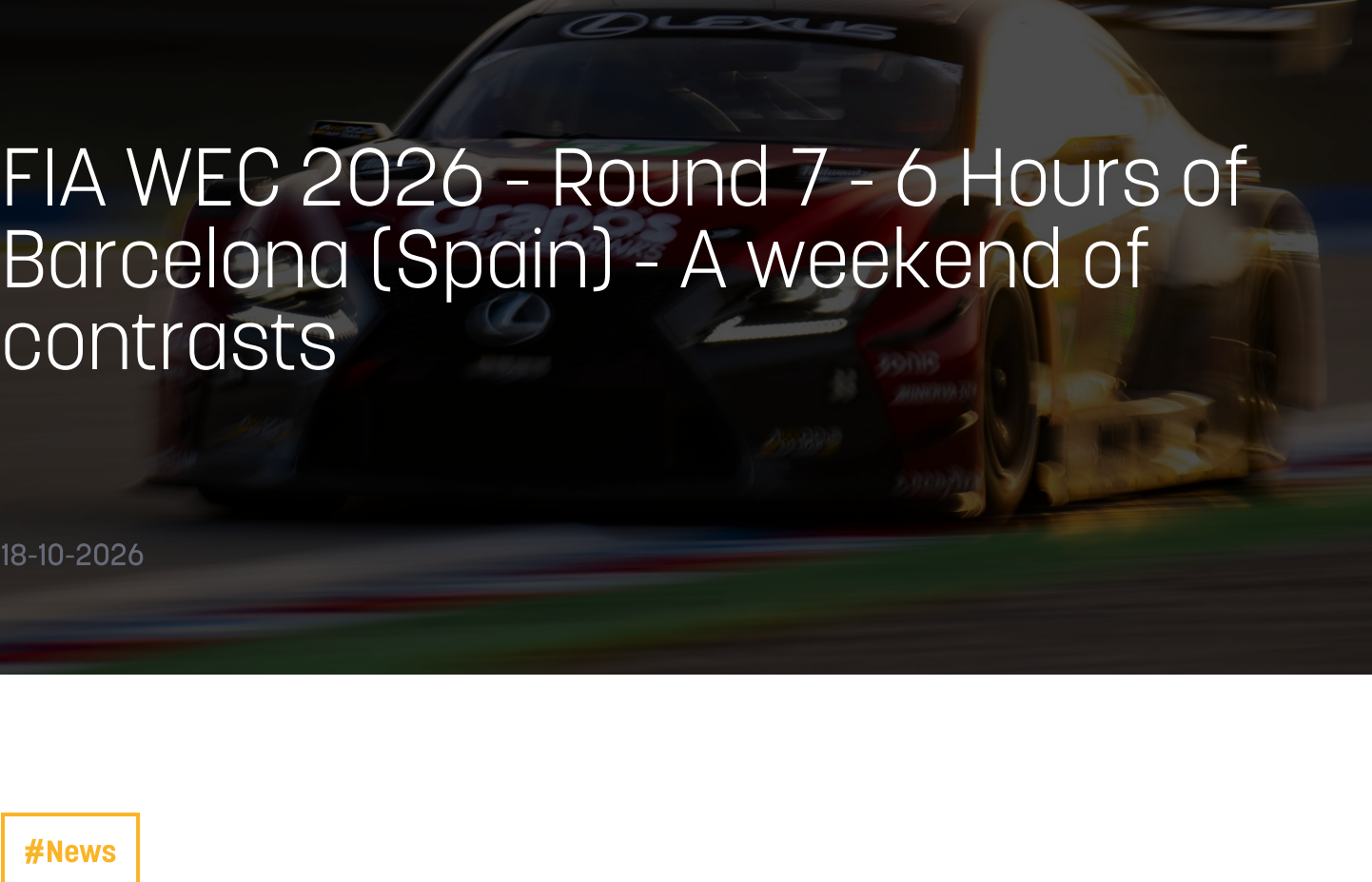
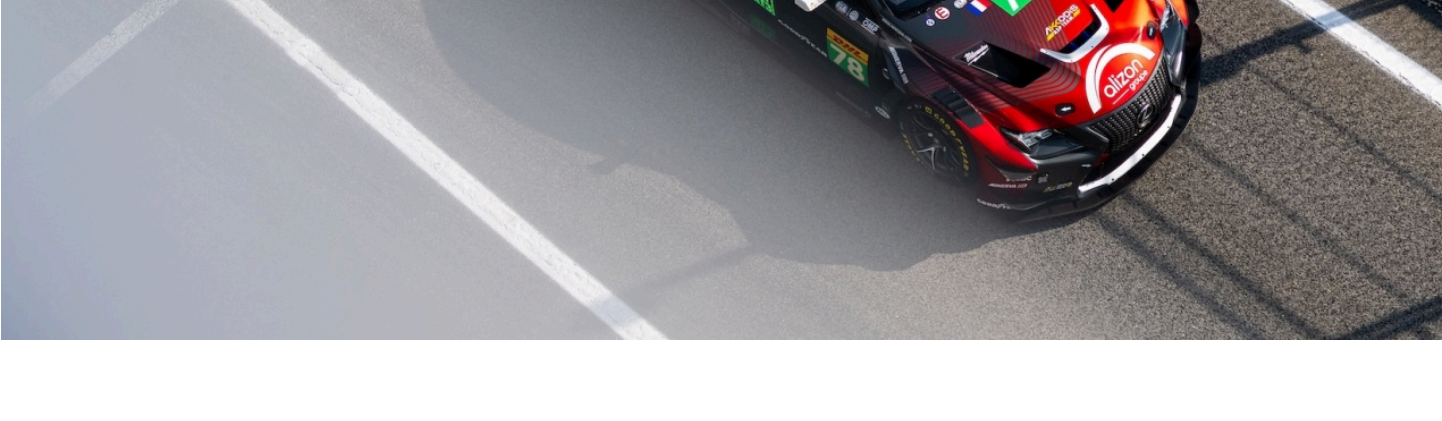




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#News

Practice potential did not translate into race results for the Akkodis ASP Team in the 6 Hours of Barcelona. After being second fastest in Friday’s free practice with the #78 car, then third on Saturday morning with the #87, the team were optimistic of a competitive race. However, a race held in changeable conditions soon dashed their hopes. A collision at the start put the #78 to the back, while two penalties took the #87 out of contention. In front of 55,551 spectators, the team’s six drivers pushed to the end and brought the two Lexus RC F LMGT3s home in 14th and 15th place in the LMGT3 class. That result fell short of expectations after a weekend that put the team’s determination to the test.



Free practice: Gaining momentum

Free practice at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya focused on optimising performance and managing tyre wear, a key challenge for the six-hour race. The two Akkodis ASP Team Lexus RC F LMGT3s showed encouraging progress in Friday’s two sessions, before continuing preparations in cooler conditions on Saturday morning.

In first practice, on a dry track, Esteban Masson set the fastest time for the #78 car. Teaming up with Tom Van Rompuy and Hadrien David, the Frenchman earned sixth in the LMGT3 class, which was led by two Ferraris. José María López finished 14th in the #87 he shares with Petru Umbrurescu and Clemens Schmid.

The second session confirmed the potential of the #78. Hadrien David improved their best time to 1’41’’994 and finished second, just 0.344secs behind the pace-setting #58 McLaren. The #87 also made progress. Clemens Schmid joined his team-mate in the top six with his best lap. A total of 142 laps across both cars gave the six drivers and their engineers a strong foundation for the rest of the weekend. The team continued to work on set-ups prior to third practice, with a priority on tyre management – particularly the hard-worked left-hand side tyres – without compromising performance.

On Saturday morning, in light mist for the third and final free practice session, the LMGT3s had the track to themselves for a one-hour session, a first for WEC. The track remained dry and the #87 stood out with a lap of 1’42’’225 from Clemens Schmid, which propelled the Lexus into third, 0.529secs behind the leading #21 Ferrari. In the #78, Esteban Masson set the crew’s best time and finished in 10th.



Qualifying: Top-five for Petru Umbrurescu, Tom Van Rompuy missed Hyperpole by 0.018secs

The skies cleared for qualifying, which took place on a dry track with an air temperature of around 21°C. Petru Umbrurescu and Tom Van Rompuy took the wheel, aiming to secure one of the 10 places in Hyperpole.

A tight battle meant drivers had to drive with speed and precision, respecting track limits and avoiding tyre debris off the racing line.

At the wheel of the #87, Petru Umbrurescu gradually improved his lap times. The Romanian found his best rhythm at the right moment: on his final lap, he clocked a time of 1’42’’922 and moved into fifth. That ensured Clemens Schmid would participate in Hyperpole.

For Tom Van Rompuy, the outcome was decided by the narrowest of margins. With a best lap of 1’43’’124, the Belgian finished in 11th. The #78 remained in contention for Hyperpole until the very last moments but ultimately missed out by just 0.018secs.



Hyperpole: row four for the #87

Clemens Schmid retrouve le volant de la #87 pour la dernière confrontation chronométrée. L’Autrichien se montre immédiatement dans le rythme et réalise son meilleur tour en 1’41’’894.

Clemens Schmid finished seventh, securing a fourth-row start on the LMGT3 grid for the #87 Lexus he shares with Petru Umbrurescu and José María López. Both crews looked forward to capitalising on the work carried out since Friday. The weather, however, could prove decisive.



Race: staying the course through a troubled event

Sunday’s conditions in Barcelona threw teams a curve ball. At midday, the air temperature was 16°C and the track was damp, with the racing line still drying out. Rain was forecast and an extra formation lap preceded the start of the race. On a track which is tough on tyres, drivers had to contend with poor grip and uncertain weather.

Petru Umbrurescu started from seventh on the LMGT3 grid at the wheel of the #87, with Hadrien David 11th in the #78. Through the rain, Petru immediately gained a position, but the sister car’s race soon took a turn for the worse when Hadrien was caught up in a collision and pushed into the gravel. The Frenchman managed to get back on track, but the time lost left his crew with a mountain to climb.

After just five minutes, an initial Virtual Safety Car (VSC) period slowed the field down, before the safety car was deployed. The restart brought more challenges when rain returned at around 12.25pm and another incident triggered a further neutralisation. Between pit stops, changes in grip and the field bunching up, the first hour was a demanding one.

Despite the drama, Petru Umbrurescu kept the #87 in the leading group. He was running sixth and moved up to fifth at the pit stops. This strong pace suggested the team could capitalise on its practice potential. However, a penalty for speeding in the pit lane halted the momentum, and the drive-through penalty dropped the Lexus into the second part of the field.

In the #78, Hadrien David continued his efforts. As the track dried out, lap times improved and the Frenchman was picking up the pace, aiming to make up as much ground as possible.

As the two-hour mark approached, the first driver changes saw Clemens Schmid take over from Petru Umbrurescu in the #87, whilst Esteban Masson replaced Hadrien David in the #78. The two Lexus were then in 14th and 16th place respectively.



The #87 was forced to serve a second drive-through penalty, this time for an infringement under the virtual safety car. The time lost further reduced their chances of a points finish.

Tom Van Rompuy took the wheel of the #78 after a single stint from Esteban Masson. Clemens Schmid, meanwhile, continued in the #87. At halfway, the #78 was 15th and the #87 16th. The crews remained focused, but their earlier incidents restricted their chances.

Another virtual safety car, followed by a safety car, set the scene for the final part of the race. José María López took over the #87 and, when the race resumed, he closed in on Tom Van Rompuy. He eventually overtook his team-mate to move up to 15th.

At the final pit stops, José María López continued at the wheel of the #87, while Esteban Masson took over the #78 for a final stint. Both crews kept pushing but were unable to overcome their earlier drama.

The #87 car driven by Petru Umbrurescu, Clemens Schmid and José María López finished in 14th place in the LMGT3 class, one place ahead of the #78 car of Tom Van Rompuy, Hadrien David and Esteban Masson. The final positions did not reflect the hard work put in, but the team is already focused on the next and final round of the season, the 6 Hours of Monza, at the home of Italian motorsport on 6-8 November.