



After a two-month break, the Le Mans Series prototypes and GTs are back on track for the second part of the season. Who will be the winners? Let's bet there will have fights in each category!

Last year, the Le Mans Series headed to the new Algarve circuit for the very first time and the night race turned out to be very popular among the drivers and the race-fans; this is why the drivers will take the checkered flag in the dark (around 11 pm).

The drivers enjoyed the Portuguese roller-coaster in 2009, and there are very few drivers heading to Portimao for the 1000Km race who aren't looking forward to racing here again. One is certainly Olivier Pla, the title defender in the LMP2 class, a "French Touch" for the Portuguese team, who will be competing in Quifel-ASM Team's home race, at the steering wheel of a Ginetta-Zytek 09S.

A LAP OF THE ALGARVE CIRCUIT WITH OLIVIER PLA – QUIFEL-ASM TEAM

"The Algarve circuit is fantastic because it is different from most new tracks. It has a good mixture of high speed and slow corners with a few blind turns and it winds up and down all the way. The track is interesting and very demanding.

"You accelerate hard from the start line which goes slightly downhill. You brake hard and change down quickly from sixth to third gear for the first right-handed corner. This corner is tricky first because it is bumpy, but also because you have to carry the speed through the very short straight. The second corner is high speed which is taken flat out then hard on the brakes for the first hairpin, taken in first gear. You have to accelerate very early in this right-hander because it is uphill to blind turn 4 and flat-out till the next left-handed hairpin. The track is bumpy on that part so the car moves a lot. Braking is very difficult because the track turns sharply downhill and you brake very late, although the entrance is blind. Uphill again for a long straight with a flat-out left-hander... and you can't see the exit! You come quickly down the hill which can be flat-out in qualifying into double-apex turn 7 and 8, which is off-camber; it's very important as it influences the following short but steep hill. It goes down and up again after turn 9 taken in fifth gear. The straight leads you to the most difficult corner - double-apex right-handed turn 10. You have to brake late, but as you cannot see where the track goes, it is hard to find a point of reference. You can't miss your braking. The track drops down again with a flat-out left-hander before you jump on the brakes for an uphill left-hander taken in second gear. Quick squirts of power before you jump on the brakes for the double-apex right-handed turn 13. This corner is also tricky because it is off-camber and you must accelerate as soon as you can to carry the speed all the way up the hill towards the last corner. It is taken in fifth gear and flat-out but this can be very tricky because when you turn your wheels, you can't see if there is a car around the corner. Then you are back to the start-finish line which is very bumpy as well."

THE FIGHT IS ON THROUGHOUT ALL CLASSES

A Rebellion Racing Lola, a Signature Plus Lola or the ORECA Matmut Peugeot will be able to clinch the overall victory, who will be the winner? Will the defending Quifel-ASM Team be able to repeat the last year victory? Or will Strakka Racing forge ahead after their victory at the Le Mans 24 Hours in last June? Of course, Oak Racing, RML, KSM & Team Bruichladdich will be also there to win in the LMP2 class? If a Saleen rules the GT1 class, will Larbre Compétition or Atlas FX-Team FS bring the trophy home? Will Spyker or Aston Martin be able to mix it up as spoilsport in the duel between the Porsches and Ferraris in the GT2 class? Race-fans will also enjoy the Ford Transit Trophy as it will be spectacular to watch vans racing on the hilly

FOLLOW THE RACE

The 1,000Km of Algarve is scheduled to start at 5:00 pm on Saturday, July 16.

Please visit our website at www.lemans-series.com for live-timing