

The 2007 Le Mans Story: Binnie Motorsport Win LMP2

Race Reports

16.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 1

First 4 hours like clockwork-almost!

Bill started the Binnie Lola and ran for the first 2 hours, though some very difficult conditions. After the race started in sunshine, rain quickly came but Bill maintained a strong driving performance despite a spin as the rain started to fall at the Dunlop Bridge section. Now, with nearly 5 hours completed, Allen is lapping with good consistency, running in P3 in class, having completed 63 laps.

So, the overall whole LMP2 class looks like this (with current driver listed):

1. R.Kerr Zytek Barazi / LowesRacing 65 laps
2. M.Amaral Quifel Racing Lola / AER 64
3. A.Timpany Binnie Motorsports / Carlisle†63
4. R.Ianetta Noel Del Bello Racin 63
5. B.Jouannay Saulnier Racing Courage/AER 59
6. N.Siedler Kruse Racing Pescarolo/Judd 56
7. R.Longechal T2M Motorsport Dome/Mader 51
8. T.Erdos RML Ltd / NetVu Lola/MG 50
9. G.Pickering Bruneau Racing/Orphee 50
11. J.Barazi Barazi Racing /Gulf Oil 48

16.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 2

Race notes - 22.30pm

After a debut stunning double stint from young Chris, Bill took over for his second shift in the pristine looking Binnie Lola-Zytek. As I write this, Warren Hughes (also on his second shift in the Quifel ASM Lola) has taken class lead away from Adrian Fernandez in the Lowes Zytek, and Bill inherits P2 in class also. Fernandez confirms that the Zytek had a brake problem which has just been resolved, and Kurosawa, the Japanese driver will resume in that car.

Due to their combined efforts so far in the race the Binnie Lola is now in P14 overall, and P2 in class, having completed 100 laps. All good so far but there's a long long way to go...

16.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 3 - Binnie Lead LMP2

Midnight report from Le Mans

The last 2 hours of the race have been quite eventful, for others, not so much us. Bill circulated like clockwork, staying out of trouble and benefitting from others misfortune. With Allen now at the wheel for his double stint, the car is firmly in P2 position, 2 laps down on the Lowes Zytek being driven by Kurosawa.

Catching up with Chris after a nice relaxing massage... "We're running a wet setup on our car, and its dry...so its hard to match the times of the Zytek and others, but its 'safe' and we are circulating without any trouble. I had so much traffic for a lot of my double stint. I'm looking forward to jumping back in after Allen finishes".

Now we've just heard that the Lowes Zytek is suffering from a fuel pressure problem and has been brought back into the pits. Checking the timing sheets now, if the Zytek stays where it is for 1 more lap, Allen will take the class lead....

The Quifel Lola that was leading the class for so long is also parked in the garage after an accident.

waiting for a few minutes.....

OK, 00.32am and Binnie Motorsport tops the LMP2 charts for the first time. Allen takes over the lead from the Lowes Zytek. 00.37am and he brings the car in for new Kumho tires and fuel.

LMP2 class positions at 00.50am (with current driver at the wheel)

1. C.Buncombe Binnie/Carlisle 131 laps (16th)
2. V.Petrov Noel Del Bello Racing 131
3. H.Kurosawa Barazi Zytek Lowes 128 (in Pit Box)
4. B.Jounnay Saulnier Racing 125
5. M.Vergers Barazi Zytek Gulf 121
6. W.Hughes Quifel Racing ASM 118 (in Pit Box)
7. T.Erdos RML Ltd/NetVu 118

16.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 4

Chris took the wheel at 01.35am with 143 laps completed. Now, at 2.10am he has completed a further 8 laps and is leading the class. Second is the ever threatening Noel Del Bello Racing Courage with Romain lanetta in the car. Chris is lapping around 5 seconds a lap quicker than the Frenchman. We still have 14 hours to go but its turning into a fascinating LMP2 class battle. Only 2 cars from the class have officially retired but 2 others are as good as out of the race. Other threats to our lead include Bruce Joannay's Saulnier Courage and Robbie Kerr in the very fast Lowes Barazi Zytek.

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 5

All's well so far...

Bill completed a successful morning stint and handed over to Allen at 6am or thereabouts. With 8 hours and 30 minutes remaining the Binnie Lola holds steady as LMP2 class leader, and 13th place overall. Other contenders in the class persist in having problems. The Lowes Zytek us visiting the pits yet again -suffering from, and Liz Halliday in the Del Bello Courage had an off-course excursion at Indianapolis. With the sun rising it's always easy to start thinking that you are nearly on the home stretch, but there is still a third of the race to go.

LMP2 current running order

(driver named is currently driving)

1. A.Timpany Binnie /Carlisle 217 laps (13th)
2. N.Filhol Saulnier Racing 210 laps (16th overall)
3. M.Vergers Barazi Gulf Racing 206 laps (23rd overall)
4. M. Newton RML Ltd/Netvu 203 laps (28th overall)
5. H.Kurosawa Barazi Lowes Racing 200 laps (31st)
6. L.Halliday Noel Del Bello 193 laps (36th overall)
7. P.Rostan Bruneau Racing/Orphee 126 laps (39th)

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 6 - Binnie pit notes...

Well, we are still leading the class, and the car hasn't missed a beat! Allen continues to lap - now well into his second stint in a row as we head towards the 8am mark. We've now completed 232 laps, and we are 12 laps ahead of our nearest rival. Haroki Kurosawa contined the Lowes Zytek's bad run, throwing the car off and causing quite a lot of body and floor damage to that car. The LMP1 Charouz Lola has leapfrogged us to take 13th.

The leading LMP1 Audi has just crashed heavily - driver Dindo Capello is ok-it appears the Audi R10 lost a left rear wheel, pitching Dindo hard into the Indianapolis corner tyre wall. We estimate that he hit the wall at close to 190mph! The Audi had lead all but 3 of the 262 laps completed at the time of the accident.

This is how LMP2 looks as of 7.55am

(driver named is currently driving)

1. A.Timpany Binnie /Carlisle 232 laps (13th)
2. J.Barazi Barazi Gulf Zytek 220
3. T.Erdos RML Ltd/NetVu 217
4. B.Jouannay Saulnier Racing 216
5. R.Kerr Barazi Lowes Zytek 213
6. L.Halliday Noel Del Bello Racing 195

no other class runners...

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 7 - Still Leading LMP2

Its 10.50am, the sun is trying hard to come out,†and we are still P1 in class having covered 272 laps. Bill is doing his trade mark job, keeping consistent and steady. The last 4 hours have really taken their toll on the class. Our rivals in LMP2 have all brought the fight to us, but so far all have failed. We now have a 19 lap lead over the second placed LMP2 car, which is Adrian Fernandez in the Barazi Lowes Home Improvement Zytek - a car that has been fraught with incident and accident despite its undoubted pace.

Third in class† - to be honest I don't know if there is one now! The #32 Barazi Gulf car suffered a rather amateur accident exiting the final turn, and that is a retirement; The last I saw of the RML Lola it was stationary and looking†sorry for itself in the†pit box; and we just heard that the #35 Saulnier Racing Courage is possibly a retirement too. Already

DNF's are the Noel Del Bello car and the #20 Pilbeam.†Really,†our main rival is ourselves. We have to be at our sharpest now, these are the difficult final hours and still anything can happen.

We just made a stop - engine cover off just to make some checks. All is ok, so we refuel, change tires and Bill resumes business as usual.

LMP2 class latest

(Driver listed is currently driving)

1. B.Binnie Binnie/Carlisle 274 laps (13th)
2. A.Fernandez Barazi Lowes Racing 253 laps (23rd)

no other runners.

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 8 - 3 Hours To Go

Coming up to 12 Midday now, and we are still reeling of the laps, and holding a strong P1 class lead. Just made a routine pit stop and Allen is currently behind the wheel for another stint. Still no signs of the predicted thunder storm but the weather here is changeable.

So, with only 2 class runners now (the Lowes Zytek is some 18 laps down on us) all we have to do is keep out of trouble and keep circulating.

3 hours to go.....

Overall leaders

1. Audi Sport USA #1 Audi R10
2. Peugeot Sport #7 Peugeot HDi
3. Peugeot Sport #8 Peugeot HDi
4. Pescarolo Sport #16 Pescarolo Judd
5. Rollcentre #18 Pescarolo Judd

GT1 leaders

1. Aston Martin Racing #009 Aston Martin
2. GM Corvette #63 Corvette GT
3. Aston Martin Larbre #008 Aston Martin
4. Aston Martin BMS #009 Aston Martin

GT2 leaders

1. IMSA Performance #76 Porsche 997
2. Risi Competizione #99 Ferrari F430LM
3. Autorlando #93 Porsche 997
4. AF Corse #78 Ferrari F430LM

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 9 - Pit Notes

12.30pm CET

We've now covered 302 laps, and having taken class lead in the 8th hour, we have lead the class for over half the race, 12.5 hours to be precise. Allen is reeling off the laps like clockwork and the TV channels are even showing us more frequently now!

Chris Buncombe: "I'm feeling tired now, I have slept for about 45 minutes, but the adrenalin is still pumping! It's an unbelievable debut at Le Mans for me. What can I say - the Binnie boys are fabulous-where we are at the moment is down to them, and the fantastic car preparation".

The thought is that Chris may do the final stint of the race. Allen is cycling through one stint right now and is expected to do another before changing over.

Le Mans - Race Update 10 - The Rain Returns

As forecast, with almost exactly 2 hours left of the 75th running of the Le Mans 24 hours, the rains have returned - and it looks like they are here to stay! Having seen the weather early we were one of the first to pit and change to Kumho wet tires. With now 1 hour and 50 mins remaining, Allen is in the car for another stint. We are now 22 laps ahead of our nearest rival. It sounds a bit crazy but there's still the distance of a Formula 1 Grand Prix to run, so anything can happen!

Its now 1.10pm and Allen has brought the car into the pits, for what has been our longest stop of the race. We're in the garage, Allen has hopped out and Chris is getting ready to take the wheel. The team are 'waterproofing' the car - as we have some time to make sure all is well before rejoining. All is well - this is a precaution that we had planned if we reached this stage, and it was raining.

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Race Update 11 - 30 mins To Go..

2.20pm CET

We have 40 minutes remaining. We sat it out in the pits for the last half hour as we lost the radio contact when Chris ventured back out onto the track. At 2.18pm the safety Car was sent out to bring the field to an order of sorts. The rain is torrential and extremely dangerous. I believe our plan will be to send young Chris back out just to cross the finish line, which is all we need to achieve as we have a huge lead over the Lowes Zytek.

The last 2 hours appear to have taken their toll on the factory Peugeot's. The Minassian/Villeneuve/Gene car has already retired and a few minutes ago the remaining #8 car was wheeled into its pit garage with a reported gearbox problem.

2.29pm - the Peugeot has emerged from its garage to resume its race. They have a slim lead over the Pescarolo Judd. In GT1 it looks like it will go the way of the factory Aston

Martin for the first time - beating Corvette in a straight fight. In GT2 the Rouen, France based IMSA Performance Porsche 997 has a healthy lead over the 2nd placed Risi Ferrari.

29 minutes left to run to the flag now. The Safety Car is still circulating....

17.06.2007 Le Mans - Another Win for Binnie in LMP2!

We made it! Binnie Motorsports - 1st in P2 - by a 'Le Mans' country mile! Bring it on!!

Well done to all the Binnie Boys - a well deserved victory for all concerned. Congratulations are coming in from all over the globe, from friends and sponsors. A big thanks to Kumho for providing us with great tyres and congrats to them - this is their best ever finish at Le Mans and we are pleased to bring that to them, and indeed all our sponsors - Carlisle Capital, Vanco, Chic Outlet Shopping (the first race for them, and a Le Mans win!), Click Culture, Red Hook, all our fans and everyone else who followed us. Thanks!

To wrap it up, because we sat out most of the final hour in the pit garage to be safe, and also because we had no radio contact with Chris, we ended up finishing 18th overall. We completed 317 laps and made 28 pit stops.

The race was won outright by Audi #1 - Pirro/Werner and Biela. GT1 spoils went to the #009 Aston Martin, and GT2 honours went to #15 Porsche IMSA Performance team. Well done to them too.

We'll add some pictures and driver reactions soon!

Official ACO Stats >

Le Mans - Thanks to All Our Fans...

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all the fans who have emailed in with well-wishes for our success. This means more than anything when we realize just how many people are out there watching our progress. For those who have asked for signed Le Mans posters, we will mail these out to you so please send in your requests, and remember to include your mailing address. You can reach us by emailing binniems@gmail.com. 'We'll post as many of your emails as we can on this website so check back in this week'

Thanks again to you all!

Binnie Motorsports Team