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Qualifying sessions: MATECH FORD GT and HEXIS RACING ASTON MARTIN on pole

GT3 NEWS #3

MATECH FORD GT and HEXIS RACING ASTON MARTIN on pole

The two qualifying sessions were very close, and with more than 40 cars on the track, the traffic was a significant factor. During the first session, qualifying the cars for race one, Romain Bera was the quickest, claiming the first pole position for him in the FIA GT3 European Championship, and pole position for the Ford GT for its first ever race. Frederic Makowiecki set pole position in the second qualifying session, in the Hexis Racing Aston Martin DBRS9, only 7 thousandths ahead of Thomas Mutsch in the Ford GT

FIRST QUALIFYING AND FIRST POLE POSITION FOR THE FORD GT

For its first ever qualifying session, the Matech Racing Ford GT set the pole position, when Romain Bera managed to beat Erik Janis' (S-Berg Racing Team Lamborghini Gallardo) time. "It is quite a surprise for us, we had an electrical problem during the first day, but I really did my best during this session" declared Romain Bera. The Ford GT is still under development, and so far the Matech Racing have never raced with this car for an hour, so the race is going to be interesting for this team. Anyway, the Ford GT proves that this car has started off well, and is efficient over a lap. "Now we know that our laps are fast, after the race we will see how consistent the car is" analysed Bera.

Erik Janis and Diego Alessi (BMS Scuderia Italia Aston Martin DBRS9) were respectively second and third. Three different makes were in the Top 3, and seven different cars in the Top10! With fourteen cars within 2 seconds of each other, the first race of the season is going to be close!

FIRST POLE POSITION FOR MAKOWIECKI

Racing last year in a Dodge Viper Competition Coupe, Frederic Makowiecki is now in the Hexis Racing Aston Martin DBRS9. The Frenchman set his first pole position in the FIA GT3 European Championship during the second qualifying session at Silverstone. Makowiecki had a huge fight with the nr 43 Matech Racing Ford GT driven by Thomas Mutsch, but by seven thousandths, Makowiecki was the quickest. Newcomer team, Hexis Racing, is learning very fast. "The team works very well, since the beginning of the week-end our car is good, and we improved a lot during each session" declared Makowiecki. "We could do something good during the second race; it is a great advantage to be on the first row, as with so many cars, the start could be dangerous!"

With Stephane Daoudi's nr 34 JMB Racing Ferrari 430 in 3rd position,



the nr 10 First Racing Lamborghini Gallardo driven by Maxime Dubrulle in 4th position and Jon Barnes' nr 30 Damax Ascari KZ1R GT3 in 5th, five different cars are in the top 5, and this time sixteen drivers were only 2 seconds apart.

The second race will start on Sunday afternoon.

Quotes

Qualifying 1:

Romain Bera - nr 44 Matech Racing Ford GT, 1st: "It is great! This pole position is a good way to thank the team for all the work they have done to be ready today. We worked hard; yesterday during the free practice we had an electrical problem, so I was not able to drive the car fast. Today it was OK, and we had a good set-up. Also, it is my first time on this track, so I'm pleased. We have never driven this car for one hour, so we will learn a lot during this race. My last pole position was in 2004 in the French GT Championship, and I have not been racing for eight months, so I'm glad to be back on pole position."

Erik Janis - nr 15 S-Berg Racing Team Lamborghini Gallardo, 2nd: "I'm quite satisfied; our goal was to be on the first row, so it is good. I would like to thank the team because since the beginning of the week-end the car is really good, very well prepared, and we did not have any problems. We have to concentrate on the race, it is an hour long and so many things could happen. The level is very close, so no mistakes are allowed. We had similar times with Jirik Jaromir, so it is a good situation. I chose to do only one flying lap in order to keep the tyres for the race."

Diego Alessi - nr 23 BMS Scuderia Italia Aston Martin DBRS9, 3rd: "We could have done something better. During my qualifying session, I could have gone faster, but I did not manage to have an ideal lap. I'm impressed by the time the Hexis Racing Aston Martin set during the second qualifying; I did not think that we could go so fast! For the race, we are very confident because with my team mate we are on the same time. That could be the key."

Qualifying 2:

Frederic Makowiecki - nr 26 Hexis Racing Aston Martin DBRS9, 1st: "The car is very nice to drive, it is a real racing car, you have to push it as much as you can to do a good time, and it is great. The team did a fantastic job, the car is better and better, we worked on the set-up, and today the car is perfect. The car is consistent so it is good for the race. My team-mate, Jean-Claude Lagniez is discovering this championship and this car. During the race he is going to improve again, and I'm sure we could do something good."

Stephane Daoudi - nr 34 JMB Racing Ferrari 430, 3rd: "We are happy to be on the pace today, because during the free practice it was not easy for us. I pushed really hard to make this time, it was not easy. Our suspension is too soft... We put it on the hardest position that we could, but on the hard breaking my car touches the ground, so it is not really great. The car is not easy to drive, and during the race it will be really



difficult to keep a consistent car like that!”

Jon Barnes - nr30 Damax Ascari KS1R GT3, 5th: “That was my first time in the Ascari with new tyres, so I’m happy with my time. I’m not completely used to this car, I only did few laps with it, so I’m confident, and we will improve. The Ascari is good for this track, even if with the weight it is more difficult for us, but as long as we manage to keep a good speed in the corner, the car is brilliant.”

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