

KW Motorsport 2006 News Archive

28.03.2006 CREATION CA06/H-001 TOPS THE TIME SHEETS AT OFFICIAL LMS TEST

The all-new for 2006 Creation CA06 Hybrid prototype was the fastest car on the HTTT Paul Ricard test track in the last two days, topping the final combined time sheets with a 1m 44.240, 1.3 seconds ahead of the Racing for Holland Dome. The outcome of the official Le Mans Series two-day test could not have been better for the small, privateer team from near Bicester, England.

After an intensive development programme over the winter months, led by the team's engineer Ian Smith and the car's original designer, Kieron Salter of KW Motorsport, there were plenty of happy faces as justification of the team's decision to hybrid its chassis to the 2006 regulations was plain for all to see. The team's two regular drivers, Nicolas Minassian and Jamie Campbell-Walter, were present together with new season signings Felipe Ortiz and Beppe Gabbiani. All four had plenty of opportunity for laps around the challenging Paul Ricard track and worked through an extensive engineering programme to dial out areas including understeer and bouncing.

Team Principal Ian Bickerton summed up the test: "It's quite emotional, seeing such a positive result for all our hard work. The car ran very, very well with no problems. Straight out of the box it's obvious it's a very quick car and, if we'd had another day with Nic and Jamie, I think we could have gone at least a second quicker, even on the hard, race tyres. Michelin are working on some new front tyres for us which will be available for Spa, and we worked hard together these last two days to get the best out of the new, heavier car. Its all very positive. "The new 5-litre Judd engine is superb. Between Creation and Pescarolo we have not only proved the speed of our cars but also the reliability of the engine.

Pescarolo were concentrating on an endurance run using the same engine as us and it never missed a beat. Judd have really done a great job. "Marseille-born driver Minassian was equally positive about the Creation CA06's potential. "One thing is certain; this car is going to be good. Sometimes it takes time to be competitive but we are already in the ballpark. We're not quite there yet but we've had no reliability problems. The car turned its first kilometres without the slightest issue, though there is still some development work to do to find a good balance. "The car is very different to last year's DBA. We have kept the best of the chassis's qualities but the only other common areas are the gearbox and the suspension and even the latter has been slightly modified. Everything else is different.

Last year we had a power issue due to the restrictors. We therefore had to always find a compromise between grip and a very low aero set up. Today we have gained nearly 40% in terms of power which is huge. The car is more uniform. We have gained grip and we can go further with the aero package." While Minassian did the majority of the set up work, Bolivian Felipe Ortiz and his Italian friend and team mate Gabbiani both profited from time behind the wheel over the two days.

Every time they went out their lap times were quicker and they became more comfortable with the car. Bickerton pronounced that "they'd done a good job!" As darkness fell on Sunday night, all four drivers completed night laps though Jamie Campbell-Walter did more than the other three, his best time being a 1m 45.9. "It was quite difficult in the dark, to be honest, as it's not like Le Mans where there's lots of lights around the track. There's complete darkness so it was both difficult and challenging but we kept working through our testing programme and continued to improve the car." 27th March 2006.

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