



Nelson PANCIATICI

PRESS RELEASE

FIA WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 3: 24 HOURS OF LE MANS

NELSON PANCIATICI'S FIRST TAKES HIM TO THE FOOT OF THE PODIUM

It was this weekend that Nelson Panciatichi took part in his first 24 Hours of Le Mans for the 80th edition of the "Mancelle" challenge. For his grand debut, the driver of the G-DRIVE RACING by SIGNATECH NISSAN team finished in 10th place in the general ranking and 4th in an LMP2 category of the highest order.

Nelson Panciatichi also found himself the recipient of the **Jean Rondeau Trophy** which rewards the best French hope in endurance. This prize was created in honour of the memory of Jean Rondeau who won the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1980 in a car he had constructed.

Strongly supported by his co-drivers, Pierre Ragues and Roman Rusinov, Nelson Panciatichi entered the mancelle adventure with great calm and was able to avoid the many traps in this race by applying his team's instructions to the letter.

The practise, where each driver was able to get his bearings, was good. The ORECA 03 NISSAN G-DRIVE RACING by SIGNATECH NISSAN, improved with performance DUNLOP tyres, tagged the 3rd best time in the qualifiers at the hands of Nelson Panciatichi and really announced his ambitions for the race!

Starting with a conservative strategy, favouring reliability more than performance, did not stop the ORECA 03 NISSAN from holding lead positions and entering the top 10 by the 4th hour of the race while hovering between 2nd and 3rd place among the LMP2s most of the time. A podium was therefore foreseeable until an unfortunate blow-out on the rear right immobilised the car in the box for the time it took to change part of the damaged rear bodywork and extractor. Hopes for a place on the podium were over but the G-DRIVE RACING by SIGNATECH NISSAN knew how to liven up the race:

"This first experience was an incredible moment for me. The memory will be with me for the rest of my life. I can't wait to come back," declared an enthusiastic Nelson Panciatichi, *"our practise was good with a great qualifying session, and even if it wasn't the team's priority, they gave me the opportunity to fight for a chance at the podium. It was a shame not to get a clear lap but that's part of the hazards of this race! With my co-drivers, Pierre and Roman, we gave a solid race and the G-DRIVE RACING by SIGNATECH NISSAN team did a great job. Even if it's frustrating to land at the foot of the podium, so close to the target, it bodes well for the future. For a first, it was a very positive result!"*

For Philippe Sinault, the manager: *"Practise went well despite a few small concerns with the gearbox. Getting to know the circuit went very well for Nelson and although it wasn't the priority, we even gave him a window of opportunity to attempt a good time and try to position himself as high as possible, which he did. With regards to the race we had a fabulous result within reach for this new team, but nothing is ever a certainty at Le Mans and with the flat tyre all our chances of a podium evaporated."*

There was a lot of emotion at the finishing line and the whole G-DRIVE RACING by SIGNATECH NISSAN team leave the Le Mans circuit with a feeling of accomplishment because they completed this legendary race which is always an exploit!

For more information on Nelson PANCIATICI, please visit www.nelsonpancia.fr



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