



NURBURGRING POST-QUALIFYING PRESS CONFERENCE

REGALIA, ELLINAS & FONTANA DISCUSS THEIR QUALIFYING

GP3 Series: Welcome to the GP3 Qualifying Press Conference here in the Nurburgring. Joining us is pole-sitter Facu Regalia (ART Grand Prix), second on the grid Tio Ellinas (Marussia Manor Racing) and third Alex Fontana (Jenzer Motorsport).

GP3 Series: Congratulations Facu, your first pole. You have been really on it since Valencia, how did the session go for you today?

Facu Regalia: "I was quite scared at the beginning as I did a massive lock-up on my first set of tyres at the first corner. This meant I destroyed the front right on my first lap. On my first set, I was already P1, so I was quite happy and keeping more calm after that. On the second set of tyres we made some set-up changes to the car which is what I had asked for and we improved a lot between the first and second set. I didn't make any mistakes with the second set so it was practically perfect. Finally we got pole. We've really wanted this after we were so close in Valencia."

GP3 Series: Yes and you found a clear lap as well which not everybody could, how did you find the traffic?

Facu: "It was a bit complicated as the traffic was not easy to manage as you would find a driver slowing down. We did two laps to try and look for a good space. On my fastest lap I didn't find any traffic, it was almost perfect apart from a little mistake on the last corner but I'm happy. When I saw the laptime I was surprised as it was an amazing lap."

GP3 Series: Is this your first time at the Nurburgring?

Facu: "No, I raced here last season with Formula 3 and in 2007 with Formula BMW."

GP3 Series: ART Grand Prix have showed good pace, what do you expect from the race and also the tyres?

Facu: "Now we have returned to the Medium compound, this compound the tyres degrade very easily compared to the Super Hard we had in Silverstone. It will be hard for the race but at least we start with new tyres. We will try to save the tyres at the beginning of the race so I can push at the middle/end of the race. We will see if there is a fight between myself, Tio, Alex and the rest behind us. For sure after this pole position, the most important thing is the start."

GP3 Series: How much of a worry is it having Tio starting alongside you, knowing he has a lot of GP3 experience?

Facu: For sure it's a worry. But I also think I'm quite experienced on the track in race conditions where it's a new track for Tio. He did a very good today so I must congratulate him and also Alex."

GP3 Series: Good job Facu, thank you. Tio, you're back in the Press Conference, it's been a while! You're still the Series leader, how was qualifying for you?

Tio Ellinas: "Basically our qualifying in Valencia and Silverstone, we had a different strategy, all the time saving tyres. So we qualified P4 and P6 there with the focus on the race. But here, we've changed our strategy and are doing what we did in Barcelona. Our goal was to post a quick lap and be in the top three."

GP3 Series: P2 today, almost pole...you just missed out by 0.054s..

Tio: "I had pole with 5 minutes to go and it was a really good laptime. For me it was really hard conditions, as it's my first time at this circuit so I'm learning everytime. I made a mistake on the last corner as I had over-steer. Apart from that, I think my lap was very good and made it into the top three. I think the team have done a really good job setting the car so it was just down to me to qualify at the front so I'm happy with the performance."

GP3 Series: How was the tyre degradation and conditions compared to yesterday?

Tio: "The weather here is so unpredictable; I'm hoping the weather remains as this. We have the medium compound here, so I'm hoping we will be able to race each other."

GP3 Series: What will be the plan for you today with regards to either pushing or conserving tyres?

Tio: "For me I must make a good start and try to win the race. I know everybody will try to win but at the beginning I need to be calm and take an advantage when needed. I just want to score more points and keep my championship point lead and see what happens!"

GP3 Series: Well done Tio, thank you. Alex, congratulations P3, you're best qualifying, how was your session?

Alex Fontana: "It was tricky actually as we saved a set of tyre from Free Practice. On my first set of tyres I found yellow flags and on my second lap I made a little mistake with the gears. On my second set, I came across a slower car in the last corner which meant I lost a lot of time on that lap. On my last attempt, I was able to put everything together, but maybe I pushed a bit too much in a few sectors. I didn't think it would be a great lap but in the end, the result came so I'm quite happy about that."

GP3 Series: Do you think you had more within you to be higher up the grid?

Alex: "I think Facu did a great lap so I'm not sure if it would have been possible to have taken the pole. But for sure, it was possible to have improved on my lap and be closer to Tio's time. I'm sure I lost some time in the final corner as I found two drivers who were slowing down. I'm happy with the team as the car was going well and we will see if the new system with the gears will make life easier or trickier. It will be interesting to see how the Medium compound tyres perform. I think we won't be able to push every lap like Silverstone but I'm sure we can manage it."

GP3 Series: How important will the start be to your race? It must be a good confidence boost to be at the front...

Alex: "I don't know if it's enough, but for sure it helps. I started P4 last Round in Race 1, but I made a better start in my second race. It's a bit new to me to start so near the front, as I've started from nearer the back before after a few mistakes. I think we've put our mistakes together and the car is going good. I think without any crazy things on the first few laps we can manage to stay near the front and see what happens."

GP3 Series: Thanks Alex, good job.