

After the first round of the Le Mans Series at Le Castellet, the intensity is going to be ratcheted up several notches in the second race, the Spa Francorchamps 1000 kms on 5th -7th May. Almost sixty cars will be on the starting grid for the Belgian classic, and the duel between Audi and Peugeot, with only six weeks to go to the Le Mans 24 Hours, will be the highlight in the top category!

LM P1: Audi and Peugeot ready for a no-holds-barred fight for victory!

Due to the introduction of the ACO's new regulations, a good part of the 2011 season's field is new. Several cars are making their competition debut this year, and the Spa Francorchamps 1000 kms will see more newcomers. It is notably the case for the Audi R18, the latest weapon from Ingolstadt, and the German team is determined to put on a stunning performance in the car's first race – only six weeks before the Le Mans 24 Hours. While the successor to the R15 TDI has done a lot of testing, it will have its first start in the heat of competition on the Belgian circuit. The three R18s entered by Audi will be up against three of the new Peugeot 908s in their second outing this season, and the French cars are determined to sink the German armada.



In addition to the above, the well-subscribed LM P1 category includes the Team Pescarolo Pescarolo-Judd, victorious at Le Castellet and determined to show that its car is a force to be reckoned with. The ORECA Peugeot 908 HDi FAP, which won the last Sebring 12 Hours, should be on the pace like the two Lola-Toyotas entered by Rebellion Racing equipped with a new aerodynamic kit. Other outsiders like the two OAK Racing Pescarolos, the Guess Racing Lola-Judd, the Mik Corse Zytec Hybrid, the Quifel-ASM Team's Zytec 095C and the Swiss-entered Hope Racing Oreca Hybrid are determined to make the most of any opportunities that fall their way.

LM P2: The Oreca-Nissans start favourites

Greaves Motorsport won the opening race in the Var with its Zytec Z11 SN-Nissan, and the British squad will be out to score another victory in the Ardennes. It will have a tough battle on its hands as it will be up against three of the Oreca-Nissans, which have always been at the top of time sheets. TDS Racing, Boutsen Energy Racing and Signatech-Nissan will give the English car a good run for its money. Strakka Racing and RML with their HPD ARX-01ds, Pecom Racing (Lola-Judd) and OAK Racing (Pescarolo-Judd) are all after their first victory in the category in 2011.

LM GTE Pro: BMW takes on Porsche and Ferrari

A couple of newcomers, the Lotus Evoras and above all the BMW M3s, will get stuck in in the hotly-contested scrap between Porsche and Ferrari represented by the latest version of the 997 GT3 RSR and the new R458 Italia. The Bavarian cars are backed by BMW Motorsport and they will be redoubtable rivals to the AF Corse, Hankook Team Farnbacher Luxury Racing and JMW Motorsport Ferrari F458 Italias – the last-named emerged victorious on the Paul Ricard circuit – plus the Felbermayr-Proton Team, IMSA Performance Matmut and Prospeed Competition Porsche 997 GT3 RSRs. The outsiders, the Jota Racing Aston Martin Vantage and the two Jetalliance Lotus Evoras, will not find it an easy task to take the battle to the Italian and German cars.

LM GTE Am: Felbermayr-Proton out to double up!

As in LM GTE Pro, the LM GTE Am category will be the theatre of another Porsche-Ferrari battle. Six Ferrari F430 GTs – two entered by AF Corse and two by CRS Racing – will be up against three Porsche 997 GT3 RSRs. The Felbermayr-Proton team, which won at Le Castellet, is determined to add a second victory to its tally despite an influx of rivals including the Larbre Competition Corvette C6-ZR1 and the Gulf AMR Middle East Aston Martin Vantage.



Battle on all fronts at Spa-Francorchamps !

Five potential winners in Formula Le Mans

In the Formula Le Mans category, the five cars will be locked in battle from start to finish. The Hope Racing, JMB Racing, Genoa Racing, Neil Garner Motorsport and Pegasus Racing FLM 09s will provide thrills for the spectators in Belgium. Pegasus Racing came out on top on the Paul Ricard HTTT circuit at Le Castellet, and will be looking for a second success. Its rivals starting with Genoa Racing and Hope Racing, which both showed impressive speed in the south of France, have other ideas!



The weekend's programme

In addition to the Spa Francorchamps 1000 kms, the programme will provide the spectators with other events from 5th -7th May. After the Euro Series Formula 3 Championship at Le Castellet, the ATS Formula 3 Cup will be part of the Le Mans Series meeting with two races as will be the case for the Speed Series and Radical Masters championships. In total, the crowd that will flock to the Belgian circuit can enjoy eleven hours' racing!

Note that the Spa Francorchamps 1000 kms will be held on Saturday 7th May from 14h05-20h05. The first free practice sessions will take place on Thursday 5th May from 12h20-13h20, then from 16h55-17h55. On Friday, the third session is from 11h50-12h50 before qualifying - 15h50-16h40.

Find the complete results on www.lemans-series.com. More information is also available about tickets for the Spa Francorchamps 1000 kms on www.race-rallye.be