this is the first visit of the Le Mans Series competitors to the picturesque East Midlands circuit.

Jean-Marc Gounon snatched pole position on his final lap, with the chequered flag waving, pushing Stefan Johansson back to second place in the Zytek and series leader Jean-Christophe Boullion to third in the Pescarolo. "It is my job to show how fast the Courage can be" said Gounon on taking his first pole position in the Le Mans Series, and incidentally the first pole position for the Mugen V8 engine and Yokohama tyres. "If it remains dry we hope to have a very good race, but we have some more work to do for wet races."

Stefan Johansson, the Swede with a wealth of Formula One experience, notably with Ferrari, was ousted by a tenth of a second but starts on the front row of the grid, ahead of Jean-Christophe Boullion who drive the Pescarolo C60 Judd with Emmanuel Collard and a new third driver, Didier André. "Third is not so bad, we have a good car and we look forward to the race" said Boullion, who needs but a single point from the British round for Pescarolo Sport to claim the major titles for the season.

Joining Boullion on the second row is Jamie Campbell-Walter in the Creation CA06/H Judd, happy with his last-lap time in the first time he has qualified for the team. Nicolas Minassian, his erstwhile co-driver, was hampered by understeer in the Creation team's second car and had to settle for the fourth row of the grid, driving for the first time with Irishman Kevin McGarrity.

Brazilian Tommy Erdos set the fastest time in LMP2 driving the RML MG Lola AER owned and co-driven by Mike Newton, narrowly ahead of Stuart Moseley in the Team Bruichladdich Radical SR9 Judd.

Lamy on GT1 'pole' for Larbre

Three makes feature in the top three positions in the GT1 category, topped by the Aston Martin Racing Larbre DBR9 with Portuguese ace Pedro Lamy at the wheel. Less than a tenth of second behind was Stephane Ortelli in the Team Oreca Saleen S7R, the Frenchman executing a wild spin while trying for a faster time on his final lap, and ending up in the tyre barrier with light damage.

Third quickest was Markus Palttala in the PSI Experience Corvette C6.R, now racing on Michelin tyres. Six-tenths of a second covered the six cars in the GT1 category, with Jerome Policand fourth in the Luc Alphand Aventures Corvette C5-R, Antonio Garcia fifth in the Team Modena Aston Martin, and Peter Kox sixth in the Convers Menx Team Ferrari 550 Maranello.

Ferrari 430 top in GT2

Tim Sugden drove the Virgo Motorsport Ferrari 430 to 'pole' position in the GT2 category, a full three-tenths faster than Andrea Montermini in the GPC Sport Ferrari 430. The Italian cars have shown their pace this season, but the Panoz, Spyker and Porsche marques are pushing hard and will surely feature strongly in the race. Third fastest was Peter Dumbreck in one of the two Spyker Squadron C8s ahead of the reigning champion in GT2, Marc Lieb at the wheel of an Autorlando Porsche GT3 RSR.

QUALIFYING SESSIONS- TOP TIMES
"LM"P1

Pos	N°	TEAMS	CARS	DRIVERS	BEST TIME
1	12	COURAGE COMPETITION	Courage LC 70 Mugen	Jean-Marc GOUNON	1:20.756
2	2	ZYTEK MOTORSPORT	Zytek 06S	Stefan JOHANSSON	1:20.869
3	17	PESCAROLO SPORT	Pescarolo C60 Judd	Jean-Christophe BOULLION	1:20.926

"LM"P2

Pos	N°	TEAMS	CARS	DRIVERS	BEST TIME
1	25	RML	MG Lola EX 264	Tommy ERDOS	1:21.557
2	21	TEAMBRUICHLADDICHRADICAL	Radical SR9 AER	Stuart MOSELEY	1:21.776
3	24	BINNIE MOTORSPORTS	Lola 05/42 Zytek	Sam HANCOCK	1:22.769

"LM"GT1

Pos	N°	TEAMS	CARS	DRIVERS	BEST TIME
1	50	ASTONMARTINRACINGLARBRE	Aston Martin DBR9	Pedro LAMY	1:27.390
2	55	TEAM ORECA	Saleen S7R	Stéphane ORTELLI	1:27.459
3	70	TEAM MODENA	Corvette C6-R	Markus PALTTALA	1:27.685

"LM"GT2

Pos	N°	TEAMS	CARS	DRIVERS	BEST TIME
1	99	VIRGO MOTORSPORT	Ferrari 430 GT	Tim SUGDEN	1:31.320
2	97	GPC SPORT	Ferrari 430 GT	Andrea MONTERMINI	1:31.654
3	86	SPYKER SQUADRON	Spyker C8 Spyder GT2R	Peter DUMBRECK	1:32.231