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Team Maranello Concessionaires



Team Maranello Concessionaires' two Ferrari 360 N/GT race cars are now on their way to the Automotodrom Brno circuit in the Czech Republic after having completed comprehensive preparation work ahead of round four of the FIA GT Championship.

TMC will arrive in Brno leading the Team Championship with 27 points, three ahead of fellow competitors, JMB Racing. Drivers Jamie Davies and Tim Mullen (car number 88) are in second place in the Drivers' Championship with 20 points each, just one point behind the current leaders. TMC's other driver pairing of Kelvin Burt and Darren Turner (car number 89) lie in sixth place with seven points each.

The historic circuit is situated 16Km from Brno, the Czech Republic's second largest city, and some 200Km from the capital city of Prague. Popular with drivers, the 5.4Km-long track includes a number of undulating sections as well as a mixture of fast and slow corners which are guaranteed to provide some spectacular racing this weekend.

"Round three in Enna was particularly hard on our cars," commented Rod Benoist, TMC's Team Manager. "Subsequently, we have been extremely busy preparing for Brno as we had a fair amount of work to do. The Czech circuit should be good for us - the track surface is very similar to Magny-Cours and we know that our Dunlop tyres worked very well in France. Since Enna, we have also been working closely with our partners to further enhance the performance of our two cars in other areas and we will be trying a number of new developments this coming weekend."

Kelvin Burt : "Having raced here last year in a Porsche, and not having a particular good time of it, Brno holds some memories for me. With lots of corners and a relatively low-grip surface, I'm expecting a much better result in the Ferrari. Enna was painful for the team but I've seen how hard everybody has been working this past two weeks in readiness for Brno."

Jamie Davies : "I'm really looking forward to a good weekend. After our difficulties in Sicily, I'm confident of a great result at Brno. I know that the track suits my style of driving and with the work that the team has been doing since returning from Enna, Tim (Mullen) and I are confident that we can place ourselves at the front of the Championship again."

Tim Mullen : "Although this will be my first visit to Brno, I'm told the circuit is very exciting to drive and should suit the Ferraris really well. After our disappointment at Enna, I can't wait to get back in the car again. To be within one point of the lead so early in the season is a great feeling."

Darren Turner : "Before our problems in Enna, my car was running really well. The Ferrari had lots of speed and we demonstrated this in practice and qualifying particularly. Being privy to the work the team has been doing to prepare the cars for round four, our luck should turn again and I look forward to stepping up to the podium again on Sunday with Kelvin (Burt)."

Mechanical difficulties at Enna 11th May

After a race which saw TMC's two Ferrari 360 N/GT race cars establish themselves quickly as the front runners in the three hour endurance event, cars 88 (Jamie Davies and Tim Mullen) and 89 (Kelvin Burt and Darren Turner) battled through several unexpected mechanical difficulties to eventually finish in the points in seventh and eighth positions respectively. Having started the race from second (88) and third (89) in class on

the grid, the two TMC machines raced to the front before calling into the pits for several unplanned stops. Remarkably, the team managed to replace elements of the right front suspension of car 88 losing just three laps after damage was incurred from contact with Enna's high kerbs. Car 89's gear linkage was also repaired with a similar loss of time when Darren Turner encountered problems in his session. This prompt action demonstrated the rapid response of the team when faced with difficult circumstances and enabled TMC to consolidate their lead in the Team Championship (the team still leads with 27 points).

"A disappointing result on paper," said Rod Benoist, TMC's Team Manager. "However, when we look back at our qualifying times and the pace of both cars during the early stages of the race, we take comfort from the fact that we have established both cars as Championship contenders after just three rounds. After setting the pace during the first half of the race, we needed to react to several unexpected problems and the team did just that. Overall, we are pleased to be still leading the Team Championship and with seven rounds to go, we have plenty of time to recover our lead in the Drivers' Championship too. We now look forward to a great race in Brno in two weeks time."

Text/Photo; TMC

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