

Nürburgring, Germany

23rd August 2009

Third podium of the season for OAK Racing Team Mazda France

The fourth round of this season's Le Mans Series proved a superb one for OAK Racing Team Mazda France after their #35 entry of Matthieu Lahaye and Karim Ajlani claimed third position in LMP2. It was the pair's second podium of the campaign after achieving a similar result at Spa-Francorchamps in May whilst the #24



car also finished third in Le Mans in June. Indeed, that same entry of gentlemen drivers Richard Hein and Jacques Nicolet capped an excellent weekend by finishing fourth. The two crews produced a faultless display during the 1000 kilometre race at the famous German venue, confirming the excellent performance of its technical package for 2009 which unites Pescarolo chassis with Mazda-AER engine and Dunlop tyres. It was a result that also confirms the return of reliability.

François Sicard, OAK Racing Team Manager, was delighted with a result which rewards the hard work and commitment of the entire team and its technical partners: "Our objective this weekend was to score a podium finish with the #35 and to place the #24 in the top five. To that end it's mission accomplished so I am delighted."

"Matthieu and Karim had a fantastic race, Matthieu climbing up to third after the opening few laps. Karim meanwhile had a few technical problems during his first stint which cost us several places. Despite those, they climbed back up to third place, which confirms the level of performance and reliability of the car. Richard and Jacques completed a faultless race and confirmed their progression since Le Mans. A big thank you to AER and Mazda who worked very well and who are starting to be rewarded for their efforts. Congratulations also to Dunlop who supplied us with fantastic tyres which allowed the guys to run double stints. I'm looking forward to Silverstone in three weeks."

Matthieu Lahaye: "We have shown our potential during the past few races so it's nice to get a podium. We were fast in the race and I hope that this will continue at Silverstone. I also think that I have found something for the starts! As in Portimão, I had a superb opening stint and was soon running in the top three. I pushed hard throughout and did not have any problems. From the middle of the race, we were able to double stint the tyres which allowed us to climb back up the order. I am delighted for the entire team who deserve this result."

Karim Ajlani: "My first stint was going well until the moment the engine bip, when changing down the gears, stopped working and I had to switch the mapping to 'safe'. That meant I did not have any antilag and was slower exiting the corners which cost me some time until the end of the first stint. We decided to continue, waiting until the driver change for the mechanics to fix the problem. This paid off as we only lost six minutes in the pits. I finished the race with a double stint, bringing the car home to score this fabulous podium. We had high hopes for this race and it has paid off. I must say a big thank you to the entire team."

Jacques Nicolet: "This is an excellent result for the team, with a podium for the #35 and Richard and I just behind with an excellent fourth place. Both of us have made a step forward in performance since our podium at Le Mans, and that's been confirmed by the result here. We raced with a good, consistent rhythm and drove faster than normal which has helped us to finish just off of the podium. I cannot wait to be at Silverstone."

Richard Hein: "We have achieved the objectives that we set ourselves and I am proud to finish in the top four. OAK Racing is a fabulous team, a big family and united which has worked hard to achieve such results. I was prudent at the start when the fight is often quite intense, before attacking at the maximum which enabled us to maintain the same level of performance as our rivals. Jacques and I will continue to work hard. We are not far from the leading drivers and we want to get even closer."

The fifth and final round of the 2009 Le Mans Series takes place at Silverstone on September 13th where the Magny-Cours-based team will be hoping to finish the season on a high with another strong performance.

LMP2 Final Classification:

- 1) #40 Quifel ASM Team – Amaral / Pla – Ginetta Zytec, 189 laps, 11 points
- 2) #29 Racing Box – Ceccato / Francioni / Piccini – Lola Judd, 187 laps, 8 points
- 3) #35 OAK Racing - Lahaye, Ajlani - Pescarolo Mazda, 185 laps, 2 points
- 4) #24 OAK Racing – Nicolet, Hein – Pescarolo Mazda, 184 laps, 3 points

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