



**Le Mans Series, Round 1**  
Barcelona, Spain  
5 April 2009

### **Two OAK Racing-Mazdas in top 6 of LMP2 class in Barcelona**

Nevers-based team OAK Racing made an excellent start to the season by placing its two Pescarolo-Mazdas in the top six of the LMP2 class during the Catalunya 1000kms, the opening round of the 2009 Le Mans Series.

Frenchman Matthieu Lahaye and Syrian Karim Ajlani, ninth in their class on the starting grid, finished fifth in LMP2 whilst their team mates, gentlemen drivers Jacques Nicolet and Richard Hein, finished just behind with a fine sixth place. The team, which for the first time was racing with its new technical package - a Mazda engine and Dunlop tyres, set a main objective for the weekend to finish the race with both cars running at the chequered flag. Therefore it was mission accomplished and a result that proves the reliability of their 2009 machinery and sets them up for a great season.

François Sicard, Team Manager, said: "This opening round of the Le Mans Series was important for us, even though we have been testing already. We only finished assembling the two cars on Monday and this result proves the quality of work of the entire team and our technical partners. We have had some small electrical problems since Friday, which compromised our performance during qualifying and didn't allow us to work on the chassis set-up as we would have liked. Nevertheless, we remained focused on our race strategy, which was based on consistency and performance, and that has paid off. A big thank you to all the team members who deserve this result."

Matthieu Lahaye added: "The work of the past few weeks has been worthwhile because today we had a car which performed well and was reliable. This result is encouraging and is a solid base to build from for the rest of the season. We hope to be fighting at the front in the upcoming races."

P R E S S R E L E A S E





Karim Ajlani, said: "I am delighted for the team and that we were able to finish despite my spin at the beginning of my first stint. I am still learning a lot and I need to spend more time in the car. I still lack some experience and I stupidly got caught out. It will not happen again!"

Richard Hein added: "This result is extraordinary because we were forced to start from the back of the grid following the electrical problems which prevented me from setting a time in qualifying. It is important to note that we were using the 2008 bodywork, which proves the potential of the car. When you see the performance of the #16 LMP1 Pescarolo with the 2009 aero package, I am very confident for the remainder of the season."

Jacques Nicolet also enjoyed the result, as a pilot and the team owner: "The team gave me a great birthday present today and I am very proud to score one of my best career finish in the Le Mans Series. All the team is now focused on the next race in Spa where we are expecting to run the 2009 aero package on both cars."

#### **LMP2 classification:**

- 1) #30 Racing Box - Biaggi, Bobbi, Piccini A - Lola Judd, 201 laps – 10 pts
- 2) #40 Quifel ASM Team – Amaral, Pla - Ginetta Zytek, +46.536sec – 8 pts
- 3) #29 Racing Box – Ceccato, Francioni, Piccini G - Lola Judd, 195 laps – 7 pts
- 4) #26 Bruneau - Radical AER – Bruneau, Moseley, Greensall - 193 laps – 5 pts
- 5) #24 OAK Racing - Pescarolo Mazda - Lahaye, Ajlani - 190 laps – 4 pts
- 6) #35 OAK Racing - Pescarolo Mazda – Nicolet, Hein – +18.436sec – 3 pts

Contact:  
Sylvie Nicolet  
06 07 28 65 88  
[s.nicolet@oak-racing.com](mailto:s.nicolet@oak-racing.com)

P R E S S R E L E A S E

