



**LE MANS SERIES:
1000KM DE SPA
Race
May 10, 2009**



A VICTORY AHEAD OF LE MANS

March's 12 Hours of Sebring and this weekend's 1000km de Spa rounded off Team Peugeot Total's competitive preparations for the 2009 Le Mans 24 Hours which takes place in a month's time. The main aim of the Peugeot squad in the Belgian Ardennes was to carry out work ahead of the French endurance race, but it ended up pocketing victory, too.

Both of the two Peugeot 908 HDi FAPs entered for the Belgian race succeeded in reaching the chequered flag to gather further valuable information for the team. After monopolising the front row of the starting grid, the two cars soon opened up a healthy lead, with Frenchman Nicolas Minassian in the N°7 car lapping ahead of Catalan Marc Gené (N°9). The two machines were actually running to different tyre strategies (medium rubber for the former, soft for the latter) and, just prior to the first round of driver changes, they were split by almost 50 seconds. As Simon Pagenaud (N°7) and David Brabham (N°9) took over from their respective team-mates, but the Australian made a mistake on Lap 53 when he pulled over too soon after passing the N°28 Courage. He was forced to pit to change the right-hand lower wishbone which caused Brabham to drop all of 13 minutes. In addition to falling down the order, the 908 HDi FAP then lost further ground at around the 100-lap mark when the car was called in for a four-minute stop-and-go penalty because of Brabham's manoeuvre. Alexander Wurz, who was then at the wheel, came in for the forced stop before rejoining and tucking in behind the leading car which was in the hands of fellow Austrian Christian Klien.

The N°7 car was first past the flag to secure a win which Team Peugeot Total had been waiting for since the squad's success at the Nürburgring on August 17, 2008, which was the 908's most recent victory until today.

Olivier Quesnel: "With Le Mans fast approaching, today's win has done the team a great deal of good and I am very pleased with our overall performance here at Spa. We came here to prepare for next month's big race and everything went very smoothly. Despite five safety car interventions, we didn't make any strategic errors. The two cars were running to different strategies on different tyres, but both double stinted. David's error prevented us from finishing first and second, but that's part and parcel of motor racing. We now have more private testing to come before Le Mans and, following today's race, I have to say that the petrol and diesel cars seem very close in performance terms."





Simon PAGENAUD: "It's been an exceptional weekend for the team and, of course for me. I felt very comfortable with the team and I was made to feel part of the family. I am pleased to have played a part in Peugeot's build-up to the 2009 Le Mans 24 Hours."

Christian KLIEN: "I'm delighted with today's result. We knew we were here to work, but it's still very nice to have won. The ballast we must now carry because of the regulations cost us several tenths of a second per lap but we managed to find a good balance for the car during the weekend."

Nicolas MINASSIAN: "The two cars ran at different rhythms. The objective was really to learn as much as possible and consequently work on different set-ups. I have to admit that today's result is great for morale and has given everyone a tremendous boost ahead of Le Mans."

Final positions:

- 1, PEUGEOT 908 HDi FAP N°7, 143 laps
- 2, Pescarolo N°16, +27.622s
- 3, Lola Aston Martin N°007, +1 lap
- 4, Oreca N°11, +1 lap
- 5, Lola Aston Martin N°009, +1 lap
- ...13, PEUGEOT 908 HDi FAP N°9, +7 laps
- Etc.
- Fastest race lap: Simon Pagenaud (2m 2.569s)

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