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Corinthians handed Donington "Pole" as Qualifying abandoned

01/08/2009 - SC Corinthians will start the opening Superleague Formula by Sonangol race at Donington Park tomorrow from pole-position (2 Aug) after qualifying was abandoned due to a flooded track this afternoon.

The Brazilian club's Antônio Pizzonia (BRA) headed the time trials in the opening Group A session staged on a dry track but rain midway through the session sent all cars in to the pits.

The following Group B qualifiers, now fitted with wet tyres as conditions quickly deteriorated, was headed by Olympiacos' Davide Rigon (IT) – the defending SLF champion and a winner of the corresponding Donington race last August.

Quarter-final 1 was held in heavy rain and poor visibility forcing the organisers to suspend then ultimately abandon the following time trials due to the dangerous conditions on the 2.5 miles (4.02 km) parkland track.

The 18-car grid will line-up for tomorrow's opening 44min plus one lap race in the order cars achieved in the opening 15-minute, Group A and B time trials. The nine GpA cars will take the "pole" side of the grid behind Pizzonia with Rigon alongside on the front row heading the GpB runners down the other side.

Three British soccer clubs, Glasgow Rangers, Liverpool FC and Tottenham Hotspur, plus two British drivers, Jonathan Kennard and Scott Mansell, aim for "home rule" at Donington – the only British venue in the series.

The Rangers car of John Martin (AUS) starts from fifth place, Tottenham Hotspur's Craig Dolby – who lives in nearby Leicestershire – from sixth alongside on the third row and championship leading Liverpool FC's Adrian Vallés (SP), from 10th position.

AS Roma's Jonathan Kennard and Galatasaray's Scott Mansell are placed seventh and 17th respectively on the colourful grid.

The drivers of PSV Eindhoven and FC Porto, along with the British club trio, wore black armbands in respect of Sir Robert William "Bobby" Robson CBE, who died yesterday (31 Jul) aged 76 after a long battle with cancer. He managed the Dutch (1990-92/98-99) and Portuguese (1994-6) league clubs as well as the England "national" soccer team (1982-90).

QUALIFYING QUOTES:

Corinthians: Antônio Pizzonia (BRA)

"It has been a very good day for us. It's my second 'pole' in three races. We were strong in our dry qualifying session but the car was also good in the wet practice earlier in the day. So, rain or shine, I am very positive for tomorrow."

Olympiacos CFP: Davide Rigon (ITA)

"I was on the limit – the conditions were bad but honestly I hope the rain stays. I will be happier for a wet race. I won here last year – I like this track a lot – and starting from the front row I have a very good chance of scoring my second podium of the season."

FC Basel: Max Wissel (D)

"I was just 0.039secs slower than Antônio so I know I have the pace in the dry while I was fourth fastest in a wet practice so it seems that whatever the conditions we have a well-balanced car so things are looking good for FC Basel."

Qualification Final Classification

Qualifying Group A

POS	NO	RACING TEAM	DRIVER	TIME	GAP
1	14	Corinthians SF Racing Team	A. Pizzonia	1:22.868	
2	10	FC Basel SF Racing Team	M. Wissel	1:22.907	0.039
3	17	Rangers FC SF Racing Team	J. Martin	1:22.948	0.080
4	22	AS Roma SF Racing Team	J. Kennard	1:22.953	0.085
5	18	Sevilla FC SF Racing Team	E. Guerrieri	1:23.036	0.168
6	7	Flamengo SF Racing Team	E. Bernoldi	1:23.067	0.199
7	15	Atlético de Madrid SF Racing Team	H. P. Tung	1:25.141	2.273
8	5	PSV Eindhoven SF Racing Team	D. Muermans	1:26.199	3.331
9	4	Galatasaray SF Racing Team	S. Mansell	1:26.623	3.755

Qualifying Group B

POS	NO	RACING TEAM	DRIVER	TIME	GAP
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1	9	Olympiacos SF Racing Team	D. Rigon	1:32.414
2	3	AC Milan SF Racing Team	G. Pantano	1:33.110 0.696
3	19	Tottenham Hotspur SF Racing Team	C. Dolby	1:33.660 1.246
4	8	RSC Anderlecht SF Racing Team	Y. Buurman	1:33.923 1.509
5	21	Liverpool FC SF Racing Team	A. Vallés	1:34.551 2.137
6	16	Porto FC SF Racing Team	T. Gommendy	1:34.687 2.273
7	69	Olympique Lyonnais SF Racing Team	N. Panciatici	1:34.727 2.313
8	24	FC Midtjylland SF Racing Team	K. Andersen	1:35.095 2.681
9	2	Sporting Clube de Portugal SF Racing Team	P. Petiz	1:36.933 4.519

Race 1 Grid

Row 9	17- Galatasaray	18- Sporting Clube de Portugal
Row 8	15- PSV Eindhoven	16- FC Midtjylland
Row 7	13- Atlético Madrid	14- Olympique Lyonnais
Row 6	11- Flamengo	12- FC Porto
Row 5	9- Sevilla FC	10- Liverpool FC
Row 4	7- AS Roma	8- RSC Anderlecht
Row 3	5- Rangers FC	6- Tottenham Hotspur
Row 2	3- FC Basel	4- AC Milan
Row 1	1- Corinthians	2- Olympiacos

Pole Position

Note: Qualifying abandoned due to weather conditions - Race 1 Grid based on times from qualifying groups A & B - Group A pole side of grid

FURTHER INFORMATION :

Additional briefing information, video and images are available at:

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