



J. VILLA



S. JIMENEZ



## Racing Engineering – GP2 Barcelona Qualification

It was a day of mixed fortunes for the Racing Engineering team at Montmeló for round two of the GP2 Championship.



The day began promisingly with both Javier Villa and Sergio Jiménez setting competitive times in the morning's free practice session. At the end of the thirty minute period, blighted by yellow flags following a number of incidents, the Racing Engineering drivers lined up 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> with Javi Villa only half a second away from a top five placing. For Javi there were the early signs of the mechanical problems that would affect him in the afternoon which prevented him from setting the expected top ten time. Both drivers were confident of improving come the afternoon.



As ever, given how short qualifying is, it was important for both drivers to have a trouble free run during the half hour session. However for Villa there were problems from the start when, in a repeat of his Bahrain problem, he again suffered a fault with the fuel system on his Dallara. The Team had worked on the Dallara after practice and were confident they had solved the problem but the cause is more complicated than was first thought. Despite calling into the pits immediately where the Racing Engineering crew did everything possible to correct the problem time was against them. As a result Javi was unable to set a competitive lap and will start from the back row of the grid.



Things were more positive for Sergio Jiménez who was able to put in a competitive showing on the Barcelona track, one that he has already experienced from his Spanish F3 days. Sergio was happy with the way his car was handling from the start and was soon putting in some solid mid-grid times. Following a change to new tyres his times improved further although some of the other drivers used their greater experience of running new tyres during qualifying to improve their lap times a little more. By the end of qualifying Sergio had set the 19<sup>th</sup> fastest time but so close are the cars that the 11<sup>th</sup> fastest time is less than 0.7 seconds faster. Indeed such experienced drivers as Negrão and Pizzonia are only half a second quicker than the novice Brazilian. Sergio set some quick individual sector times and if he had been able to put them together his ideal lap would have put him 15<sup>th</sup> on the grid.



**Alfonso D'Orleans (team principal):** I am very unhappy about the problem that affected Javier's qualifying and the team will be working flat-out to fix the fault for tomorrow's race.

I am confident that, given Javier's pace, he will be able to put up a really good fight from the back of the field and be able to deliver a good result tomorrow.

I am very happy with what Sergio is achieving, he is improving well on a track that he already has some knowledge of.

**Javier Villa (driver car 14):** I had problems once again with my fuel system which started as soon as I took to the track. I called into the pits straight away and although the Team tried to fix the problem they were unable to which meant that I was unable to set a representative time.

**Sergio Jimenez (driver car 15):** I was very happy with my car at the start of qualifying and I was going well. I stopped to fit new tyres and my times improved further but not as much as some of the drivers around me. My sector times were good but I couldn't put them together for an ideal lap but I am confident for the race and I will be trying to put the fast sector times together for a fast lap.

