



## Team RLR Eager to Impress at Imola

Team RLR boss Nick Reynolds believes the third round of the 2011 Le Mans Series at Imola on July 1-3 is an ideal opportunity for his squad to shine.

Despite the Lancashire-based outfit's March pre-season test at the famous circuit being disrupted by an unseasonable deluge of snow, Reynolds sees the combination of an enhanced setup for the MG Lola EX265 and the Italian track's characteristics combining to give the LMS rookies an excellent chance to maintain the strong form that has placed them fourth in the championship standings after the two opening rounds.

With the event also doubling as the fourth round of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, a strong field of 50 entries will line up to race at the historic track 40km to the east of Bologna and near the Apennine mountains in Italy. With 12 other cars from around the world contesting the LMP2 category Team RLR will once again be testing itself over six hours against the very best endurance racing teams in its class.

The 4.9km circuit, officially known as the 'Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari' after the legendary Italian marque's late founder Enzo and his son Dino, is in itself a tough test - consisting of several fast-flowing sections broken up by more technical complexes featuring heavy braking points.

In readiness for the challenge Team RLR put the MG Lola EX265 through its paces in a test session at Snetterton race circuit in the UK to refine its setup and try to exploit the performance benefit offered by the LMP2 class rule changes issued by the ACO after the last LMS round at Spa, which saw a slight easing of the restrictions on the Judd engine runners.

Team principal Reynolds declared himself satisfied with the results of the test and the way his drivers had readied themselves for the event, leading him to believe the squad is as well prepared as it can be to make an impression when it hits the track at Imola.

In a hectic week leading up to the Six Hours of Imola the MG Lola EX265 also made a public appearance when it took pride of place at Silverstone on June 25 during MG Live!, the world's biggest event for MG owners. Hundreds of VIP visitors were able to take a closer look at the prototype sports car, which won the LMP2 class at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2006, while Team RLR's Rob Garofall got the chance to test drive MG's brand new MG6 Magnette around the Stowe Circuit after meeting fans to talk about the MG Lola and endurance racing throughout the day.

**Nick Reynolds, Team RLR team principal, said:**

"I believe we can go to Imola and get a good result. The preparation for the drivers has been very good in the build up to this event, and they've all been round the circuit in testing so they will arrive knowing what the task looks like. It should be a track that suits us better than the ones we've raced at so far this season, plus after our most recent test following the race at Spa we developed a setup that we think will transfer straight onto the car at Imola and produce a big step forward in the car's overall

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race pace. On top of that Imola is a stunning track and a great place to go racing, so we're excited at the prospect of getting stuck in over there."

**Barry Gates, Team RLR driver, said:**

"I'm just hoping the conditions at Imola for the race will be different from when we tested there in March earlier this year when it snowed heavily! At least we'll go back feeling we know our way around the circuit because I think it's going to be very busy out on track during practice and qualifying, it's not a long circuit and there's going to be a lot of cars out there. It's tight and twisty and the concern is that the P1 cars will disrupt the practice sessions like they did at Spa, where so many red flags cut everyone's running time. We're in good shape though because the Judd engines have a little bit more power following the regulation changes and Imola is a high downforce circuit which will suit the MG Lola. With the progress we've made over the past few weeks hopefully we'll be a bit closer to the pace of the front-runners in our class and we feel it's a race where we should do well."

**Rob Garofall, Team RLR driver, said:**

"For us to sit fourth in the LMP2 class standings and only a few points from the leaders is an exciting place to be in our first full Le Mans Series season. If we can take that form to Imola and come away with another good result we'll be right in the mix for the championship, and for a little British team with all the restrictions we've had placed upon us it's great to be in that position, then who knows what can happen in the final rounds? Imola is a superb track that's full of character and it's a great experience to be going racing there. We've got what we expected to be our two most difficult circuits in the shape of Paul Ricard and Spa out of the way, and with a good test behind us in the build up to this race that should help give us the best possible chance of producing another strong performance."

**Simon Phillips, Team RLR driver, said:**

"I visited Imola to test a Radical recently and that was a really useful exercise in terms of learning the circuit ahead of going there to drive the MG Lola. It did run through my mind when I was out there that compared to the likes of Spa there are not many places to run off at Imola, you could lose a lot of time looking over your shoulder for the P1 cars so we're going to have to be smart about managing traffic well. We're all really looking forward to getting back into the car with the latest setup developments and going to race at a circuit where we think we have an opportunity to do well. The fact we're running fourth in the championship on merit is a great achievement, we've worked unbelievably hard on all aspects of the team to give us the best possible chance of success and maybe we can do something special in the next few races."

**ENDS**

Notes for editors:

To find out more about Team RLR and its Le Mans Series campaign log on to: [www.rlrmotorsport.com](http://www.rlrmotorsport.com)

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