



Racing Engineering - GP2 Hungary Feature Race – Giorgio Pantano still leads the Championship despite not scoring today

It was a very difficult day for both of the Racing Engineering drivers in today's Feature Race at the Hungaroring as Giorgio Pantano was involved in an early race incident and Javier Villa was hampered by his poor grid position following his problems in yesterday's Qualifying. Despite his problems Giorgio still leads the 2008 Drivers Championship by 9 points.

Telefonica

The 42 lap race started cleanly with all the cars getting away without incident, Giorgio made a good start from 8th on the grid and gained two places despite some gentle contact with another car on the opening lap. Giorgio found himself behind his great rival from the Hockenheim round, Romain Grosjean, the Racing Engineering driver immediately began to put heavy pressure on the ART car and it looked to have paid off as Grosjean ran wide and onto the run-off area. The Italian quickly took advantage to sweep ahead but as Grosjean regained the tarmac he made contact with the rear of Giorgio's car spinning the Racing Engineering Dallara around. It was some moments before Giorgio could find a gap in the traffic to resume the track and he found himself back in 22nd place behind Asmer.

MAPFRE



feve

The Racing Engineering team opted for an early pitstop to allow Giorgio a chance to find some empty track and to give him the opportunity to make up as much ground as possible. The Repsol and Telefonica supported car was immediately flying and by lap 4 Giorgio was up to 20th and closing on Herck. By lap 10 Giorgio was challenging Filippi for 18th and on the next lap the Arden driver ran wide and Giorgio took the place. Within 6 laps the Italian was lying 16th and running just behind his team-mate Villa. Realising that he was holding Giorgio up Javi made no effort to block the second Racing Engineering car and on lap 18 the number 12 car was 15th. Giorgio now began to chase Rodriguez and was soon ahead and pulling quickly away but he now found himself too far behind the cars ahead to gain any more places and he had to settle for 14th at the flag as he dropped behind Javier in the closing stages.



Snap-on

PAGO



For Javier Villa it was a similarly disappointing race, starting from 18th on the grid Javi lost four places at the start as he was both boxed in by a car ahead getting away slowly and he found that, as yesterday, his clutch was functioning incorrectly, however he was quickly back up to 19th by the end of the second lap and by lap 4 Javi was 18th and chasing Filippi hard.

The Racing Engineering team had opted for the early pit stop strategy for Javier as well as Giorgio and a typically efficient stop saw the young Spaniard quickly on his way. Javi was now in hot pursuit of Rodriguez who was running in 14th and on lap 13 he was only 0.38 seconds behind. A slight error on lap 17 saw Javi run wide without losing a place and he now found himself closely followed by his team-mate and on the following lap Giorgio demoted Javi to 16th. For the next 7 laps Javi did all he could to pass Rodriguez and on lap 25 Rodriguez broke under pressure and spun allowing Javi up to 14th. Javi was now in the same position as his team-mate, he was too far behind to gain any more places and so he concentrated on bringing his car home to finish 13th as he gained a place at the end at the expense of his team-mate.

For tomorrow's Sprint Race both drivers will be starting in the middle of the grid and both will be trying to make up as many places as possible on this track where overtaking is so difficult. Both men have the consolation that, as expected, the Racing Engineering cars have been totally reliable as once again the Spanish team brought both cars to the finish.

Alfonso de Orleans Borbón (team principal): "I am upset about Grosjean's move. I know it was a race incident, but it left Giorgio without any chances in this race. Javi did a good job during the second half of the race, but also he suffered from problems and could not make up the positions he needed to get into the points."

Javier Villa (driver car 11): "Again we suffered from problems with the clutch. In the formation lap the clutch already started to slip and I had to cool it down, not being able to prepare my start properly. As a consequence my tyres were not up to their temperature and I lost a lot during the beginning of the race. As so often this year, we have a well balanced car, which could be seen during the second part of the race, but facing so many problems, there is little we can do."

Giorgio Pantano (driver car 12): "We did a great start and I moved up. I passed Grosjean as he made a mistake, but he hit me in the back, this caused me to spin and I found myself at the end of the field. I kept pushing, but no more was possible."