



Minassian takes Pole Position at Laguna Seca

Twenty minutes is not long to qualify for a sportscar endurance race, but Nicolas Minassian and the Creation Autosportif team took the challenge to the Audi team this afternoon at Laguna Seca. Minassian, taking the qualifying duties for the team sat out the first half of the session leaving only a few nerve-racking minutes to qualify. It mattered little come the chequered flag, as Minassian reigned supreme as he took the Pole Position for the Audi backed season finale at Laguna Seca.

“I didn’t go out straight away because I wanted to save my tyres a little,” explained Minassian. “I have to start the race tomorrow on the same ones, so hopefully not driving around the circuit for the whole session will help me at the start.”

Minassian’s first flying lap moved him into fifth position, with his next tour of the 2.238-mile circuit gaining him another two positions. Traffic was an issue on Minassian’s third flying lap, but the Frenchman soon found some clear track and less than 80-seconds later Minassian was on the front row, less than a tenth of second adrift of JJ Lehto.

Not content with a front row start, Minassian backed off for a lap and then banged in the best time of the weekend, with a 1:15.893s, to take the Pole Position from Audi star Lehto, who then headed to the pits without improving on his own best time. The Pole was Nicolas Minassian’s and big smiles were all over the Creation Autosportif pit.

“That was good, I pushed really hard and the team did a great job,” Minassian said. “I had to push for it and take a little risk to get pole. I just take one corner at a time and when I put it all together it was a great feeling. This stuff is all about teamwork and we work well together and I really wanted this pole, it is important for the race tomorrow so now we just need to win the race and take a trophy home.”

Minassian will lead the field around from Pole Position Saturday afternoon in what is just his second start in the American Le Mans Series. The race gets underway at 7pm ET.





Editorial Notes

Nicolas Minassian, 31, lives in England with his wife Jayne. Minassian was runner up in the French F3 Championship in 1995, British F3 in 1997 and the FIA F3000 Championship in 2000. He has tested with both Williams and Honda in Formula One and competed in the Champ Car World Series with Ganassi Racing before taking the 2002 ASCAR title with RML. With Creation Autosportif, Minassian is a front-runner in the inaugural four-round LMES Championship and will contest the final two rounds of the ALMS at Road Atlanta and Laguna Seca with the team.

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