



"LM" P1

- 1, Gené/Minassian, Team Total Peugeot, Peugeot 908 HDi FAP, 1m31.692s
- 2, Lamy/Sarrazin, Team Total Peugeot, Peugeot 908 HDi FAP, 1m32.168s
- 3, Mücke/Charouz, Charouz Racing, Lola B07/17 Judd, 1m34.459s
- 4, Cochet/Frei, Courage Competition, Courage LC70 AER V8, 1m36.045s
- 5, Chilton/Chilton, Arena Motorsport, Zytek 07S Zytek, 1m36.078s
- 6, Collard/Boullion, Pescarolo Sport, Pescarolo Judd, 1m36.139s
- 7, Campbell-Walter/Ortiz/Nakano, Creation Autosportif, Creation CA07 Judd, 1m36.461s
- 8, Hall/Barbosa/Short, Rollcentre Racing, Pescarolo Judd, 1m37.424s

"LM2" P2

- 1, Kimber-Smith/Watts, Team LNT, Zytek 07S, 1m35.149s
- 2, Erdos/Newton, RML, MG Lola EX264 AER, 1m35.847s
- 3, Vergers/Barazi/Ojeh, Barazi Epsilon, Zytek 07S Zytek, 1m36.38s
- 4, Binnie/Timpany/Buncombe, Binnie Motorsport, Lola B05/40, 1m37.416s
- 5, Amaral/Burgueno/de Castro, Quifel ASM Team, Lola B05/40 AER, 1m37.461s
- 6, Nicolet/Filhol/Jouanny, Saulnier Racing, Courage LC75 AER, 1m37.873s
- 7, Moseley/Greaves/Greaves, Bruichladdich, Radical SR9 AER, 1m37.957s

"LM" GT1

- 1, Garcia/Turner, Team Modena, Aston Martin DBR9, 1m44.755s
- 2, Ayari/Ortelli, Team ORECA, Saleen S7R, 1m45.721s
- 3, Bouchut/Gardel/Gollin, Larbre Competition, Aston Martin DBR9, 1m45.897s
- 4, Policand/Gavin/Goueslard, Luc Alphand Aventures, Corvette C6.R, 1m45.933s
- 5, Perrazini/Cioci/Tavano, Racing Box, Saleen S7R, 1m46.366s
- 6, Blanchimain/Dumez/Vosse, Alphand Aventures, Corvette C5-R, 1m47.109s

"LM" GT2

- 1, Bell/Bruni, Virgo Motorsport, Ferrari 430 GT, 1m49.730s
- 2, Narac/Lietz, IMSA Performance Matmut, Porsche 997 GT3 RSR, 1m50.924s
- 3, Belicchi/Chiesa/Kane, Speedy Racing Team, Spyker C8 Spyder, 1m51.132s
- 4, Lieb/Pompidou, Felbermayr-Proton, Porsche 997 GT3 RSR, 1m51.535s
- 5, Hezemans/Dumbreck, Spyker Squadron, Spyker C8 Spyder, 1m51.604s



Minassian makes it five for Peugeot at Silverstone

In brilliant, warm late-summer weather, the Le Mans Series prepares for its final European round at Silverstone with a full grid of 46 cars. On the front row are the two Peugeot 908 HDi FAP diesel cars, Nicolas Minassian on pole position with his Portuguese teammate Pedro Lamy alongside, and on the second row are the German ace Stefan Mücke, in the Charouz Lola B07/17 Judd, and – the sensation of qualifying – Tom Kimber-Smith, who has switched from his usual mount, the Team LNT Panoz Esperante, to place the LNT team's Zytek 07S LMP2 fourth overall. Kimber-Smith had not even sat in the Zytek until Friday morning, and conceded "the speed difference was a bit of a shock", but he was faster in each of the practice sessions to win the team's confidence for qualifying. The two prototype categories feature 21 cars, and there are 25 cars in the Grand Touring categories, all closely contested.

"LM" P1

"Silverstone has always been good to me, and I hope it will be again" said Nicolas Minassian after claiming pole position at what he calls his "home track". "I had to push a bit, but the car is good and I would like to win this race" said the English-domiciled Frenchman. The Team Peugeot Total equipe waited until midway through the 20-minute qualifying session before making an appearance on the track – at that point Tommy Erdos and Michael Vergers topped the leaderboard in their LMP2 cars – but then Minassian unleashed a time of 1m 31.692s followed by Lamy on 1m 32.168s.

For the Peugeot coupes the job was done, and they were wheeled into their garages. Stefan Mücke was third quickest in the Charouz Lola at 1m 34.459s but then had a lurid spin through the ultra-fast Abbey curve and kissed the barriers travelling

backwards in a pall of tyre smoke, ending his bid for the day.

Jonathan Cochet was fourth fastest in the LMP1 group in the Courage Competition LC70 AER, Tom Chilton fifth in the Arena Motorsport Zytek 07S, and Emmanuel Collard sixth in the Pescarolo Sport entry. "We are working on the race set-up today" declared Henri. "We cannot be on pole position unless the Peugeot drivers qualify with one foot on the throttle and one on the brake!"

"LM" P2

Recent form demonstrated at the Nürburgring and Spa was repeated at Silverstone: the LMP2 cars, more than 100 kg lighter than the LMP1s, are almost their equal on lap times. Tom Kimber-Smith and Danny Watts, straight out of the LNT team's Panoz Esperante, amazed their class-mates by leading LMP2 in each practice session and Kimber-Smith sealed the bid with a sensational time of 1m 35.149s, fourth fastest overall and nearly three-quarters of a second faster. Second fastest was Tommy Erdos in the RML MG Lola, ahead of third quickest in the LMP2 class, Michael Vergers in the Barazi Epsilon Zytek 07S

"LM" GT1

Oliver Gavin felt confident of pole position in GT1 driving his old Corvette C6.R in the colours of Alphand Aventures, on 1m 45.933s. After all, had he not garnered a string of 'poles' in this car in the American Le Mans Series? But then Soheil Ayari went faster in the Matmut sponsored Team Oreca Saleen S7-Rat 1m 45.183s, followed by Christophe Bouchut who split the contenders in the Aston Martin Racing DBR9 at 1m 45.897s. But then, when the picadors had done their work came the toreador, Antonio Garcia in the Team Modena Aston



Martin DBR9, and with one swift strike in the last minute of qualifying the Spaniard put pole position way beyond their reach at 1m 44.755s. The distinctive dark green Aston Martin with orange wheels was nearly a second clear of its rivals, promising an exciting 1,000 kilometre contest on Sunday.

"LM" GT2

Pole position in GT2 fell to Robert Bell in the Virgo Motorsport Ferrari 430, leader in the GT2 division on points but with Gianmaria Bruni replacing his regular co-driver Allan Simonsen, who is racing in Australia this weekend. Not only was Bell on pole position, driving for the first time on Silverstone's full 5.14 kilometre Grand Prix circuit, but he forced a margin of 1.2 seconds over the second man, Richard Lietz in the IMSA Performance Matmut Porsche GT3 RSR.

Raymond Narac was badly shaken by his accident in Spa last month, but was buoyed by a successful weekend in the team's Saleen in a French GT race last week.

Third and fifth were the Dutch Spyker C8s, on a new Dunlop compound which clearly suited the Audi mid-engined cars, and they sandwiched GT2 championship challengers Marc Lieb and Xavier Pompidou in their Felbermayr Proton team Porsche GT3 RSR.

Two exciting new programmes were announced at Silverstone which will boost the Le Mans Series grid in 2008.

Embassy Racing announced on Friday that it will build its own "LM" P2 prototype, designed by Peter Elleray, the designer responsible for the Le Mans winning Bentley Speed 8, while ORECA revealed it has bought Courage Competition and will develop the existing "LM" P1 and "LM" P2 prototypes while developing a closed coupe "LM" P1 to the ACO's new regulations, which will become mandatory in 2010.

Embassy announced that its project began even before the British team bought the Pilbeam MP93 at the start of the year.

The team has bought new premises near its existing workshop and plans have been drawn up to create a bespoke environment specifically designed to house all the elements required for a constructor including stores, office space, workshop and preparation shop. Two new WF01s will be powered by a Zytek engine, and the team is hoping to have its roll out at the end of January. Warren Hughes has been retained to drive for the team until 2010.

ORECA's take over of the Courage Competition facility at Le Mans confirms their place as a racing car constructor. ORECA's facilities include the main headquarters in Signes, near the Paul Ricard circuit, and an engine facility at Magny Cours in addition to the chassis construction shop at Le Mans. Courage's "LM" P1 and "LM" P2 cars will run next year as Courage ORECA's, while the company develops a new "LM" P1 prototype for 2009. Two manufacturers are being considered to supply the engines for the new prototype, the likelihood being that it will be a gasoline-powered car, and there is no firm decision yet regarding the future of the "LM" GT1 Saleen project.

"This decision has been taken very quickly so in the next few weeks we will make a decision regarding the programme next year, with GT1 and "LM" P1," said ORECA Group Chairman Hugues de Chaunac, who confirmed the takeover with Yves Courage on Tuesday before Silverstone. The car will run on Michelin tyres and no decision has yet been taken regarding drivers.

