

Le Mans 19th July 2014

The ACO unveils the new LM P3



The Automobile Club de l'Ouest has launched a new category called LM P3 (Le Mans prototype 3), which will be part of the Asian Le Mans Series and European Le Mans Series continental championships in 2015. This formula is a gateway to Le Mans-type endurance racing.

A joint presentation of this new category took place at the Red Bull Ring (Austria) and at Inje Speedium (South Korea) where the third round of the European Le Mans Series and the first round of the Asian Le Mans Series were taking place. In 2015 the LM P3 is aimed at Le Mans-type continental championships organised directly or indirectly by the ACO.

The aim of these championships is to enable teams, drivers and constructors to learn the specific aspects of endurance racing before moving up to the top level, the FIA World Endurance Championship of which the Automobile Club de l'Ouest is the promoter and organiser. At the summit of the pyramid is the Le Mans 24 Hours, the blue riband event in the FIA World Endurance Championship, in which all the participants in the different endurance series hope to take part and dream of winning!

However, before achieving this aim they have to learn all the ins and outs of endurance racing. This is the aim of the new LM P3 prototype. The LM P3 is a modern, simple, safe car whose looks resemble those of the prestigious LM P2s and LM P1s, although its dimensions are slightly smaller (it is 15 cm shorter but has the same width), and its performance is guaranteed (2 seconds quicker than the LM GTEs on a normal circuit). It can be built by any constructor.

The ACO specification has to be taken into account. It imposes a closed vehicle with a carbon chassis and a metal rollbar, FIA safety standards, an obligatory crash test, a shark's fin, openings on top of the wheel arches and a weight of between 870 and 900 kg.



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Cars will have a single engine (to be confirmed before end of July), V8, putting out around 420. The engine management system will come from Magneti Marelli. This ensemble will be sold by Oreca, which will provide a back-up service to help the teams at all the circuits. A single engine will be allowed per car per season and each one must last 10 000 km without maintenance. A certain number of other common parts will be imposed. The size of the tyres will be similar to those used in the Porsche Cup.

All these measures will lead to cost capping. The sales price of these cars should not exceed 195 000 euros (chassis: around 135 000 euros, engine: around 60 000 euros).

The running costs of a car over an ELMS season should be between 350 and 400 000 euros. It will not require a large staff.

The LM P3s are aimed at opening the door to endurance racing and they are destined in priority for young drivers and gentlemen drivers.

In the LM P pyramid the LM P3s will be the first step before moving up to the LM P2s (accepted in all series as well as the Le Mans 24 Hours) and the LM P1 (FIA WEC and Le Mans 24 Hours only).

Pierre Fillon, President of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest: *"From the base to the summit we want to make it easy for drivers, teams and constructors to enter for endurance. For drivers we're promoting a specific training course starting with endurance races for karts – with the Le Mans 24 Hours for Karts – up to the Le Mans 24 Hours for cars. Quite a few of the most recent winners of the event cut their teeth on the Le Mans circuits. For the teams what was lacking was a quick, safe low-cost car to help them learn the sport and move up the steps of the ladder one by one. This LM P3 is the base of our pyramid devoted to the different LM Ps."*

Vincent Beaumesnil, Automobile Club de l'Ouest, Sports Manager: *"We decided to create the LM P3 to continue the endurance ladder. This brand new prototype, which bears a familiar resemblance to the different LM Ps, will be very competitive, reliable and safe and will be sold at reasonable prices with low running costs. We reckon that the yearly budget for a season in the ELMS will be only about twenty per cent higher than a closed CN with a much better positioned product profile. We've thought everything through so that the restrictions for drivers and teams should be reduced to the minimum. The sporting regulations governing the LM P3s in the series they will be racing in will also be adapted to economic constraints without, however, infringing on the performance, the safety and the quality of the on-track spectacle."*

Gérard Neveu, European Le Mans Series, General Manager: *"The creation of the LM P3 category is great news and it will be a big asset in the European Le Mans Series, a championship that is capable of providing drivers and teams who wish to race in top-level endurance events with an excellent training environment. Sports prototypes are the very essence of endurance and this entry-level prototype category will enable new teams to highlight new talents in the ELMS. We'll be delighted to welcome those taking part in this new category in our 2015 championship."*



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Mark Thomas, Asian Le Mans Series, Managing Director: *"For the Asian Le Mans Series the launch of the LM P3 is an extremely positive step forward for the development of Le Mans prototype racing in Asia. As a developing region there is an obvious demand for an entry level and more economic prototype that can enable teams and drivers to take the first step into endurance racing. We have already started in this direction in the 2014 Asian LMS with the addition of CN Prototypes into our grid. However, the LM P3 will provide the long term solution for us to introduce a proper ACO homologated car into the Series and we are convinced this is a platform that will be well received in Asia. We now believe we have the portfolio of cars that can both compliment the emerging Asian LMS and support the global Le Mans pyramid that will enable endurance motorsport to grow in the region."*



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