

Le Mans Series – 1000 km de Budapest - Preview

IMSA Performance Matmut set for Eastern adventure

For the first time in its history, the Le Mans Series will visit Eastern Europe this weekend when Hungary joins the likes of Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil and Italy on the ACO's list of destinations visited. It's also an important first for the IMSA Performance Matmut team, even if one of their drivers has experience of racing there a decade ago...

"I remember the layout requiring a good rhythm, but overall it was quite slow, with a lot of acceleration and braking," said Patrick Pilet. "I still have good memories of the Hungaroring as it was the first time I really performed in my category. But it has changed since then, especially the main straight and first corner. I'll know more than Raymond (Narac) but not by much and will have to learn it all over again."



That shouldn't be a problem at all for the IMSA Performance Matmut squad however who are still feeling fresh and confident at the end of a busy summer. *"After our victory in the FIA GT2 European Cup at Spa, the team took a week off for a holiday,"* said Team Manager Franck Rava. *"So we are now in a great position to face the penultimate round of the Le Mans Series campaign. We only have to hope that luck will not be against us, as seems to happen so often in this championship!"*

Pilet is also expecting the twisty and narrow Hungaroring to suit the Matmut-liveried Porsche. *"Last year, the Ferrari would have had the upper hand but the results this season suggest that trend has been reversed. The Ferrari has made gains in power so will perform well exiting corners and onto the straights. We, on the other hand, have made progress on the chassis side so the Porsche should be well suited to the numerous changes of direction and braking points,"* said the factory Porsche driver, who has finished second at Mid-Ohio's American Le Mans Series round since racing at the Spa 24 Hours. As well as traffic, which is always difficult to manage in Hungary, drivers will have to be mindful of the weather conditions which are expected to be hot at this time of year. *"Physically, I think that it is going to be quite a demanding race. There is very little time to relax due to the technical layout so I don't think we will be double stinting,"* added Pilet.

As in Portimao last time out, the 1000km event will finish in darkness, at around 10pm on Sunday. Saturday will be dedicated to free practice whilst qualifying takes place on Sunday morning ahead of the start at 4pm.

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