



LE MANS 24 HOURS

Saturday June 13, 2009

Interim race report: at 21:00 (after 6 hours)

TEAM PEUGEOT TOTAL STILL ON TOP

The strong run of the N°8 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP came to halt when the Sarrazin/Montagny/Bourdais car was forced to pit for a disc bell problem which has dropped it to sixth place with a quarter of the race completed. Its place at the top of the order has been snapped up by the N°9 sister car (Gené/Wurz/Brabham) which is more than 40 seconds clear of the best-placed non-Peugeot runner. The N°7 car (Minassian/Lamy/Klien) has carved its way back to 17th.

(Conditions: dry, warm and bright but a little cloudy, then sunnier. 28°C → 27°C)

Provisional positions at 21:00:

1, Gené/Wurz/Brabham	Peugeot 908 HDi FAP (N°9)	97 laps (1322km)
2, Capello/Kristensen/McNish	Audi R15	+41.736s
3, Luhr/Rockenfeller/Werner	Audi R15	+1 lap
...6, Sarrazin/Montagny/Bourdais	Peugeot 908 HDi FAP (N°8)	+2 laps
...17, Minassian/Lamy/Klien	Peugeot 908 HDi FAP (N°7)	+6 laps

Pit stops and incidents:

N°7 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP (Nicolas Minassian / Pedro Lamy / Christian Klien):

18.20: pit-stop (fuel and tyres). Driver change: Klien takes over from Minassian.
19.05: pit-stop (fuel).
19.40: pit-stop (fuel and tyres). Driver change: Lamy takes over from Klien.
20.31: pit-stop (fuel)

N°8 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP (Stéphane Sarrazin / Franck Montagny / Sébastien Bourdais):

18.05: pit-stop (fuel and tyres). Driver change: Sarrazin takes over from Montagny
18.49: pit-stop (fuel)
19.32: pit-stop (fuel)
19.40: pit-stop (fuel and tyres). Driver change: Bourdais takes over from Sarrazin.
20.34: pit-stop (fuel)

22:46: pit-stop (fuel, tyres and repairs). 9m 26s spent in pits. Rejoins at 20:55.

N°9 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP (Marc Gené / Alexander Wurz / David Brabham):

18.05: pit-stop (fuel and tyres). Driver change: Brabham takes over from Gené
18:48: pit-stop (fuel)
19:31: pit-stop (fuel)
19:40: pit-stop (fuel and tyres). Driver change: Wurz takes over from Brabham
20.30: pit-stop (fuel)

Observations:

Shortly after the 3-hour mark, Montagny hands over N°8 car to Sarrazin after driving since starting from pole position at 3pm. During his remarkable stint, the Frenchman completed 50 laps and built up a lead of 2½ minutes over the N°9 car, extending his advantage over the best-placed non-Peugeot to almost 3 minutes! Shortly before 7.30pm, the N°8 car passes the 1,000km mark with Sarrazin at the wheel, making the leading car's average speed since the start approximately 225kph. The N°9 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP continues to trail its sister car in second place with Brabham at the helm. Meanwhile, the N°7 car (now with Klien in control) makes regular progress to recover a place in the top-20 after falling back to 51st overall shortly after the start. Soon afterwards, at 7.40pm, the safety cars are sent out again, and the team quickly revises its strategy and all three Peugeots see a driver change. When the safety car goes back in, it leaves N°8 car (now with Bourdais onboard) a full lap clear of the N°9 (Wurz).

Shortly before quarter distance, however, the N°8 car makes an unscheduled stop for a rear-left disc bell problem (centring studs). N°9 inherits the lead, while the early pace-setter spends 9½ mins in pits and falls to sixth.

Quotes:

Franck Montagny (N°8 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP): "I kicked off the race with a quadruple stint, which means I was in the car for a little more than three hours. That's a long time, not to mention the long, anxious minutes during the build-up to the start! It was a close-run thing at the start with McNish. I even think he crossed the line before me. The track was dirty to begin with and it wasn't easy. The safety car enabled us to pull a minute clear and, after that, I pushed as hard as I could to try to gain another minute. I'm exhausted."

David Brabham (N°9 Peugeot 908 HDi FAP): "I tried to keep it as consistent as possible, and I took it especially cautiously through the traffic. Our car is running fine, and I had no real issues. It would have been nice to carry on a bit longer but the tactical thing has to be done. If that means handing over to someone else, you hand over to someone else."

Bruno Famin (Technical Director, Peugeot Sport): "The N°8 car had a problem with the rear-left disc bell, but Sébastien was able to make it back to the pits. Everything is OK now. Despite the traffic, the N°9 car is putting in a good, consistent run."

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