



1000km Algarve

31st July 2009

The Team ORECA-Matmut-AIM on pole !

The two ORECA 01s set pole and the third-quickest time in qualifying.

The Team ORECA-Matmu-AIM set pole for the Algarve 1000kms in the third round of the 2009 Le Mans Series on the Portiamo circuit in Portugal. Nicolas Lapierre in no.11 was the quickest ahead of the Aston Martins, Pescarolos and Audis R10s on the Algarve circuit giving the ORECA 01 its first pole position. It was a great performance and in addition, the team bagged the third spot on the grid thanks to Bruno Senna in no.10.



For the Portimao event, Hugues de Chaunac and his men had a single aim: to show the out-and-out speed of the Signes-designed prototype, which had already proved its reliability in the Le Mans 24 Hours. Today's result confirms the progress made by the team. Obviously, the next challenge will be the race, which the driver line-ups of Lapierre-Olivier Panis in no.11 and Senna-Tiago Monteiro in no.10 have used the four hours free practice to prepare for. They took advantage of them to get to grips with the Portimao layout during the day and also at night. On the hilly, tricky circuit the two ORECA 01s upped their performance throughout the sessions. The four drivers continued to fine tune the cars' handling, and found the setup that suited them best.

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QUOTES :

Nicolas Lapierre (n°11), pole setter: *"That really is a boost! The toughest part is still to come, but the fact of setting the ORECA 01's first pole position is great for the whole team. I was able to find a couple of clear laps even if I could have gone faster. In race setup, the car is consistent and we know that's one of its best qualities. It's also very quick on this circuit. It's going to be a difficult event, especially in terms of traffic."*



Bruno Senna (n°10), 3rd: *"The session was a bit frustrating. I was held up several times. Despite this, the result is good for the team. We've got a well set-up car for the race. We managed to improve its handling during practice and we know that the tyres will last. It's going to be our best chance since the start of the season; we can fight for victory."*



Start of the Algarve 1000kms: 20h15 (French time).



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