

Qualifying, Saturday April 5th 2008

### "LM" P1

1. N° 8, Team Peugeot Total, Peugeot 908 Hdi-FAP	1m31.875
2. N° 7, Team Peugeot Total, Peugeot 908 Hdi-FAP	1m32.454
3. N° 1, Audi Sport Team Joest, Audi R10 TDI	1m33.250
4. N° 10, Charouz Racing System, Lola Aston Martin	1m33.734
5. N° 2, Audi Sport Team Joest, Audi R10 TDI	1m34.671
6. N° 6, Team ORECA Matmut, Courage ORECA Judd	1m35.078
7. N° 16, Pescarolo Sport, Pescarolo Judd	1m35.641
8. N° 14, Creation AIM, Creation CA07-Aim	1m36.375
9. N° 17, Pescarolo Sport, Pescarolo Judd	1m36.516
10. N° 18, Rollcentre Racing, Pescarolo Judd	1m36.640
11. N° 5, Team ORECA Matmut, Courage-ORECA	1m36.797
12. N° 20, Epsilon-Euskadi, Epsilon Euskadi ee1-Judd	1m36.922
13. N° 19, Chamberlain Synergy, Lola B06/10-AER	1m39.063
14. N° 4, Saulnier Racing, Pescarolo Judd	1m40.594
15. N° 3, Scuderia Lavaggi, Lavaggi LS1-AER	1m41.610

### "LM" P2

1. N° 34, Van Merksteijn Motorsport, Porsche RS Spyder	1m34.422
2. N° 33, Speedy Racing Team Sebah, Lola B08/80 Coupe Judd	1m35.797
3. N° 27, Horag Racing, Porsche RS Spyder	1m36.156
4. N° 31, Team Essex, Porsche RS Spyder	1m36.266
5. N° 40, Quifel - ASM Team, Lola B05/40-AER	1m36.641
6. N° 32, Barazi Epsilon, Zytek 07S Zytek	1m37.516
7. N° 45, Embassy Racing, WF01 Zytek	1m38.109
8. N° 44, Kruse Schiller Motorsport, Lola B05/40 Mazda	1m38.437
9. N° 25, RML, MG Lola EX 265 - MG	1m38.485
10. N° 46, Embassy Racing, WF01 - Zytek	1m38.500
11. N° 35, Saulnier Racing, Pescarolo Judd	1m39.594
12. N° 26, Bruchladih Radical, Radical SR9-AER	1m40.750
13. N° 41, Trading Performance, Zytek 07S	1m41.516
14. N° 30, Racing Box, Lucchini Judd	1m44.579
15. N° 37, WR/Salini, WR Zytek	1m49.859

### "LM" GT1

1. N° 59, Aston Martin Racing, Aston Martin DBR9	1m44.484
2. N° 72, Luc Alphand Aventures, Corvette C6.R	1m44.531
3. N° 55, IPB Spartak Racing, Lamborghini Murcielago	1m44.969
4. N° 73, Luc Alphand Aventures, Corvette C6.R	1m46.718
5. N° 50, Larbre Competition, Saleen S7R	No time

### "LM" GT2

1. N° 96, Virgo Motorsport, Ferrari 430 GT	1m47.844
2. N° 77, Team Felbermayr Proton, Porsche 997 RSR	1m49.093
3. N° 76, IMSA Performance Matmut, Porsche 997 RSR	1m49.250
4. N° 91, Fambacher Racing, Porsche 997 RSR	1m49.250
5. N° 90, Fambacher Racing, Ferrari 430 GT	1m49.343
6. N° 75, IMSA Performance Matmut, Porsche 997 RSR	1m49.593
7. N° 99, JMB Racing, Ferrari 430 GT	1m50.297
8. N° 94, Speedy Racing Team, Spyker C8 Laviolette	1m50.953
9. N° 85, Snoras Spyker Squadron, Spyker C8 Laviolette	1m50.953
10. N° 93, James Watt Automotive, Aston Martin Vantage	1m51.015
11. N° 88, Team Felbermayr Proton, Porsche 997 RSR	1m51.218
12. N° 95, James Watt Automotive, Porsche 997 RSR	1m51.250
13. N° 98, JMB Racing, Ferrari 430 GT	1m52.078



## Peugeot lands first punch but Audi ready to fight back

The 2008 Le Mans Series burst into life at the Circuit de Catalunya near Barcelona at the weekend, with no fewer than 47 cars taking part in the opening qualifying session of the year ahead of tomorrow's first of five 1000km races in Europe.

The weather was warm and dry throughout qualifying, and more of the same is predicted for Sunday's race.

Peugeot and Audi met for the first time in Europe since Le Mans in 2007 and Stephane Sarrazin rained on his team-mate Marc Gene's party when he set pole position time for Peugeot.

Local driver Antonio Garcia scored a popular pole position in the "LM" GT1 Aston Martin run by Team Modena. Angel Burgueno and Miguel de Castro will both drive the new Judd-powered Epsilon Euskadi which was 12th fastest in the "LM" P1 class, and 17th overall on its debut.

Jos Verstappen was fastest in the "LM" P2 category for Porsche, and in the "LM" GT2 class the Ferrari and Porsche battle continues to rage after a winter of development by both manufacturers. Gianmaria Bruni made the most of Ferrari's winter development to set pole position time in the reigning champion Virgo Motorsport Ferrari 430 GT.

### Sarrazin spoils Gene's party

For a long time it looked as though Marc Gene had done enough to score the first pole position of the year in his Peugeot 908 Hdi FAP, but his team-mate Stephane Sarrazin had other ideas and the Frenchman pipped his team-mate in the second half of the session.

The two Peugeots will start Sunday's 1000km race, which is expected to run to its full 1000km distance rather than six-hour time limit, from the front row, with Allan McNish's Audi lining up alongside the Charouz Racing System Lola Aston Martin on the second row.

"We have a good balance with the car, it is easy to drive, easy to control," said Sarrazin who, with Pedro Lamy, won last year's drivers' title. "The performance at Sebring [the opening round of the American Le Mans Series in March] was faster than the Audi, but the race is very long and we hope to improve our reliability."

Gene was forced to abort three of his fastest laps due to yellow flags, and a red flag caused when Xavier Pompidou spun his Judd-powered Lola and was stranded in the middle of the circuit.

"I expected better," said the Spaniard. "I had to abort my first lap, second lap and

third lap, and the tyres were past their best."

McNish was disappointed not to have been closer to the Peugeots, his Audi not set up perfectly for the Spanish circuit, but he is optimistic about his chances during the race.

His Audi team-mate Alexandre Premat scored fifth fastest time in the second Audi R10 TDI, but Jean-Christophe Boullion, the 2006 Le Mans Series champion with Pescarolo Sport, was disappointed to have finished seventh fastest in class.

Giovanni Lavaggi and Wolfgang Kaufmann ran the new AER-powered Lavaggi LS1 for the first time on Friday having worked for two weeks solidly to prepare the car for the opening round of the Le Mans Series. The car's roll-out on Friday was interrupted by an electrical problem, and despite qualifying in 1m41.610s, Kaufmann emphasised that the time was set with plenty of performance in hand. "We can lap in 1m36, which is respectable," said the German.



#### Jos still the boss

Jos Verstappen has been in impressive form in testing after two years away from racing, and the Dutchman was again outstanding in qualifying, setting a best time of 1m34.422s.

The Dutchman will share the Porsche RS Spyder with Peter van Merksteijn, the two countrymen driving without Jeroen Bleekemolen who has other racing commitments this weekend.

"This is my first race and I am happy with the performance of the car," said Verstappen, who set fifth fastest time overall. "Hopefully we can keep up at the start and if we come out of the first corner well, stay close to the leaders. The car is very good on a long run."

Xavier Pompidou recovered from his mid-session spin to set second fastest time in the Speedy Racing Judd-powered Lola, which is making an impressive competitive debut in Spain, while Belgian veteran Didier Theys made it a Porsche 1-3 in the Horag Racing RS Spyder. Casper Elgaard was fourth fastest in the Dunlop-shod Essex Racing Porsche RS Spyder, ahead of the Quifel ASM Team Lola which was spun early in the session by Olivier Pla.

The reigning champion RML team was disappointed to have recorded ninth fastest time in class after experiencing problems mating the engine management system to the AER engine.



#### Garcia leads on home ground

Antonio Garcia waited until just three minutes from the end of the qualifying session to post pole position time in the "LM" GT1 class, beating the Luc Alphand Aventures Corvette C6.R of Guillaume Moreau by just 0.047s. "It is really close," said local driver Garcia. "We know the track, it is very aggressive on the tyres and that the first lap would be the fastest lap. This is a good starting point for the season because we know that we have a good car for the race too."

The category had only four cars qualifying after the Larbre Competition team suffered from engine problems in the morning practice session and was unable to complete repairs in time for qualifying. The Saleen S7R will start from the back of the grid, but we can expect a lightning start and strong performance from Christophe Bouchut, Patrick Bornhauser and Frederic Makowiecki.

Also performing well with a brand new car was Peter Kox, who set third fastest time in the IPB Spartak Racing Lamborghini Murcielago. The Dutchman, who will share with Russian driver Roman Rusinov, was less than half a second off the front-running pace.

"We are happy with the car and trying to make it reliable because we know that we are short of performance," said Kox. "The car has a very good race pace."



#### Bruni king of GT2 in qualifying

Porsche versus Ferrari is one of the all time great endurance racing battles and in Spain, the two giants of the sport were joined by new cars from Spyker and Aston Martin.

Gianmaria Bruni drew first blood when the Italian put in a stunning performance to lead the "LM" GT2 category in the Virgo Motorsport Ferrari 430 GT that he will share with champion driver Rob Bell.

Bruni set a time 1.249s faster than Marc Lieb's Team Felbermayr Porsche which was struggling for grip in the afternoon having had a good set-up in the morning. "We made a slight change to the car since this morning and it works better," said Bruni. "The balance was good for all three laps."

Richard Lietz, who started the 2007 season with two pole positions, could not repeat the performance and will line up third in class in the car that he will share with Raymond Narac. His time was matched to the thousandth of a second by Le Mans Series debutant Richard Westbrook. Few believe that will be the end of the story and are predicting another competitive season between the two manufacturers.

The Snoras Spyker Squadron Spyker C8 Laviolette was ninth fastest in the hands of Peter Dumbreck, which the Aston Martin V8 Vantage made its competitive debut with tenth fastest time.

