

Today Saturday, Peugeot won the Spa-Francorchamps 1000 kms for the fifth time on the trot after its four straight victories between 2007 and 2010. The 908s got the better of their German rivals early on in the race despite their poor grid positions and were never headed after that. TDS Racing, Hope Racing, AF Corse and IMSA Performance Matmut triumphed in the other categories.

LM P1: Peugeot a conquering start to the race

After qualifying Peugeot Sport did not seem worried. The 908s were badly placed on the grid in 12th, 17th and 48th positions and it did not look easy for the French cars. The drivers designated for the start put their heads down and went pedal to the metal from the first corner.

The first hour of the race saw a no-holds-barred battle between the Peugeot and Audi drivers for the control of the race. Andre Lotterer in the no. 2 Audi R18 TDI led Timo Bernhard in no. 1 and Alexander Wurz in the no. 7 Peugeot. The Austrian got up to second place after 25 minutes and then took a lead he was never to lose less than 20 minutes later.

LM P2: The Oreca 03-Nissans dominate

At the start of the race Soheil Ayari in the Signatech Oreca 03- Nissan hit the front and battled for the lead with Mathias Beche (TDS Racing). They were joined by the Boutsen Energy Oreca and all three scrapped away merrily for first place. The Signatech-Nissan car the suffered mechanical problems and fell back.

FLM: Hope Racing scores a flag to flag victory

Right from the green light the FLM category was dominated by Hope Racing. Nicolas Marroc jumped into first place and opened up a gap. Luca Moro and Zhang Shanqi, who relayed him, kept the car in front.

LM GTE Pro: A good start for Melo

Jaime Melo who set pole in the no. 71 AF Corse Ferrari F458 Italia made a good start and led in LM GTE Pro. Rob Bell in the JMW Motorsport Ferrari F458 Italia gave the Brazilian a run of his money. The two cars ran wheel to wheel in the opening half of the race.

LM GTE Am: Armindo goes off

Nicolas Armindo put in a great drive and managed to make up the time lost at the start of the race. The pole setter in the category got back in the lead in the LM GTE Am category and was as quick as the best GTE Pros before refuelling and handing over to Raymond Narac.

Peugeot's triumph

After 2h35 minutes racing Christophe Bouchut (Level 5 Motorsport) had a big shunt and the race was neutralized as the safety cars came out. The Peugeots consolidated their lead and at the restart their domination was obvious. No. 7 headed on to victory and no. 9 ran into several problems (suspension), which destroyed the team's hopes of a triple podium finish. The nos 7 and 8 908s did not have any problems and went on to score a double followed by the no. 3 Audi R18.

The Ingolstadt cars ran into several problems with their bodywork among others, but scored a podium finish thanks to Capello-McNish-Kristensen. However, with under six weeks to go till the Le Mans 24 Hours, Spa is a wake-up call for Dr. Ullrich and the engineers at Ingolstadt. The Peugeot camp however was delighted with the victory of Alex Wurz-Marc Gené-Anthony Davidson.

The no. 16 Pescarolo-Judd was the first petrol-engined car in the classification and also the highest-placed car in the Le Mans Series. The driver line-up of Emmanuel Collard-Christophe Tinseau-Julien Jousse has consolidated its lead in the championship.

TDS Racing: 1st win in the Le Mans Series

In the battle between the LM P2 prototypes, TDS Racing came out on top with the help of a good strategy and finished in front of Boutsen Energy Racing. Pierre Thiriet-Mathias Beche and Jody Firth gave the team its first win in the Le Mans Series.



Hope Racing led from start to finish

Hope Racing led the whole race in Formula Le Mans beating all its rivals. Nicolas Marroc started in second place and backed up by Luca Moro and Zhang Shanqi brought the car home in first place to the great satisfaction of the Swiss team.

LM GTE Pro, first success for Fisichella

Former F1 driver, Giancarlo Fisichella, is now a Le Mans Series regular. Thanks to a very good strategy, the Italian took the lead in LM GTE Pro towards the end of the race. Gianmaria Bruni's co-driver in the no. 51 Ferrari F458 Italia took the chequered flag with a few seconds in hand over the Hankook Team Farnbacher F458.

LM GTE Am: Armindo makes up the time lost

After his off at the start of the race Nicolas Armindo had no choice but to go pedal to the metal to flight his way back to the front. He was backed up by a steady Raymond Narac and he reeled off quick laps in the no. 67 IMSA Performance Matmut Porsche 997 GT3 RSR matching the pace of the Pro teams. The IMSA Performance Matmut duo managed to retake the lead, and Narac brought the car home to the chequered flag in front of the no. 62 Ferrari F430 of AF Corse.

Peugeot wins the Michelin Green X Challenge

In addition to its double on the track the Peugeot Sport Total Team achieved a double in the Michelin Green X Challenge which rewards the cars that have the best performance/energy consumption ratio.

Quotes

Olivier Quesnel, Peugeot Sport Team Principal: "We're delighted with this excellent result which seems perhaps a bit of a surprise to some. We came here to prepare for Le Mans and we're happy to have won. It's been a very positive weekend in all areas: pace, fuel consumption, strategy. I can only see positive aspects. I'd be really over the moon if things turned out this way in six weeks' time!"

Alexander Wurz (no. 7 Peugeot 908, winner in LM P1 and overall victory): "I wanted to nurse my tyres at the start and then I saw that we were setting a really good pace. I was able to push and get to the front of the race. It's a great win and a fantastic reward for the whole team."

Stéphane Sarrazin (no. 8 Peugeot 908, 2nd overall and in LM P1); "Unfortunately, we lost time when we found ourselves behind the second safety car in the middle of the race. But it's a good result and provides us with positive information. The car's quick, reliable and well balanced. It's a big boost to our confidence before Le Mans."

Tom Kristensen (no. 3 Audi R18 TDI, 3rd LM P1 and overall): "We had a few problems and overall we're disappointed by our performance in this race. But that's not to say that Peugeot doesn't deserve their victory. The guys in no. 7 drove a great race and made no mistakes so they deserve their success. We'll be ready for Le Mans!"

Jody Firth (Oreca 03-Nissan, TDS Racing, LM P2 winner): "The key was steadiness. We were also quick but we needed to be steady to achieve this result. The whole team did a great job."

Giancarlo Fisichella (no. 51 AF Corse Ferrari F458 Italia, winner in LM GTE Pro): "It's a great result. I've already scored a few second places but never a victory. It's fantastic for the team, for us and for Ferrari. The car just kept getting better and better. We did one less stop than the others. The car was difficult to drive at the end of the race."

Nicolas Armindo (no. 67 IMSA Performance Porsche 997 GT3 RSR winner in the LM GTE Am category): "I made a mistake at the start of the race and went into the gravel. I didn't make things easy for Raymond but he drove a very steady race. Then I pushed really hard to get back to the front of the category. We knew we were quick so we had no choice but to go for it."

Find all the results on www.lemans-series.com.

