



J. VILLA



S. JIMENEZ



Racing Engineering – GP2 Bahrain Qualification

Times were very close as the 26 GP2 cars battled it out for their grid positions at the Sakhir track in Bahrain. For Racing Engineering it was a day that went from promising to problematical as mechanical problems in qualifying sent pushed the drivers towards the back of the grid despite the potential they showed in the free practice session.



Despite their lack of familiarity with the track the drivers of the two Racing Engineering cars set some very competitive times in the 30 minute morning practice session. Javier Villa was immediately on the pace finishing 11th on 1m 43.479s, so tight were the times that third fastest was less than half a second quicker than the young Spaniard's fastest lap. Brazilian Sergio Jimenez, on his first competitive outing in a GP2 car, showed a great deal of promise when finishing 22nd of the 26 cars that ran in the morning despite a gearbox problem that hampered his efforts.



Qualifying wasn't a very lucky for both Racing Engineering drivers. Villa soon noticed a problem with his engine and returned to the pits after a few laps. The fuel pump wasn't working properly and, given the short amount of time available to fix the problem, he didn't have a lot of opportunity to look for a quick lap. A 21st position at the end of the session was all that Javi could realistically look for in such circumstances. It was a case of similar bad luck for Jimenez who, after struggling all day with an incorrect 5th gear that the team couldn't change as Mechachrome (the official supplier) didn't have anything more suitable. That meant Sergio could only finish 22nd, just behind his team-mate.



The team is currently working on both cars in order to get them as well prepared as possible for tomorrow's race. When Javi ran without problems his pace was good so there is confidence in the team for an exciting recovery race from him. Sergio will have a hardest task if he has to continue with today's gear ratios, something that, sadly, is beyond Racing Engineering control.



Alfonso D'Orleans (team principal): "It has been a day that started quite happily but then didn't end up so well! It has been quite disappointing after the promising practice but there were things that went wrong that are beyond our control. Javi had a problem with the fuel pump and we are right now having a look to see what exactly happened. Sergio had a problem with the primary shaft that prevented him from learning the track properly and then he was struggling with a huge gap between 4th and 5th gears but, sadly, Mechachrome can't provide a more suitable gear so it looks like he'd have to run like that.

Anyway I feel confident for tomorrow and I'm pretty sure Javi have quite an epic race as he used to do in F3 with a lot of overtaking. For Sergio it will be tougher given the gearbox troubles. The whole team has been working really hard so in that respect I'm happy, we did our job properly.

Javier Villa (driver car 14): "In free practice we were up there but in qualifying a fuel pump problem didn't allow us to do a lot. For tomorrow we are looking for a stable car as the track is very difficult, very slippery and it's quite easy to spin."

Sergio Jimenez (driver car 15): "It wasn't easy for me as I am still unfamiliar with the car and the track. The car was good in the morning until I had a drivetrain problem but the team did a fantastic job to fix it in time for qualifying. The car was very good at the start of qualifying and I was 13th fastest but when we fitted new tyres there wasn't the improvement we were hoping for so I dropped back."

