



### **G-DRIVE NOT WHAT WE HAD REACH OUT FOR**

The 2017 edition of the 24 Hours of Le Mans started in fact just 16 days ago with the test day on June 2nd, were Russian team G-Drive Racing started the car preparation, the driver “qualification” and so on. Alex Lynn, the new boy in town and Le Mans rookie, discovered the track and the magic sensation of driving on the impressive Le Mans circuit.



Roman Rusinov, Alex Lynn and Pierre Thiriet were well prepared for the Le Mans adventure. On Wednesday, as the 60 cars went on track to start free practice, G-Drive Racing ORECA07 #26 set the overall best LMP2 lap time, even though the team was working on the set-ups and giving Alex Lynn, the team’s rookie, that necessary and mandatory laps. Nevertheless, it was a good way to start, giving the complete team great motivation to continue that way.

As for qualifying practices, which took place in three sessions on Wednesday evening and Thursday, the team did a great preparation to finally give the drivers a fantastic car to fight for and eventually reach the LMP2 pole position, in a 3:25.352 lap of the Sarthe circuit.

But the race could not confirm the hard and great job done by the team, as on top of small mechanical problems that occurred in the first lap, and accident with a GT car hindered all hope for any result as #26 ORECA 07 had to withdraw because of hard damage on the car.

Next year, we will come back stronger!

FP : LMP2-P1 3 :30.363 (233.2km/h)

Q1 : LMP2-P9 3:31.945 (231.5 km/h)

Q2 : LMP2-P7 3:28.580 (235.2 km/h)

Q3 : LMP2-P1 3:25.352 (238.9 km/h)



## **/// WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT THEIR RACE:**

### **Xavier Combet (Team Manager):**

*" Our results this week-end are clearly not representative of what we can achieve. We experienced a very intense work week, be it in the test day, the free- and qualifying sessions. The drivers, the mechanics and the engineers have worked on set-ups and a lot on tyre ware, as the surprising weather without any raindrop this year - which is very rare in Le Mans - was supposed to simplify the tyre strategy. In fact, it came out quickly that the best time for a quick lap was going to be at the coolest time of the day, this is at night of course. Alex Lynn made the job and made it right, giving #26 ORECA 07 G-Drive Racing the LMP2 pole position, and one little point for the championship.*

*During warm-up, and for the third time in four sessions, Alex was again fastest LMP2 on track, while the team was just checking the cars... and not trying to take any risks.*

*Of course, the race incidents did not allow us to validate and concretise these good performances into the race. When Roman Rusinov started the race, his engine when on security mode, because of the too hot temperatures, this means that he lost all the power in the first lap. This is the reason why he was passed by so many cars and not because of some bad start. Roman tried hard to clinch his position back, in a very high level competitor pack. May be a little over motivated, he spun the car, and had the accident a few laps later, with the Porsche GT #88.*

*It's an enormous shame for the team, as we came here to look for a victory. We had the right car to achieve this goal, and a super driver line-up with fast guys. We "just" had to do it! But, we will never see the 2017 24 Hours of Le Mans chequered flag, and it's sad for the*

*mechanics and the engineers who worked so hard to prepare the most important endurance race of the year.*

*Ok, we almost did not score anything, but we will work toward the coming WEC 6 Hours of Nürburgring, because we want to fight for the top places in the championship. It's going to be complicated, but the season is still long... So, see you there! "*

#### **Roman Rusinov (RUS)**

*" Actually I did take a good start, but in the first lap I experienced an electronically problem on the engine that made me lose all power. The car went on security mode and I lost all the benefit of our great pole position. It took me 40 to 50 seconds to get the car back on working mode and I came to the pits to clean the radiators. When I was back on track, I spun and to complete the black story, I had that accident with the #88 Porsche GT. When you drive an LMP2 on this track, you are overtaking at all time and you have to take some risks if you want to be fast. That's what I did, and I thought the car I was overtaking would let me pass, he went to the side, but in the end, he did not, and it was the end for both of us. Of course it's a real deception, but I mostly feel sorry for the team crew and my teammates. We did not deserve that. Finishing a 24-hour race after two hours, is definitely not what we came here for. "*

#### **Alex Lynn (GBR):**

*" The first thing is that I really want to say a massive thanks to the whole crew, because they worked very hard from the beginning of Le Mans test-day to give us a great car. Our car was clearly the fastest in the category and they deserved to go further into the race to be thanked. It's a shame... but that's how it is. We had a great qualification that put us in a great position and gave us confidence toward the race and it would of course have been nice to take advantage of it longer. Also it's a pity for the points we will not add to our championship counter. But Le Mans is also that. So let's go now toward the next WEC race. "*

#### **Pierre Thiriet (FRA):**

*" My 24 Hours of Le Mans 2017 ? Well, my seventh participation was the shortest Le Mans event I ever experienced ... It's sad, but it will give a very special flavour to our victory when we will reach it with this team. We had a great car, we were confident, great comfort... but we could not take advantage of it, so there is not much additional information to share... everything was there for the best, and no technical stress. But something definitely went wrong. Our mechanics tried to repair when Roman came back to the garage, but the damages were just too much, and the chassis was touched... In these conditions, there is never a good enough reason to take inconsiderable risks. So we were out. See you next year, but before that, see you in Germany for the next WEC race. "*





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**Our mailing address is:**

G-Drive Racing  
Russia  
Russia 0000  
Russia

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