



Racing Engineering - GP2 Turkey Qualifying – Pole Position for Racing Engineering

Racing Engineering's new driver, Italian Giorgio Pantano, showed in qualifying today just how quickly he and the Racing Engineering team have adapted to each other with a superb display to take pole position for tomorrow's Feature Race. To further emphasise just how competitive the Racing Engineering Repsol/Telefónica supported Dallaras are Javier Villa set a time good enough for eighth place, the best qualifying position the young Spaniard has achieved so far in GP2.



The pair of Racing Engineering cars were on the pace from the start for today's practice and qualifying at the Istanbul circuit with both drivers looking to finding the best possible set up for their cars in this morning's practice session. Giorgio was quick from the onset using his experience to ensure he got the maximum from his car and he was soon at the top of the timing sheets. Working with the Racing Engineering team to optimise his car he eventually set a time of 1m 33.815s, quickest in all three sectors of the track. The Italian was the only driver of the 26 that practised to lap in the 1m 33s bracket.

Javier was also on the pace as he too looked to get the best from his car and at the end of the session he finished ninth with a time of 1m 34.986, one of nine drivers within less than a second of the second fastest car.

With both drivers happy that their cars were very competitive they were looking forward to qualification, confident that they could be amongst, if not head, the very quickest.

For Giorgio, qualification was simply a case of continuing the great work that he and the team had achieved in practice and he didn't disappoint dominating the session to take pole position in a time of 1m 32.659s. Giorgio's quickest lap was a quarter of a second faster than the next quickest, quite a big margin in the very competitive world of GP2 racing.

Javier showed that both the Racing Engineering Dallaras are fully competitive by setting a time of 1m 33.813s, only 0.9s away from the second fastest car, to take his best-ever qualifying position of eighth.

The two points awarded for pole position mean that Giorgio is now equal first in the Drivers Championship while Racing Engineering now leads the Team Championship.

With both drivers starting tomorrow's race so high on the grid their chances are excellent and both will be aiming for a podium place and a win is a very real possibility.

Alfonso de Orleans Borbón (team principal): *"Well I think it was very, very good. Considering it is Javier's best qualification to date and he has been able to get on the podium coming from further back so I see no reason why he is not on the podium tomorrow.*

Well Giorgio, it was a fantastic pole position and it raises us into first in the Team Championship so that makes us very happy and he is co-leading the Drivers Championship so we are pretty much first in everything. Let's hope we carry that through tomorrow. As for the boys, the whole team did a lot of hard work after Barcelona to get the cars ready, they have done a fantastic job and first of all I want to congratulate all of the boys and of course Cristina, the only girl in the technical crew."

Javier Villa (driver car 11): *"Eighth position is not too bad. I had no problems with the car, everything is fine and I liked it a lot. We need to work a little bit on the setup for tomorrow as it will be a long race for everybody but I am feeling happy and confident. It is really important for the team that Giorgio took the pole and everybody will be pushing hard."*

Giorgio Pantano (driver car 12): *"For me it was perfect and we did the job. I was feeling from this morning that the car was very good. I was feeling OK with the car, the circuit the tyres, everything and we did the job because everything was there. The engineers, the mechanics did their job, we've improved the car from Barcelona and now we see the difference. Now we are on pole, we are on the top. Tomorrow it will be hard for the race but I believe we can do the job."*