



LARBRE COMPETITION



JOB WELL DONE FOR LARBRE COMPETITION IN LE MANS 24 HOURS PRACTICE AND QUALIFYING

French team Larbre Competition is thrilled with the performance of its three drivers during the Le Mans 24 Hours practice and qualifying sessions, and is confident of a solid result for its 25th participation in the twice-around-the-clock event.

Drivers Romano Ricci, Erwin Creed and Thomas Dagoneau showed great consistency throughout the pre-race sessions and achieved team manager Jack Leconte's goals, as they posted the 19th fastest time in qualifying on board the #50 Ligier JS P217 in the LMP2 class.

After completing the mandatory scrutineering and administrative checks on Sunday, as well as the training seminar and autograph session over the following two days, Larbre Competition and its crew returned to the track for Wednesday's free practice, as its new driver trio reacclimatised themselves to the 13.6 km circuit.

With the aim of breaking below the 3:40.000 mark, Ricci showed impressive pace immediately, guiding the #50 Ligier to a 3:36.927. Both Creed and Dagoneau continually improved their times throughout the session, with the Val de Vienne-based squad ending the session in 18th.

In first qualifying, all drivers completed the mandatory five night laps, with Ricci going 19th fastest, albeit slightly down on his practice time. With one eye on the race though, the French squad decided to focus on consistency for its three drivers and would not attempt to improve in the remaining sessions.

On Thursday, Creed was behind the wheel for most of the #50's running, as his lap times continued to drop before the session ended prematurely after a red flag. In the final qualifying run, Dagonneau completed more laps and improved his time, before Leconte made the decision to bring the car in after rain started to fall over the circuit.

Now, the crew will get some deserved rest ahead of Saturday morning warm-up in preparation for the 86th edition of the French endurance classic at 15:00 (local time).



Jack Leconte: "Le Mans never changes, especially on Thursday where 20 cars had accidents within 90 minutes, which led to the red flag. We are always making sure to take it cautiously, but we managed to run the same pace throughout the two days. We did not use new tyres in the third qualifying session, as conditions were not quite there and when we did think about putting them on the rain arrived. I am very satisfied as - like during the test day - the drivers are back within the same second of each other. We decided to give Creed and Dagonneau a bit more time on the circuit and now their pace is similar to Ricci's, which is great news for the race. Now we pray that the rain stays away and the sun returns on Saturday!"

Romano Ricci: "I did not drive much, but the car is very well set-up and balanced, so we are in a strong position for the race. We will not be the quickest but will do our best not to make any errors and hopefully benefit from other teams' mistakes. My mind is completely on the race and I can't wait to do my first stint, especially as Jack Leconte has given me the chance to start."

Erwin Creed: "I had a good feeling in the car on both days. This is quite enjoyable as we are starting to rack up mileage and laps. At the beginning of the week, I could feel the pressure of Le Mans. The LMP2 is very fast and I was cautious, as not to make any mistakes. I then increased my pace, because these cars need to be pushed in order to be in the right working window. On Thursday, I felt more confident and started to control the car better, the quicker you go the safer you feel. I also enjoyed driving at night and to add to that, we had rain and slick tyres during my last stint, but all went very well."

Thomas Dagonneau: "Thursday went well, but every time I go out on track there is a

slow zone, or even a red flag. I found practice difficult, as I could not get a good feeling in the car, it was a bit complicated for me. I sat down with our data engineer and we tweaked the set-up, from then on the car felt much better. We could push again and we made progress, but then I broke too late and not hard enough in Mulsanne, which sent me through the gravel trap. This ruined the end of the session for the team and Erwin could not run. In qualifying two, I did one-and-a-half laps before coming back into the pits because of a red flag. I went out again in the final session and did a few timed laps. Only one wasn't disrupted by slow zones and it felt good! I am satisfied with my progression and happy not to make any mistakes on Thursday."

2018 Le Mans 24 Hours programme*

Saturday 16th June

09:00-09:45: Warm-Up

15:00: 2018 Le Mans 24 Hours start

Sunday 17th June

15:00: 2018 Le Mans 24 Hours finish

**All times local*



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