

RML Media Information

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RML Wins 24 Heures du Mans in LMP2

The No.25 RML MG Lola EX264 won the LMP2 class of the 24 Heures du Mans today after a punishing race that saw problems plague the team from the opening lap. All three drivers Tommy Erdos, Mike Newton and Warren Hughes drove superbly throughout the race, never letting the class win leave their sights.

The pace of the MG was so competitive that despite a number of unscheduled and extended pit stops each driver was able to recover lost ground in record time and maintain the fastest class lap throughout the race. Coupled with a real battle of determination from the team it proved a winning combination which any amount of problems couldn't beat.

With the car's reliability being an asset in all previous tests it was frustrating to experience problems as early as lap one. During the opening hours of the race the team resolved a cooling system problem which had put the MG to the back of the grid and also replaced a gear change compressor. As day turned to night the team were to get little rest when an electrical glitch caused the transmission to stick and Mike was forced to pit early. Warren took his race debut in the MG as the evening progressed and delighted the team with an outstanding triple stint, setting a new fastest lap on the way.

Much ground had been lost in the first six hours of the race but by 2am Tommy handed the car to Mike for his second stint in 3rd position in class. With track temperatures cooling and the MG really showing its potential Mike completed a double stint where he regularly lapped significantly quicker than the

front running class rivals and kept the MG 's time in contention with the top six cars on track.

Warren was behind the wheel for the final stint of the night time running and had set a new fastest lap for the MG with a time of 3m47.601s. His progress was hampered as dawn broke however when a clutch fitting snapped and forced the team to carry out an extended pit stop. He continued with no recurrent problems before pitting for Tommy to take over.

Driving another very competitive stint Tommy claimed the class lead before pitting for Mike to take over. As the race approached the 20th hour Mike was keen to continue the good work of his co-drivers but was forced to pit just as his stint began with a broken layshaft bearing. Forty five minutes of track time was lost while the team worked tirelessly to get him back on track. His stint appeared jinxed as he then had a puncture on his out lap but after a tyre change he soon got up to pace and pulled back 3rd in class before handing the car to Warren for his final drive of the day.

Warren, who appeared to have been spared most of the problems which were to plague the team, completed another double stint and regained 2nd position before handing the car over for Tommy to take to the chequered flag.

With a class win within their grasp the team held their breath as Tommy went back out on track but more misfortune was about to come their way when a suspension failure forced him into a multiple spin approaching the Ford chicane. Amazingly he avoided contact with the barriers and managed to get the car to the pits where the team carried out a lightning speed corner change which enabled Tommy to rejoin with a podium still within his grasp.

The team's fortunes were about to change when the leading LMP2 car spun and thus gave the MG the class lead. A careful strategy was quickly put in place that saw Tommy lap steadily to conserve fuel and thus enabled him to take the class win for a well deserving team.

For further information on the team's progress please access:
www.dailysportscar.com