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**EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES 2014 – ROUND 2**

**4 HOURS OF IMOLA (May 17 & 18 2014)**

**ALPINE AND NELSON PANCIATICI ARE BACK ON THE PODIUM!**

Long-time leaders of the race then trapped by the safety car’s exit just as the Alpine A 450 held first place, the Signatech-Alpine team and Nelson Panciatici stepped up on the podium nevertheless. Not since Hungaroring have they shown such mastery. They are definitely back in the race for the title and now stand third in the provisional rankings of the European Le Mans Series.

The first day was dedicated to adapting the Alpine A 450 to the untried Dunlop tyres. The challenge was not easy, the result was all they could have wished for when Nelson Panciatici came second in the initial free practices and confirmed it with the overall best time of the day!

Third in qualifying, Nelson Panciatici had an excellent start as he took the inside curve of the very first corner and snatched second place. He tailed the leader and within 15 minutes was having to weave through traffic but, when he handed over the wheel, the car was in an ideal position for his co-drivers. They were soon in first place, but then the Alpine A 450 lost around 20 seconds on its second refuelling. They were once more in the lead when the safety car came onto the track, just as the Signatech-Alpine team had sent the car out of the pits. It forced them to pit one more time for fuel just a few laps before the finish. Shame, as victory was easily within their reach!

Nelson: *“We managed to find the right tuning to get a great performance and balance from the car. Olivier, our engineer, did an amazing job which wasn’t easy with the new tyres. During the race, my relay went well. I managed to get into second place on the very first corner and made best time at the start of the race. I had to get the car up to this position to give my co-drivers, Paul Loup Chatin and Oliver Webb, every chance. They did the rest and were lined up for a win, but the fortunes of the race decided otherwise. It’s a great reward for the team. We were fast in each session, it’s perfect before Le Mans!”*

Philippe Sinault, the Signatech-Alpine team manager said: «*We’re back in the match! The whole team has worked hard since Silverstone to get the Alpine A450 back up the ranks. Even if there are still some areas we need to work on, this podium gives us the confidence we need for Le Mans 24 Hours. We were fast in practice, in qualifying and in the race in Imola. We’ve shown that we can pass other competitors and be in the lead. We have now tested the Dunlop tyres in this challenge. It’s a good foundation for the rest of the season. We’ve gone into positive drive at the best possible time.*»

Starting next week, the Signatech-Alpine team launch into their test programme for Le Mans 24 Hours. Nelson Panciatici and his co-drivers will then be on the circuit for June 1, Test Day for Le Mans 24 Hours with the new aerodynamic kit, and the Alpine A 450 will want to prove its potential!

For more information on Nelson PANCIATICI, please visit[**www.nelsonpancia.fr**](http://www.nelsonpancia.fr)

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