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A short race for the Team ORECA-Matmut

The Team ORECA-Matmut's Peugeot 908 HDi FAP was hit by another car in the Raidillon Eau Rouge in the first fifteen minutes of the race causing its retirement.



Spa-Francorchamps was the theatre of the second round of the Le Mans Series, and was the second step in the Team ORECA-Matmut's preparation for the Le Mans 24 Hours. The team's and its drivers, Olivier Panis, Nicolas Lapierre and Loïc Duval's aim was to continue getting to know the Peugeot 908 HDi FAP. Unfortunately, the Var-based outfit's race came to an abrupt end on lap 5 when no. 4 in fourth place was hit in the Raidillon Eau Rouge and spun off into the tyre wall.

"First of all, I have to say how surprised I was by the restart," explained Oliver Panis. "I was overtaken by two cars in parts of the circuit where there were still yellow flags. Just afterwards in the Raidillon on a slippery track, Jean-Christophe was a bit over-confident and he oversteered, and by moving off line he hit me at the rear on the right-hand side punting me off the track. I'm both disappointed and frustrated. Disappointed because I made a good start getting up into second place, and frustrated because Spa was a very important step in view of the Le Mans 24 Hours. We've shown our competitiveness and we'll be in the ballpark in a month."

The no. 4 Peugeot was fourth on the grid and got up into second place after the first corner passing the no. 9 Audi. Panis held this position until the first neutralisation and the above-mentioned restart. For the



whole Team ORECA-Matmut it is a huge disappointment as Hugues de Chaunac confirmed: "Obviously, I'm very disappointed to see our preparation race interrupted by an accident leading to the car's retirement. It put an end to our general rehearsal. Such a race with such a great field cannot be replaced by a test. But we're not going to give up. Unfortunately, that's part of motor racing. We'll arrive at Le Mans all the more determined to succeed. Whether in free practice where we were always in the top five, or in qualifying in which we finished fourth, we've shown our level of competitiveness by matching the pace of the best."



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