



Racing Engineering - GP2 France Sprint Race – A disappointing day for Racing Engineering

Telefonica

It was a disappointing day for Racing Engineering in today's Sprint Race with Giorgio Pantano retiring and Javier Villa finishing 10th as all the teams struggled in very difficult conditions.

MAPFRE

It had been raining as the cars lined up on the grid for the 28 lap Sprint Race and with a further threat of more to come there was a lot of indecision as to whether to opt for wet or dry tyres. The majority of the drivers opted for wet tyres including Giorgio but several drivers nearer the back of the grid with little to lose, including Javier, chose slicks which proved to be the correct strategy.

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It was a clean start for all the cars although Javier lost several places as the car in front of him was slow away and at the end of the first lap Giorgio had gained a place and was up to 7th but Javier found himself pushed back to 19th. Giorgio gained another place on lap 2 as he chased Maldonado and he quickly pulled away from Nunes.

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On lap 5 Giorgio dived into the pits and the Racing Engineering team quickly fitted a set of slicks and sent the Italian driver back into the race. Javier had been making progress up the race order as several cars ahead pitted for slicks and by lap 10 he was running 9th while Giorgio was 14th after his pit stop.

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Snap-on

Giorgio was looking to move up to the points scoring positions and on lap 14 he tried to pass Petrov as the two cars entered the Adelaide Hairpin, the Racing Engineering driver made his move on the inside line but the Russian driver left him no room and the two cars made heavy contact. It was immediately clear that Giorgio had suffered suspension damage and he pulled into the pits at the end of the lap to retire.

Pago

Javier continued to push as quickly as possible in the very slippery conditions but on lap 18 he ran wide into a corner and lost two places to Zuber and Kobayashi. The young Spaniard continued to push over the remaining laps as several cars in front had mechanical problems or spun out and at the finish he claimed 10th place.

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Although today did not provide the results that Racing Engineering was looking for, the Spanish team have shown once again that their cars are very competitive and are potential race winners at all the tracks. Additionally, once again, they have shown great reliability with three finishes and the only non-finish the result of an accident.

The GP2 teams now move to Silverstone in two weeks time and once again Racing Engineering will be looking to win.

Alfonso de Orleans Borbón (team principal): "After yesterday's celebration it's been quite a disappointment and we didn't achieve the results today. Both cars were in perfect condition and the boys did a great job. Sadly Giorgio's race was ended by contact with Petrov."

Javier Villa (driver car 11): "It was a difficult race. The track was completely wet, but we know that after a few laps, it would dry up. At the end of the race I went very quickly and I enjoyed the race. I didn't have a good position, but this is also due to the conditions."

Giorgio Pantano (driver car 12): "The conditions this morning were very difficult. I decided to start on wet tyres and to take advantage of the wet track. When it dried up, we switched to slicks and it was too late then. Then I had the contact with Petrov that finished my race."