



## Racing Engineering - GP2 Italy Qualifying – Giorgio Pantano takes pole position at final race weekend

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Racing Engineering drivers Giorgio Pantano and Javier Villa both put in excellent performances in today's Qualifying session at Monza with Giorgio taking pole position and increasing his Championship lead by 2 points and Javier qualifying in the top ten with 9<sup>th</sup> place.



Both Giorgio and Javier took things carefully in this morning's 30 minute Free Practice session as torrential rain had made track conditions almost impossible and neither driver wanted to risk damaging their cars before the all-important afternoon Qualifying session. In fact so bad were conditions that the Free Practice was delayed due to flooding, and at the end of the session Giorgio only did 7 laps to finish 23<sup>rd</sup> with Javier 0.5 seconds slower in 24<sup>th</sup>.



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Conditions were very different by the time the Qualifying session began with the track now dry and within the opening minutes Giorgio showed just how determined he was to take pole position when he set a time of 1m 31.274s, no less than 0.7 seconds faster than any other driver at the time. Javier too showed that he was very much on form when, after 10 minutes of practice, the young Spaniard had moved up to 11<sup>th</sup> place.



Snap-on

Pago



After setting his quick lap Giorgio returned to the pits to allow the Racing Engineering team the opportunity to fine tune the set up of his Repsol and Telefónica backed car and he was soon back on track and after 18 minutes of the session he went quicker still with a 1m 31.223s lap. Once again Giorgio was back in the pits after his quick lap, returning to the track with only a few minutes of the session left. As the other drivers did their best to catch the flying Italian, Giorgio improved once again, this time to a 1m 31.220s lap, almost immediately the chequered flag was shown and Giorgio had claimed a magnificent pole position for himself and Racing Engineering.

Javier showed that he too was quick at Monza as both he and the team worked to find the right balance on his car and make up for the time lost due to the weather conditions in the morning. At the end of the session all the hard work was rewarded when he took the 9<sup>th</sup> place on tomorrow's grid.

Once again Racing Engineering has given their drivers very competitive cars and the Spanish team can look forward to tomorrow's Feature Race with confidence. Giorgio's two points for pole position means that he now leads Senna by 13 points in the 2008 Championship.

**Alfonso de Orleans Borbón (team principal):** "Amazing! Both drivers did fantastically, it's the best start to a weekend we could have. Now we have to keep our heads down and prepare for tomorrow's race. Good job by everyone in the team, after two complicated weekends, this is what they deserve."

**Javier Villa (driver car 11):** "It was a good qualifying. We did P9 and are 0.5 off Giorgio. Given the fact that we had a wet free practice and after were so strong in a dry qualifying, if tomorrow's race is a dry one, I am sure we have even more potential to improve."

**Giorgio Pantano (driver car 12):** "I am happy because I scored another 2 points and this increased the gap to the rest. It's also important for tomorrow as we don't yet know the conditions, but if it is dry, I am sure there is a good chance to win. In any case, I will try to have a good race and not take risks."