



Le Mans Series
1000km Hungaroring

Olivier Pla : A podium...overall !

The Quifel-ASM Team driver finishes in second place in LMP2... and also in the overall classification. Driving the Ginetta-Zytek, he came close to taking it all.



Arriving in Budapest, Olivier Pla had one objective: once again find victory in LMP2. Although he crossed the finish line behind Strakka Racing, this podium has a particularly good feeling: along with Miguel Amaral, the Toulouse native reached the second step of the overall podium; A result that confirms the qualities of the Team Quifel-ASM.

Right at the start of the practice sessions, Olivier was able to find the right settings, as expected, because the car was particularly well suited to the twisty Hungaroring. He signed the second fastest time in qualifying for LMP2, and fifth overall, just behind the Peugeot 908! Second in LMP2 in the early stages of the race, Olivier then made a move to take command of his class during the first pitstop. The strategy established by the Portuguese team – double stint the Dunlop tyres – was proving to be the right call. *“Our tactic was the right one,”* he confirmed. *“Our rubber was staying consistent during stints and the handling of the car wasn’t changing. This allowed me to stay in the lead until the second pitstop. On a single lap, we couldn’t keep up with the rhythm of the HPD (Honda). But our overall race rhythm was good and we were sometimes faster than the prototype that is usually the one to beat.”*

As Miguel Amaral took over the controls, the back and forth battle between the Team Quifel-ASM Ginetta-Zytek and the HPD continued. Unfortunately the No. 40 would lose close to a minute behind the safety car, before having to make another pitstop to change a portion of the front bonnet. Olivier was back in the driver’s seat for a double stint that would see him to the finish, coming home second in the overall classification after various LMP1s encountered mechanical woes.



“After our retirement at Portimao, it was important to reach the podium again,” said the 2009 LMP2 Le Mans Series champion. *“To be second overall was not even expected and it’s a superb result for the team who, once again, did a great job. I still think the overall victory could have been within reach with a little more luck. We could have beaten the HPD and taken overall honors.”*

That said, Olivier has no regrets, as he explains: *“I pushed really hard, from start to finish, and took a maximum of risks in traffic... It was really close sometimes! The race was difficult but we had to give it our all. We didn’t come very far from victory and I hope that it will be for next time...”*

Next meeting will be at Silverstone, September 10-12, for the Le Mans Series finale.

