



## Team RLR Ready to Join Exclusive Spa Club

British underdogs Team RLR will look to raise eyebrows by springing another surprise when the team rubs shoulders with the biggest names in endurance racing during the second round of the Le Mans Series 2011 at the famous Spa-Francorchamps circuit in Belgium next week

With the event on May 5-7 also doubling as a round of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup a field of around 60 high-quality entries from across the endurance racing world - including the factory Audi and Peugeot outfits – will take to the Ardennes track for the 1000km of Spa-Francorchamps, with Team RLR one of the 12 cars in the ultra-competitive LMP2 class.

Having secured its best ever Le Mans Series result and a solid start to the season with a fifth place LMP2 class finish at the opening round in Le Castellet, the Lancashire-based squad will seek to once again build on its credentials of performing above expectations in its first full season and take the challenge to the established teams.

The well-developed MG Lola EX265 Judd has performed admirably so far in the hands of Team RLR, however with other teams in the class running new 'cost-capped' cars allowed performance breaks under the latest regulations, the challenge is on to find ways of extracting every ounce of performance from the package at each round.

That means Team RLR drivers Barry Gates, Rob Garofall and Simon Phillips will have to be at their very best in order to keep the team punching above its weight.



The historic Spa circuit will present a formidable challenge. With each lap comprising 7km of fast, twisty, hilly sections - including unique complexes such as the famous Eau Rouge - it is one of the most demanding circuits in the world, and requires a huge amount of concentration and commitment from drivers.

With an intense and fiercely fought battle expected between the 60 top quality entries that will make up the field at Spa, Team RLR will once again look to combine the consistency of its drivers, the reliability of the MG Lola EX265 and smart pit stop strategy to bring home another strong result and mark another step forward in the team's progress towards becoming an established LMS contender.

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

"The boys are really fired up for this one as it's another high-profile event that we can use to show that we can mix it with the big guns. The drivers have built up a good understanding with each other and the guys in the garage now, so we're all on the same page and understand our limits and what we have to do to get the best out of the car over the course of the race. At this stage in the development of the team it's very important we try to finish each event with as few problems as possible in order to gain as much experience as we can and prepare for the future. It will be another big feather in our cap if we can do the same at Spa as we did at Le Castellet and show that we're capable of managing endurance races well even when we're slightly down on performance compared to some of the other cars."

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

"Spa has been a happy hunting ground for me in the past. I won there in 2007 on the way to winning the Radical Enduro championship, and again in 2009 in a Ligier on the way to winning the SPEED EuroSeries. I don't expect to win there next week as with the penalty of power and weight we carry due to running an older specification car we will struggle to match the class leaders for outright pace, but I think our performance at Paul Ricard showed we are capable of getting good solid results despite the limitations imposed upon us. For me Spa is also a great track as it's got some really quick corners and not too much tight fiddly stuff, which is not only fun but what sports prototype cars were made for."

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

"The grid looks just fantastic for this race, with the factory teams all present it really is a dress rehearsal for the Le Mans 24 Hours. Spa is one of the most famous circuits in the world and with 60 cars on the grid it's going to be a bit special, and definitely one of the highlights of my racing career. It's difficult to predict where we'll be in terms of performance compared to the others with more changes to the regulations since the last round, it's likely we'll be on the back foot in terms of outright pace, but the team's preparation is exceptional so we just have to race smart and try and close the gap over the six hours."

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

"Like the rest of the team I'm really looking forward to this one. I've raced at Spa before in other championships so I know what a fantastic track it is from a driver's point of view, with so many high speed corners and long straights it's a real challenge. I started for the team for the first time at the last round which was a great experience, and with around 60 cars on the grid this time it will add to the excitement of the event and every team will be going flat out to make an impression. If we can keep our nose clean and avoid any problems in the early stages then I'm sure we'll be able to settle into a good rhythm and try to exploit any issues our rivals might have."

**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)  
You can also follow Team RLR on:

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