

**24 HEURES
DU MANS**
11-12 JUN 2011

INFORMATIONS PRESSE

A NEW ERA DAWNS

The 79th Le Mans 24-Hours race has attracted a fabulous field. The most prestigious makes and the most talented drivers will all gather on the 24-Hours circuit to do battle. Thanks to their presence, the ACO will organize the blue riband motor race of the 2011 season.

Motor car manufacturers love Le Mans and vice versa! Audi, the reigning winner, Peugeot, Aston Martin, BMW, Ferrari, Porsche, Corvette and the prestigious Lotus name, back with works cars, without forgetting the return and considerable backing from Japanese engineers from Honda, Nissan and Toyota for some of the best teams, will give enthusiasts the opportunity to experience an event quite unlike any other because of its diversity and the overall quality of its field. These entries from works teams or privateers confirm the exceptional character of the Sarthe classic, which, since 1923, has always epitomized the values of endurance - sporting and technological fair play - thanks to the unceasing efforts and on-going passion of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest.

Jean-Claude Plassart, the President of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest: *"Once again the field assembled for the 79th event is of exceptional quality. The Sports Management Committee received 71 entries for 56 places on the grid. It again had to make hard choices due to the great interest and overall quality of the candidates. But above all, we're delighted to see how many major manufacturers from the world of the motor car industry, have put their trust in the ACO to provide them with the best possible theatre in which to showcase their sporting involvement."*



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DEPARTEMENT COMMUNICATION
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The selection procedure for the entries chosen for the 2011 Le Mans 24 Hours went through several stages in several major events.

At the end of the 2010 season, which finished on 7th November after the Zhuhai 1000 kms (CHN), the names of the eighteen entrants invited were already known due their 2010 results in the Le Mans 24 Hours, (4 invitations), the ILMC Championship (3 invitations), the ALMS (2 invitations) and the LMS (4 invitations), the Petit Le Mans (3 invitations) and the Michelin Green X Challenge classification (2 invitations).

On 20th December 2010, at the same time as the publication of the Le Mans 24-Hours technical regulations, entries opened for all teams that wanted to send in a form to the Automobile Club de l'Ouest.

By 19th January 2011 at midnight, the final deadline for entries, the ACO had received 71 entry forms. It was a slight drop in quantity in relation to the previous year, which can be explained by the reshuffling of the categories to harmonize the field with the suppression of the GT1s (13 entries in 2010).

On the evening of 25th January 2011, the Selection Committee consisting of eight members met in the presence of the President Jean-Claude Plassart and Vincent Beaumesnil, the Sports Manager, to draw up the list of 56 cars and 10 reserves.

The list was finalized on 28th January 2011 and published on 9th February.

Vincent Beaumesnil (ACO Sports Manager): *"This field is without doubt one of the best in the history of the Le Mans 24 Hours because of its homogeneity and the overall quality of the entries. This can be explained by two factors. The first one is that all the teams entered for Le Mans are also entered in the different competitions run under the Le Mans label, the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, as well as the American Le Mans Series and the Le Mans Series. So it's a question of top-quality teams that have a lot of experience in endurance racing. The second one is the quality of the list of drivers. There are many former winners as well as guys who've shown their talent in Formula 1. Finally, I'd like to underline the fact that the new Le Mans 24-Hours regulations (published on 20th December, they can be consulted on-line at the following address: www.lemans.org), are a big success as proved by the large number of new cars on the entry list."*

Please note that two lists of reserves, each made up of five cars, have been drawn up, one in LM P and the other in GTE. Withdrawals after 1st February will be replaced category by category – a GTE by a GTE and an LM P by an LM P.



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THE MAJOR 2011 TENDENCIES

Le Mans is famous for its duels. In the history of the event starting from 1923, direct confrontations between two teams battling for outright victory have always led to races of mind-boggling intensity. It will be the same – and maybe even more so in 2011!

More than a duel!

Since 2007 Peugeot has taken up the gauntlet thrown down by Audi. The Ingolstadt manufacturer, six-time winner between 2000 and 2006, beaten only in 2003 by its sister company, Bentley (both are part of the VAG Car Group), found itself up against a major rival as both teams opted for LM P1 cars powered by diesel engines. After two races that served as an apprenticeship, Peugeot achieved its first objective in 2009 with outright victory. In 2010 the Sochaux make was determined to impose itself on a long-term basis, but tripped up and Audi scored its ninth victory allied to a triple. This year with the two rivals entering three new cars, the competition between them will be all the more exciting as a third team is determined to take the fight to the French and German cars in the battle for victory. Aston Martin has entered two cars designed and built in-house, and has given itself the necessary resources to score an overall win for the first time since 1959 - with a petrol engine what's more! The quality of the British engineers' work allied to the adjustments to the regulations designed to balance performances between the different types of engines, should allow these open prototypes – unlike Peugeot and Audi, which have opted for coupes – to battle with the diesel-powered cars.

Finally, the highly-experienced Oreca team, which has retained Peugeot's confidence, could well split these three, as it has entered one of the 2010908 HDi FAPs.

Talented outsiders

Examples are not lacking in the history of motor sport. When the favourites enter new cars, which falter due to the lack of reliability inherent in any new design, outsiders win. The ones entered this year have sound arguments to pull off a surprise. In this respect the semi-official return of Japanese manufacturers as engine suppliers, or through direct backing of a team, will up the overall ante. Rebellion has entered two Lolas powered by Toyota engines, and the American squad Highcroft Racing has strengthened its collaboration with Honda Performance Development. Two years ago, an Acura (a make belonging to Honda) beat Audi and Peugeot to pole position in the Sebring 12 Hours. With the very experienced David Brabham (former outright Le Mans winner) in the driver line-up, a great deal of endurance know-how and a very competitive engine, this team looks like being a redoubtable challenger. In addition, the involvement of Nissan in LM P2 with Signatech Nissan shows the revival of the Japanese giants' interest in endurance racing.



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Pescarolo's comeback

It is difficult to imagine Le Mans without Pescarolo, and Pescarolo could not live without Le Mans. The official return of the 4-time winner on the entry list is one of the best pieces of news. Pescarolo Team, the new name of Henri Pescarolo's squad, will enter a prototype powered by a Judd petrol engine in the top LM P1 category. Since 1996, with the exception of 2009, this team has always been among the front-runners whether with Courage chassis, its own or with a Peugeot 908 HDi FAP diesel (2009). While this is a transition year, the team's renaissance will thrill all 24-Hours fans. Its driver line-up is spearheaded by Emmanuel Collard and Christophe Tinseau who combine talent and experience - so who knows what could happen?

Eight manufacturers represented!

Thanks to their LM P1 and GTE Pro categories the 24-Hours regulations enable the major manufacturers to find exactly the right niche to dovetail with their sporting and commercial imperatives. Audi and Peugeot have opted for the prototype category while BMW, Corvette, Ferrari, Lotus and Porsche have all chosen GT. Aston Martin has gone even further with two petrol-engined prototypes baptized AMR-O1s, and two Vantages in GTE, all entered under the works banner! In total, eight manufacturers have shown their confidence in the ACO.

A raft of new cars

Fifty-six cars will start the 79th Le Mans 24 Hours at 15h00 on 11th June. If there are no withdrawals between now and that date (teams that are forced to cry off will be replaced by reserves), there will be 25 totally new cars on the grid (almost 50% of the field), eighteen heavily modified ones (with the addition of a new engine, or the adaptation of a chassis to the new regulations) and only thirteen (two LM P1s and the 11 GTE Ams) complying with the previous rules, but still allowed to race this year.

Lotus is back

The emblematic British sports car constructor, which had its heyday at Le Mans in the 50s and 60s with cars designed by its great engineer/boss Colin Chapman, is making its official comeback with works machines. The company has entered two brand-new Evoras in the GTE Pro category to mix it in the no-holds-barred battle between BMW, Corvette, Ferrari, Porsche, Aston Martin and Doran Ford.



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Hybrid technology in LM P1

Hope Racing has entered a revolutionary prototype in the LM P1 category. It consists of an Oreca-developed chassis powered by a hybrid system. This innovation is a new form of hybrid technology that is completely mechanical (not electric), which restitutes the energy recovered under braking. Note that there will be no 56th pit entry this year (entry accepted of a car with an innovative technological project while meeting the required standards of safety, reliability and performance). Contacts were made with several manufacturers working on such vehicles, but as these projects were not sufficiently sorted out nobody asked for an entry. Thus, the 56th pit will be occupied by a car entered under normal conditions.

LM P2: A renewed field

The LM P2 field consists of eleven teams, and it looks all the better as it includes seven cars, six of which comply fully with the 2011 regulations in terms of budget caps.* In addition, the quality of the teams entered (Oak, Strakka, Oreca, Signatech, Nissan and Level 5) augurs well for a battle royal as the engines are as varied as the drivers are talented. The already-known Judd BMW will be up against engines developed by Japanese giants Nissan and Honda. With drivers like Tiago Monteiro, Scott Tucker and Soheil Ayari behind the wheel the scrap will be all the more intense.

GTE as in Grand Touring Endurance

The GT revival that has been growing in strength in previous years has been totally confirmed for the 2011 race, which now has only a single category for these cars, GTE, whose regulations are inspired by the former GT2 category. Manufacturers like BMW, Ferrari, Corvette, Porsche, Aston Martin and Lotus obviously like them as they have all entered works cars. In GTE Pro (no restrictions on the models or drivers), there are seventeen GTs, either eagerly-awaited new cars like the Ferrari 458 Italia and the Lotus Evora, or others that are heavily-reworked evolutions of models seen in 2010, the BMW M3, the Chevrolet Corvette C6-ZR1 and the Porsche 911 GT3 RSR. The level of the battle for victory should reach an intensity never seen before in the Sarthe. In GTE Am (only one professional driver in each team, and the car entered must be at least one year old), seven cars have been accepted including several that have also entered for the ILMC, further proof of the commitment of the candidates.

*To reduce costs, the sales price of a complete new car without engine must not exceed 345 000 euros.



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WHAT CHANGES IN 2011

Evolutions of the regulations, timetable, infrastructure, a quick round-up of the main changes for the 79th Le Mans 24 Hours.

Regulations

Six years after the last major revision, the Le Mans 24-Hours regulations have undergone a major evolution with four main preoccupations: safety, environment, a level playing field from both a technological and sporting point of view and cost capping.

Here are the main guidelines

Where bodywork is concerned the imagination of the aerodynamicists is still allowed full rein. Peugeot and Audi have opted for cars with closed bodywork, while Aston Martin has gone the open route. The new prototypes must have a shark's fin on the engine cover to improve safety.

To curb the power escalation seen over the past few years, the power output of the engines has been reduced to around 520 bhp. The aim is to push lap times above the 3m 30s mark. Engineers can still use supercharged/unsupercharged petrol or diesel engines. Hybrids are now allowed, and all types of hybrid technology can be entered coupled to the front or rear axles.

Performance balancing between the different types of engines is reinforced by Article 19 (the ACO retains the possibility, even during the season, to balance performances) and the 2% rule. In the latter case the aim is to bracket the lap times of the quickest cars in each technology within a 2% range in relation to the fastest, by decision of the ACO.

The LM P2 category regulations' priority is to reduce costs. The use of engines from series production cars is one of the consequences of this orientation favourable to private teams.

Finally, the GT1 category has been scratched, and the GTE regulations retain 95% of the former GT2 rules. Two classes have been created to accommodate road-going cars: GTE Pro and GTE Am (for amateur drivers, 2010 cars allowed).



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Return of the test day

For 2011, the Le Mans 24-Hours test day, which was not held in 2009 and 2010, will take place on 24th April on the 24-Hours circuit. Between 2005 and 2008 this free practice session was organized in close proximity to the Le Mans 24 Hours: the last time it was held in April was in 2004. It is not obligatory except for teams and drivers that have never taken part in the Le Mans 24 Hours before. It is an untimed session. The test day is open to 76 cars maximum, which will allow teams not entered for Le Mans, like the Formula Le Mans Cup cars, which are not accepted for the 24 Hours, to take to the mythic track for the sheer pleasure of it. Scrutineering will be held on Saturday 23rd April. The next day, the test sessions will take place between 09h00 and 13h00, and 14h00 and 18h00.

THE TIMETABLE FOR THE 24-HOURS WEEK

Scrutineering again on Sunday and Monday

In view of the huge popular success of Sunday scrutineering, a 2010 innovation, the technical checks will begin on Sunday 5th June 2011 at 14h30 and will finish at 19h00. The second day's scrutineering will take place on Monday 6th June between 09h30 and 17h30.

The major works on the 'Quinconce des Jacobins' for the construction of a cultural centre, mean that scrutineering will again be held on the Place du Jet d'Eau on Les Jacobins at the foot of the majestic Le Mans cathedral.

Evening practice

As in 2010, practice will take place as follows

Wednesday 8th June: Free practice: 16h00-20h00 – Qualifying practice: 22h00-midnight.

Thursday 9th June: Qualifying practice: 19h00-21h00 – 22h00-midnight.

Drivers' Parade

No Le Mans 24 Hours would be complete without the Drivers' Parade. It will again wend its way through the streets of the Le Mans town centre on Friday 10th June in the late afternoon (18h00-20h00).

Saturday morning curtain-raisers

As in 2009 a Le Mans legend race will be run in the morning of Saturday 11th June. It is open to cars having raced at Le Mans, or Le Mans-type cars complying with the models having competed in the event in the past. Some sixty cars are expected to turn up.



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A round of the Ferrari Challenge will also be held as a curtain-raiser to the Le Mans 24 Hours. This competition is open to the 458 Challenge and the F430 Challenge. Some sixty cars bearing the Prancing Horse badge will do battle in a 45-minute heat. The Ferrari Challenge practice sessions will take place on Wednesday 8th June from 20h30 to 21h30, and on Thursday 9th June from 17h30 to 18h30..

CIRCUIT SURROUNDINGS

Heritage

Reconstruction of the chapel

A chapel was built inside the circuit in 1932 at the foot of the Panorama hillock where masses were celebrated during the le Mans 24 Hours. It was destroyed in the war, and during the construction of the Bugatti circuit another was built in 1965 on the interior of the first curve after the downhill stretch from the Dunlop bridge. It was christened the 'Virage de la Chapelle.' In 2000, to meet the safety standards demanded by the car and bike federations, it was taken down to be moved. Unfortunately despite all the precautions taken, it did not survive and only the stained glass windows, statues and the altar were saved. A new chapel is being built near the sites of the two previous ones still in the Virage de la Chapelle. It will be finished and consecrated before the race, and will again celebrate mass during the 79th Le Mans 24 Hours.



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ENTRY LIST



N°	LM P1	NAT.	VOITURE/CAR	PILOTE - DRIVER
1	AUDI SPORT TEAM JOEST		AUDI R18 TDI	T. BERNHARD (DEU)
2	AUDI SPORT TEAM JOEST		AUDI R18 TDI	M. FÄSSLER (CHE)
3	AUDI SPORT NORTH AMERICA		AUDI R18 TDI	T. KRISTENSEN (DNK)
5	HOPE RACING		ORECA SWISS HY TECH-HYBRID	S. ZACCHIA (CHE)
7	PEUGEOT SPORT TOTAL		PEUGEOT 908	A. DAVIDSON (GBR)
8	PEUGEOT SPORT TOTAL		PEUGEOT 908	S. SARRAZIN (FRA)
9	TEAM PEUGEOT TOTAL		PEUGEOT 908	S. BOURDAIS (FRA)
10	TEAM ORECA MATMUT		PEUGEOT 908 HDI-FAP	N. LAPIERRE (FRA)
12	REBELLION RACING		LOLA B 10/60 COUPE-TOYOTA	N. PROST (FRA)
13	REBELLION RACING		LOLA B 10/60 COUPE-TOYOTA	A. BELICCHI (ITA)
15	OAK RACING		OAK PESCAROLO - JUDD	M. LAHAYE (FRA)
16	PESCAROLO TEAM		PESCAROLO - JUDD	E. COLLARD (FRA)
19	HIGHCROFT RACING		HONDA PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT ARX - 01e	D. BRABHAM (AUS)
20	QUIFEL - ASM TEAM		ZYTEK 09 SC	M. AMARAL (PRT)
24	OAK RACING		OAK PESCAROLO - JUDD	R. HEIN (MCO)
007	ASTON MARTIN RACING		ASTON MARTIN AMR-ONE	S. MÜCKE (DEU)
009	ASTON MARTIN RACING		ASTON MARTIN AMR-ONE	H. PRIMAT (CHE)



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ENTRY LIST

N°	LM P2	NAT.	VOITURE/CAR	PILOTE - DRIVER
26	SIGNATECH NISSAN		ORECA 03-NISSAN	F. MAILLEUX (FRA)
27	SIGNATECH NISSAN		ORECA 03-NISSAN	T. MONTEIRO (PRT)
33	LEVEL 5 MOTORSPORTS		LOLA COUPE-HONDA PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT	S. TUCKER (USA)
35	OAK RACING		OAK PESCAROLO - JUDD BMW	F. DA ROCHA (FRA)
36	RML		HONDA PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT ARX 01 D	M. NEWTON (GBR)
39	PECOM RACING		LOLA B11/40-JUDD BMW	L. PEREZ-COMPANC (ARG)
40	RACE PERFORMANCE		ORECA 03-JUDD BMW	M. FREY (CHE)
41	GREAVES MOTORSPORT		ZYTEK NISSAN	K. OJJEH (SAU)
42	STRAKKA RACING		HONDA PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT ARX 01 D	N. LEVENTIS (GBR)
48	TEAM ORECA MATMUT		ORECA 03-NISSAN	S. AYARI (FRA)
49	OAK RACING		OAK PESCAROLO - JUDD BMW	A. BARSELI (FRA)
VOITURES DE RESERVE - RESERVE CARS LMP1 & LMP2				
44	EXTREME LIMITE AM PARIS		NORMA M200P - JUDD BMW	F. ROSIER (FRA)
22	KRONOS RACING		LOLA ASTON MARTIN	V. ICKX (FRA)
21	RANGONI MOTORSPORT		ZYTEK 09H HYBRID	F. GERI (ITA)
45	BOUTSEN ENERGY RACING		ORECA 03-NISSAN	D. KRAIHAMER (AUT)
38	PEGASUS RACING		COURAGE-ORECA LC75-HONDA PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT	J. SCHELL (FRA)


















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ENTRY LIST

N°	LM GTE Pro	NAT.	VOITURE/CAR	PILOTE - DRIVER
51	AF CORSE		FERRARI 458 ITALIA	G. FISICHELLA (ITA)
55	BMW MOTORSPORT		BMW M3	A. FARFUS (BRA)
56	BMW MOTORSPORT		BMW M3	A. PRIAULX (GBR)
58	LUXURY RACING		FERRARI 458 ITALIA	A. BELTOISE (FRA)
59	LUXURY RACING		FERRARI 458 ITALIA	S. ORTELLI (MCO)
64	LOTUS JETALLIANCE		LOTUS EVORA	V. ECKERT (AUT)
65	LOTUS JETALLIANCE		LOTUS EVORA	L. LICHTNER-HOYER (AUT)
66	JMW MOTORSPORT		FERRARI 458 ITALIA	R. BELL (GBR)
71	AF CORSE		FERRARI 458 ITALIA	R. KAUFFMAN (ITA)
73	CORVETTE RACING		CHEVROLET CORVETTE C6-ZR1	O. BERETTA (MCO)
74	CORVETTE RACING		CHEVROLET CORVETTE C6-ZR1	O. GAVIN (GBR)
75	PROSPEED COMPETITION		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	M. GOOSSENS (BEI)
76	IMSA PERFORMANCE MATMUT		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	R. NARAC (FRA)
77	TEAM FELBERMAYR-PROTON		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	M. LIEB (DEU)
79	JOTA		ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE	S. HANCOCK (GBR)
80	FLYING LIZARD MOTORSPORTS		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	J. BERGMEISTER (DEU)
88	TEAM FELBERMAYR-PROTON		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	L. LUHR (DEU)
88	HANKOOK - TEAM FARNBACHER		FERRARI 458 ITALIA	D. FARNBACHER (DEU)



ENTRY LIST

N°	LM GTE Am	NAT.	VOITURE/CAR	PILOTE - DRIVER
50	LARBRE COMPETITION		CORVETTE C6-ZR1	P. BORNHAUSER (FRA)
57	KROHN RACING		FERRARI F430	T. KROHN (USA)
60	GULF AMR MIDDLE EAST		ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE	F. GIROIX (FRA)
61	AF CORSE		FERRARI F430	P. PERAZZINI (ITA)
62	CRS RACING		FERRARI F430	P. EHRET (DEU)
63	PROTON COMPETITION		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	H. FELBERMAYR (AUT)
68	ROBERTSON RACING		FORD GT-DORAN	D. ROBERTSON (USA)
70	LARBRE COMPETITION		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	C. BOURRET (FRA)
81	FLYING LIZARD MOTORSPORTS		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	S. NEIMAN (USA)
83	JMB RACING		FERRARI F430	M. RODRIGUES (FRA)
VOITURES DE RESERVE - RESERVE CARS GTE Pro & GTE Am				
69	ROBERTSON RACING		FORD GT-DORAN	D. MURRY (USA)
85	PROSPEED COMPETITION		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	P. VAN SPLUNTEREN (NLD)
84	TOLIMIT ARABIA		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	S. MAASSEN (DEU)
86	YOUNG DRIVER AMR		ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE	T. ENGE (CZE)
87	BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA		PORSCHE 911 RSR (997)	R. GROSJEAN (CHE)

