



## **PRACTICE AND QUALIFYING COMPLETE FOR LARBRE COMPETITION AHEAD OF 2019 LE MANS 24 HOURS**

**Larbre Competition was satisfied with the running it completed during practice and the three qualifying sessions ahead of the 2019 Le Mans 24 Hours.**

Drivers Erwin Creed, Romano Ricci and Nicholas Boulle worked through the team's programme according to plan during practice and qualifying, where the aim was to create the best car set-up and balance as possible for the race, rather than chasing absolute lap times on board the #50 Ligier JS P217.

Following the scrutineering checks on Sunday, as well as the traditional team retreat and official drivers' autograph session in the following days, Larbre hit the track on Wednesday for practice with the aim of increasing its race prospects. The programme was interrupted only by an excursion for Erwin towards the end of the session, as well as damage to the car after contact with a "floppy" bollard during Q1.

In the final two qualifying sessions on Thursday, Larbre continued to focus on the race

balance, meaning it will line up 20th on the LMP2 grid. With 25 years' worth of Le Mans knowledge, the squad understands that the first trick is to be comfortable when it comes to setting the pace.

The next event for the team is the Drivers' Parade on Friday afternoon, followed by a 45-minute warm-up session on Saturday morning ahead of the race start at 15:00.



**Jack Leconte, Team Manager:** “Thursday was much quieter than Wednesday as despite warning and briefing our drivers, one of them went off in the gravel trap at the Porsche curves. Erwin was smart and avoided the wall, which simplified the work of the team afterwards. There was also a turbulent driver who did not listen to Eduardo Freitas’ [FIA WEC Race Director] briefing with regards to the bollards so drove over one at high speed and we stopped earlier than planned as the front of the car was damaged. So Erwin was not able to execute his mandatory five qualifying laps at night on Wednesday, so he was the priority last night. We then continued to fine-tune the race set-up, which included a long night session to make sure our three drivers are comfortable and can have a competitive night period during the race. We gained two seconds over our best time on Wednesday so we are close to the other cars in our class.”

**Erwin Creed:** “On Wednesday I ended my day on a bad note as I lost the car in the Porsche curves and went into the gravel. Before this moment everything was going well and I was putting the laps together. So I was cautious when I got back in the car as I did not want to make a new mistake. I took my time to get the confidence back and all was in order during final qualifying, when I drove in daylight and at night. I am happy with my performance, I did not try to set a fast lap, I just continued to work on the team’s programme to prepare for the

race as much as we can.”

**Romano Ricci:** “I was happy to drive many laps yesterday afternoon, this allowed me to take my marks and find the right pace. I tried to set a personal best lap last night and I am quite happy as I had potential to go faster but this is not what matters. What does is that the car is well balanced and comfortable. We now have a car that can do 24 hours and feel safe while still being fast. This shows how important it is to spend time on the track, the team can fine-tune the quickest set-up as much as they can but if you do not do laps and have no confidence, then it does not work. The speed on this track is too fast and you must first have faith in the car, which we have for this weekend. There’s still a margin to progress but what is interesting is that the three of us are lapping at roughly the same speed, so our crew is homogenous. It was clear we wouldn’t set the world alight in qualifying as there is no pro driver in the crew, rather three gentlemen racers, but in the race it should be a different story.”

**Nicholas Boule:** “Thankfully we got through everything we needed to. It sort of feels like you never have quite enough time to feel completely prepared, as we’re not where we want to be on the grid. I guess it’s going to be a bit like the tortoise and the hare, hopefully we’ll pull something out. We’re working on a race set-up, I think now the trick is just to make sure everything is fully prepared for Saturday.”

### **2019 Le Mans 24 Hours programme\***

#### **Friday 14th June**

17:30-19:00: Drivers’ Parade - downtown Le Mans

#### **Saturday 15th June**

09:00-09:45: Warm-Up

15:00: 2019 Le Mans 24 Hours start

#### **Sunday 16th June**

15:00: 2019 Le Mans 24 Hours finish

*\*All times local*







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