

## Press Release – TOTAL SPA 24 HOUR 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> July 2009

At 4 pm on the 25th July Austrian driver Niki Lanik took his place on the grid and waited for the lights to go out to signal the start of his first Total Spa 24 hrs race.

**Qualifying** had began dry but after only three dry laps the heavens opened and qualifying continued in heavy rain.

Niki's qualifying had been hindered by brake problems from the start which unfortunately meant Niki missing the dry track opportunity. This resulted in Niki's lead Prospeed GT3 car starting on the last row of the grid!

**Race** conditions were wet/dry resulting in the difficult decision of which tyres to begin the race with. Despite the uncertainty of the weather, Niki drove the awesome Spa circuit in amazing style. Niki's optimistic and positive attitude and true driving talent resulted in the car moving up to 1st position in the GT3 class after only 1 and half hours driving!

A feat any World class driver would be proud of.

With high spirits the first driver change-over took place and Oska Slingerland took the wheel.

Then the car started to experienced several serous mechanical set backs, first was a window popping out then gear selection problems.

Regardless of the mechanical challenges Markus Palttala who took the third stint did an impressive job fighting his way back and over taking, recovering valuable race positions and time then handed the car over to Niki.

Despite a wheel bearing failure during Niki's second stint behind the wheel Niki brought the car in for David Loix who thankfully completed a solid session. The car was down in 10th place in its class with 15 hours to go.

The team dug deep and were determined to fight back; the car was serviced with precision and focus during the night and early morning sessions, refuelling and changing tyres with impressive consistency and energy.

This morning through sheer determination and tenacity from all the drivers Niki's stint found him in 4th position by 10 am on Sunday. By 12.30 pm the Prospeed GT3 car was battling against the 123 car of Muhlner Motorsport for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the GT3 class.

Though the team had experienced a far from easy race, flagged by mechanical challenges their spirit, focus and skill aloud them to fight back as only truly great teams can.

With only 3 hours to go the battle for 2<sup>nd</sup> place intensified, could Niki's first Total Spa 24 hour see him on the podium, a truly mammoth feat for any driver at this historically challenging event.

Despite problems experienced by the Matech GT Racing Car in the final laps, as the flag fell Niki and the Prospeed car took 3<sup>rd</sup> place and a well deserved place on the podium.

Niki's first 24 hour race and the second podium of the season, 2009 is turning out to be an impressive debut for the Rapid Man managed driver.

Niki said –

*Though all the drivers only got to meet this week, for the first time. It was amazing how quickly we all bonded.*

*My first Total Spa 24hr has been an amazing experience and a true journey in every sense of the word, watching my team mates, I feel like I've driven every mile over the last 24 hours.*

*I can't thank the team enough for all they've done this week end and for the support I've received from all my family and friends.*

Justin said -

*Niki has achieved so much this week end and his place on the podium is truly deserved. I couldn't be prouder.*



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## **Notes to Editors:**

For further information please contact Justin Keen on +44 780 1860 656

### **About Rapid Man**

Rapid Man Sports Management – guiding and developing the careers of established and talented young racing drivers.

Founder Justin Keen has been involved in motor racing for over 20 years, as a top line “Factory” sports car driver. His racing experience and motor sport business skills can deliver enormous advantage to drivers wishing to make their mark.

<http://www.rapidman.co.uk/>

### **About Niki Lanik**

22-year old Niki has been racing for humanitarian and charity campaigns since the start of his racing career in 2003, and is starting to become well known world-wide for his successes. 2009 marks Niki’s next step in his racing career having decided to race international in the world-famous FIA GT3 Championship with Belgium-based race team.

<http://www.nikilanic.com/>

### **About Prospeed**

Founded by Rudi Penders (owner, managing director and driver) and Luc Goris (owner and technical director), ProSpeed Competition has rapidly grown and won a prestigious palmares.

As Belgium’s leading racing team, ProSpeed Competition prides itself on an impressive track record, with wins in Belgium and abroad. The team is constantly using its experience to take up new challenges in Europe.

No surprise then that ProSpeed Competition has been chosen by Porsche Motorsport as official works supported team in the GT2 class of the prestigious FIA GT Championship since 2008!

<http://www.prospeed.be/>