



## SILVERSTONE 1000 KM QUALIFYING PRACTICES

Nicolas Minassian made an emphatic claim to pole position in the Creation Autosportif DBA Judd on Saturday morning with a time of 1 minute 34.562 seconds around the 3.194 mile Silverstone Grand Prix circuit. The Frenchman's time was 1.8 seconds faster than that of Hayanari Shimoda in the Zytek Motorsport 04S, with Emmanuel Collard third in the Pescarolo Sport C60 Judd 'Hybrid'.

"It was a hell of a lap" said Minassian. "The car was blindingly fast, I loved it!" His time was little more than half a second slower than last year's LMP1 pole position time, although the prototypes now race with smaller inlet air restrictors and must weigh 70 kg more.

Allan McNish, another strong contender for victory, set the fourth fastest time in the Audi Playstation Team Oreca R8 with a time of 1m 36.551s. The Scotsman, who drives with Stephane Ortelli, says that the rain forecast for the 1,000 kilometre Le Mans Endurance Series race, which starts at 4 o'clock this afternoon, will play into the hands of the Audi team.

Jan Lammers, who competed in the Grand-Am race at Watkins Glen on Friday evening, failed to reach Silverstone in time for the Saturday morning qualifying session, so his Racing for Holland Dome Judd S101 will be raced by Beppe Gabbiani and Felipe Ortiz. "I ran out of fuel" says Gabbiani ruefully. "I did not reach the reserve tap in time, so I stopped on the circuit" explaining his uncompetitive time.

The Cirtek Racing Convers Racing team set the two fastest times in GT1, Christophe Bouchut setting the pole time in the blue Ferrari 550 Maranello, which he shares with Alexey Vasiliev, ahead of Darren Turner in the brand-new Aston Martin DBR9, which he shares with Nikolay Fomenko and Marc Goossens. Third is the Menx Ferrari 550 qualified by Peter Kox.

Scuderia Ecosse has the upper hand in the GT2 category as the Ferrari 360 of Andrew Kirkaldy and Nathan Kinch qualified ahead of the Autorlando Porsche GT3RSR of Mike Rockenfeller, Luigi Moccia and Franco Groppi, and the GPC Sport Ferrari 360 of Gabrio Rosa, Luca Drudi and Fabio Babini.

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