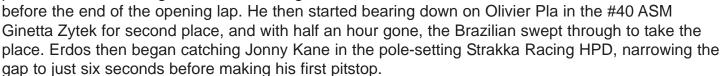


## Tide of Change Turns for RML AD Group

The new Le Mans Series season has started on a very positive note for RML AD Group, with a first round podium in the Paul Ricard 8 Hours for Mike Newton, Thomas Erdos, Andy Wallace and the team's Lola B08/80 HPD.

Tommy Erdos made an emphatic start from fourth position on the LMP2 grid, and was through to third





Taking on tyres was a wise precaution, despite the added length to the stop, and Strakka followed suit, but ASM left the change until the end of their second stint. This gave Pla the class lead, with Tommy holding third behind Kane until mid-way into the third hour. A bodywork problem delayed the #42 Strakka HPD, and RML's pitstop strategy then enabled Erdos to fight through for the class lead. Once there, he established a comfortable margin to hand on to Mike Newton for the middle stints of the race.

Having taken on the responsibility of the LMP2 lead, Mike responded to the challenge, and held on to it throughout his two stints, passing on the baton to Andy Wallace with nearly five hours completed. Emerging from the pitstop in third, Andy regained second before losing out in the next round of pitstops to the recovering Danny Watts in the Strakka HPD. Tommy Erdos returned to the Lola cockpit for the final ninety minutes, setting some of the car's quickest laps as he fought back to third, and even raised hopes of a possible second.

"It's a very positive result for us," said Erdos. "A podium and twenty-four points is a great way to start the team's new partnership with HPD (Honda Performance Development), Lola and Dunlop. Once we moved into the lead and the Strakka HPD encountered that problem, I actually started to think then that we might have a chance. Our own HPD engine ran like clockwork, and the consistency of the tyres, especially on the double-stints, was very impressive. It was such a great feeling, and one I felt for the whole team, when I took the lead, and I'm only disappointed that we couldn't hold on to that to the finish."



"It's certainly a very encouraging start to the year," agreed Mike Newton, co-driver and CEO of AD Group. "The whole interactivity between the chassis, tyres and engine is very encouraging,



especially as there's evidently so much more still to come. It was also personally very satisfying for Tommy to give me a car in the lead, and then to bring it back in again with one dot still showing on the side. That was enormously rewarding."

Pauline Norstrom, Marketing and Motorsport Director of AD Group, shared the team's delight. "After last season, when even a finish was something of an achievement, we're just so happy to score a podium in the first race of the year. The engine has lived up to all our expectations. We hope this sets the precedent for a successful year all round, and the tide of change is here perhaps."

The next round takes place at Spa in Belgium on May 9th, followed in June by the Le Mans 24 Hours.

Press Release Issued April 12th 2010



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