



## BAD LUCK FOR THE RACING ENGINEERING DRIVERS IN A TYPICALLY INCIDENT PACKED RACE AT MONACO

Neither of the Racing Engineering drivers could avoid the usual incidents and traffic problems so typical of any race held at Monaco. Both Giorgio Pantano and Javier Villa were left without the chance of a good result, the Italian after being victim of one of the several clashes that were part of a really action packed race, and the Spaniard due to his position at the back of the grid that made it nearly impossible for him to get a better finish.



Oddly enough, the start that is usually the moment where every year there are problems was incident free with the 25 cars going through the narrow Sainte Devote without major problem. Giorgio, who started fifth, lost a couple of places as a result of being pushed against the barriers by Chandhok which meant he had to lift, whilst Javier, starting 18th, passed Roldán Rodríguez. Given their very different qualifying positions, the tactics for both drivers regarding the mandatory pit stop were quite different, with Javi being bought in first in order to look for a clean track ahead for as many laps as possible, while Giorgio was hanging on in the front group trying to pit when most of his rivals had already stopped.

Initially everything went as planned; with Villa doing his tyre change in the opening laps and immediately starting to lap faster once back on the track without traffic ahead. However soon things went wrong for the Spanish team, when the Repsol and Telefónica liveried Dallara of Giorgio was hit by the Arden car driven by Sebastien Buemi spelling the end for Racing Engineering's driver who was forced to retire when he had really good chances of getting a good result and also a favourable starting position for tomorrow's Sprint Race.

Javi meanwhile continued although he was soon delayed by a lot of traffic ahead which stopped him from going at his own pace and to further progress in the classification He finished the race in 14th place but, after making contact with Conway in the final laps, he was penalised by ten places on the grid for the Saturday race.

All in all it was a disappointing day for Racing Engineering although, fortunately at least, the damage to the cars isn't too bad so the mechanics will be able to get them ready for tomorrow's race. Then it will be really tough fighting for good results given the starting positions near the back that today's race has doomed both Telefónica and Repsol backed cars to. Nevertheless the two drivers will be certain to give their best hoping that the luck they lost today will be on their side tomorrow allowing the Spanish outfit to keep the leadership in the driver championship that's still in the hands of Racing Engineering's Giorgio Pantano after today's race.

**Alfonso de Orleans Borbón (team principal):** *"Its a real pity. Our boys did a great job, but Giorgio's race found a sudden end due to the overeager overtaking maneuver of Buemi. Trying to pass where it isn't possible meant an early finish for him, Giorgio and three other drivers. I really hope Buemi's move doesn't prejudice us in both the driver and team championships lead."*

**Javier Villa (driver car 11):** *"I started well, at the beginning I passed Roldan and I was pushing for a couple of laps and then stopped for my tyre change. Then I had 3-4 clean laps until I caught up with the group ahead. I was going quickly and I was feeling happy with the car but it was a difficult race, full of incidents."*

**Giorgio Pantano (driver car 12):** *"The start was not perfect. I had bit too much wheelspin and Chandhok pushed me towards the wall, so I had to lift. Then it's difficult to pass, I was most probably faster than some cars ahead of me, but there was just no way to pass them. Then Buemi hit me and I went off, which is a shame as I ran in a good position, more than anything also keeping in mind tomorrow's race."*