

Press Release  
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## Bumper Grid at Spa



After the high drama at the 6 Hours of Silverstone last weekend, which saw Audi take the first victory of the 2015 season by a margin of just six seconds, the focus now turns to the next round of the World Endurance Championship at Spa-Francorchamps which takes place on Saturday 2 May.

The race in Belgium is considered as the traditional dress rehearsal for the 24 Heures du Mans and has always attracted extra entries from teams making their final preparations for one of the greatest sporting challenges on earth. 2015 is no different, with both Porsche and Audi running a third car in the LMP1 class, ELMS front runners JOTA Sport racing at Spa to prepare for the defence of their 2014 LMP2 Le Mans title, and AF Corse running an extra Ferrari 458 in the LMGTE Am class. In total there will be 34 cars on the grid for the fourth edition of the WEC 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, with nine in LMP1, ten in LMP2, seven in LMGTE Pro and eight in the LMGTE Am class.

Silverstone race winners Marcel Fässler, Benoît Tréluyer and André Lotterer will be looking to continue their winning ways and repeat their 2013 win. However, they know that the pace shown by Porsche and Toyota at Silverstone will mean this won't be an easy task to achieve on the 7km Spa-Francorchamps circuit that snakes its way through the Ardennes Forest. The third Audi (No.9) will be driven by Felipe Albuquerque, vacating his LMP2 seat at JOTA Sport to compete in the works LMP1 entry once again, Marco Bonanomi and Spa 24 Hour winner René Rast.

The Porsche Team showed that the 8MJ category offered it a great turn of speed on the straights at Silverstone; on the long, fast, flowing Spa track the German manufacturer will be hoping on Saturday evening to add a second WEC winner's trophy to the display cabinet back in Stuttgart. The third 919 Hybrid will be crewed by Nick Tandy, Porsche Supercup Champion Earl Bamber and Force India F1 star Nico Hulkenberg, with all three drivers making their LMP1 race debut in Belgium. The German driver's appearance in the No.19 Porsche marks the first time since 2009 that a current F1 driver has combined two top line motorsport programmes.

Toyota's Anthony Davidson and Sébastien Buemi won at Spa in 2014 on their way to the world title. A third place finish at Silverstone got their year off to a solid start but they also know that victory in



Belgium will be required to ensure they stay in contention ahead of Le Mans. The double points on offer for the longest race of the year are the main prize draw of the season.

With the two Rebellion R-Ones not making their debut until Le Mans, the sole LMP1 privateer entry will be the Team ByKolles CLM P1/01-AER. After a non-finish at Silverstone, the Austrian team will be looking to get to the chequered flag to gain maximum points before their Swiss rivals take to the track in June.

Ten cars will make up the LMP2 grid at Spa with Silverstone winners G-Drive Racing's Roman Rusinov, Julien Canal and Sam Bird heading the championship positions. Rusinov and Canal know the 7km track at Spa-Francorchamps very well after standing on the top step of the podium in 2014, and Bird brings equal experience from his single-seater career.

In the No.47 KCMG ORECA-Nissan, 2014 6 Hours of Spa winner Nicolas Lapierre returns to the cockpit to replace Nick Tandy who has moved up to the LMP1 Porsche 919. Extreme Speed Motorsport will once again field two cars but will switch to the Ligier JS P2 closed cockpit chassis powered by Honda HPD engines. Johannes van Overbeek is also due to return to driving duties in the No.31 car after missing the race at Silverstone due to injury.

Strakka Racing will start its second race with the Nissan-powered Dome S103 chassis after a successful first outing at home in the UK that saw the team pick up 15 points for 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

In LMGTE Pro the No.51 AF Corse Ferrari of Gianmaria Bruni and Toni Vilander heads to Belgium after scoring 25 points for a hard-fought victory in the UK last weekend. Spa is a happy hunting ground for Ferrari after the Italian/Finnish duo won in 2014 and Bruni and Giancarlo Fisichella were first to take the chequered flag in 2013. Davide Rigon and James Calado will once again crew the No.71 Ferrari for the Italian team.

It is all change for the driving crews at Porsche Team Manthey for this round due to clashing commitments for some drivers elsewhere. The No.92 will be driven by team regulars but not regular partners, Frédéric Makowiecki and Richard Lietz, while the No.91 car will be driven by Germany's Sven Müller and France's Kevin Estre in Belgium who are both making their WEC debut.

Three Aston Martin Racing Vantage V8s will once again take to the track with Christoffer Nygaard and Marco Sørensen driving the No.95 all-Danish entry that took pole position at Silverstone. Britain's Rob Bell will join Stefan Mucke and Darren Turner in the No.97 Vantage in the run up to Le Mans, while the line up in the No.99 car is unchanged.

Eight cars will comprise the LMGTE Am grid with the addition of the No.55 AF Corse Ferrari of 2014 ELMS Vice Champions Duncan Cameron and Matt Griffin, who will be joined by Alex Mortimer. The crews for the seven full season entries are all unchanged from Silverstone with Round 1 winners Paul Dalla Lana, Pedro Lamy and Mathias Lauda hoping to make it 2 from 2 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

The Dempsey-Proton Racing pit will be one of the centres of attention for the public visiting the Spa paddock with Grey's Anatomy star Patrick Dempsey alongside Patrick Long and Marco Seefried in the No.77 Porsche. The actor-turned-racer, who was filming right up until the first day of practice for Silverstone, will undoubtedly look increasingly comfortable in the WEC with more seat time.

Gerard Neveu, CEO of the World Endurance Championship, said: "Everyone involved in the WEC looks forward to the race at Spa-Francorchamps and every year the event provides some of the best entertainment of the whole season. There will be thirty-four cars taking part in the WEC 6 Hours of



Spa-Francorchamps, including nine in the LMP1 class. With lots to see and do around the event we look forward to welcoming fans from all over Belgium to witness what should be a fantastic race and the perfect dress rehearsal for the 24 Heures du Mans in June.”

Free Practice for the WEC 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps will take place on Thursday 30 April, with Qualifying on Friday 1 May and the race on Saturday 2 May.

For more information on the 2015 WEC 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps [CLICK HERE](#)

## ENDS

For more information

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