

2nd april 2010

Stéphane Sarrazin: a surprise guest for the Team ORECA-Matmut!

- Peugeot works driver, Stéphane Sarrazin, will drive the Team ORECA-Matmut Peugeot 908 HDi FAP in the Le Castellet 8 Hours.
- The technical team and the other drivers will be able to take advantage of his experience as they begin the 2010 Le Mans Series Championship.



The Team ORECA-Matmut will have some very talented back-up in their first race with the Peugeot 908 HDi FAP, in the person of Stéphane Sarrazin who will join the Var-based squad for the Le Castellet 8 Hours. He has been driving the 908 HDi FAP since 2007, and his experience will prove invaluable for Olivier Panis and Nicolas Lapierre on the Paul Ricard HTTT circuit. Loïc Duval, the third driver in the Le Mans 24 Hours, will take part in private testing in April as well as in the Spa-Francorchamps 1000kms in May.

Having Sarrazin in their driver line-up is a big boost for the Team ORECA-Matmut. He has scored three consecutive pole positions in the Le Mans 24 Hours at the wheel of the Peugeot, and has finished second on two occasions in the Sarthe. He has been involved in the car's development since the project was launched; he won the Le Mans Series title in 2007 and also came first in last year's Petit Le Mans.

"This decision was taken after a discussion with Olivier Quesnel," explains Hugues de Chaunac. "At Le Castellet, the level has been upped several notches with the presence of an Audi, which is going to be ultra- competitive. Stéphane's arrival in this context is an obvious advantage for the whole team. Thanks to him, the engineering squad will get to grips with the new car even quicker. Stéphane's know how will be particularly useful in racing conditions. It'll also be a big help to our drivers, as he's covered thousands of kilometres in the 908 HDi FAP. We're going to be able to get to grips with the car from the start of the season and optimise its performance in a shorter period of time."

Sarrazin is no stranger to the team. In 2001 and 2002, he drove the Team ORECA Dallara-ORECA in endurance. "I'm delighted to be back with the team that I know so well," said the Peugeot works driver. "I'm used to working with David Flourey, who was my engineer in 2003 and I already got to know Olivier Panis in F1. I know that Nicolas Lapierre is very quick and a nice guy into the bargain, so I think we're going to make a great trio. It's a fantastic opportunity for me to prepare for my season. Of course, our aim is to win, and that would be a great result in the face of the challenge from the new Audi, but my first priority is to put myself at the disposal of the team and its drivers. I'm going to try and bring my knowledge of the car and to share a few insights with them that could help the team at Le Castellet, and for the rest of the season."

Rendezvous on Friday 9th April for the first practice session, with a driver line-up at the wheel of the Team ORECA-Matmut Peugeot 908 HDi FAP that's a first in the history of the French squad.



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