



## Racing Engineering - Tests GP2 Paul Ricard

The French track of Paul Ricard was the venue for Racing Engineering and all the 2008 GP2 Series teams to carry out the last testing before the start of the season in April at Barcelona, on the Spanish Grand Prix weekend. For the Repsol and Telefónica backed team the outcome, not only of this final testing but also for the whole winter season, couldn't be better. Once again both Giorgio and Javi have usually been on the top of the timesheet, finishing the last day in second and third positions, which confirm Racing Engineering as one of the most balanced and most competitive teams of the series.

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In these two days of testing at Paul Ricard, the team's work program had several areas to cover: taking advantage of the two track layouts used for these tests to try different aerodynamic setups, and focusing on developing the new Dallara in race conditions and practising such important things as starts and pit stops. On Wednesday the teams ran on the 3D layout of Paul Ricard, moving to the slower 2D on Thursday, useful for testing with more aero load ahead of the Monaco race.



Giorgio, Javi and the whole Racing Engineering technical staff perfectly followed the work plan, fulfilling the targets for these last two days of testing, and although setting fast lap times wasn't a priority, the two drivers did good lap times throughout the two days. In fact, Javi finished the first day as third overall, and on Thursday both Javi and Giorgio were in the top three, ending up the day in second and third place.

Snap-on

With the preseason already over as regards track testing Racing Engineering are looking forward with optimism to the first race of the season at Barcelona. The good results achieved by the two drivers in all the tests and the fact that the first race is 'at home' give all the members of the team an extra boost so they are waiting anxiously for the start of the season.

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**Thomas Couyotopoulos (Sporting Director):** "I'm happy with both the sporting and technical results. We came here with a different setup for the second day and also the grip conditions were different today from the first day so we had to work hard to change a few things in the cars. Our work plan was focused on the variations needed in order to adapt the car to a track like Monaco and also to test the "long run" thinking on the races, as well as on working on general aspects of the cars to keep developing them. We have also get some good sporting results, showing that we can keep in front with both Giorgio and Javi, who finished first this morning and second in the day, with Giorgio third overall. I'm also very happy with the work done by the mechanics; they had to work until very late once more as the new car isn't yet totally reliable. Good work also by the engineers and drivers, showing that Racing Engineering starts the season strongly and with good chances to get wins this year."

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**Javier Villa (driver car number 11):** "Actually the test weren't bad. The track was a bit tricky, the car was moving quite a bit at the rear so we had to work hard but I think that, at the end of the day, which maybe helped us to look for things that could be useful for the year. Finally all went well, yesterday we were third, today second with Giorgio third, we are both together and that's good, it means the whole team is going fast. This afternoon there was a moment when times suddenly improved even if our focus was on other things like practice starts, race setups or for Monaco as today was a day to work mainly on the aerodynamics so lap times weren't our target but, anyway, I think we are there. We are all setting very close times, the differences with the drivers behind us are small so let's see what happens in Barcelona, there our last test was good, the whole team is strong and I think that at Barcelona we'll be up there."

**Giorgio Pantano (driver car number 12):** "For us I think the track had changed compared to the first test and we found more problems compared to the first test but in the end we did quite well. I am sure that the work we did today was good, the car was working very well and the team was working well. We understand a lot more now how the car works and also the team and I know each other a bit more now and we go to Barcelona with a good configuration I think. We did well this afternoon, we came back to the top and I think we will be at the top also in Barcelona."