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LE MANS WINNER MARC GENE TO RACE THE NISSAN GT-R LM NISMO

The first driver of Nissan's Le Mans challenger, the Nissan GT-R LM NISMO, has been revealed as Marc Gene. The Spanish ace has an exemplary record in LM P1 racing with eight LM P1 Le Mans 24 Hours races under his belt. Gene's experience is much in demand and he has been test driver at Scuderia Ferrari since 2005.

Gene will provide Nissan NISMO with a firm foundation of experience in its driving squad. He describes Le Mans as "the best race in the world" and already knows how it feels to win the great race outright after doing just that in 2009.

"We said at the start of our driver search that we wanted an established LM P1 driver who could provide the extra knowledge and experience that can only be gained by having 'been there and done it'," said Darren Cox, Global Head of Brand, Marketing & Sales, NISMO. "In Marc we have found a Le Mans winner, who has raced for two LM P1 works teams and can provide a guiding hand for the other drivers who are stepping up to LM P1. We are very happy to welcome Marc to Nissan and look forward to the development of a successful relationship."

FIVE MINUTES WITH MARC

How important do you think it is for a new team to have an experienced driver like yourself?

"Nissan NISMO is a great team already. From the very beginning I have experienced a very good atmosphere in the team. The mechanics and engineers are all very professional and most have Le Mans experience. From my side, my experience in works teams will definitely help Nissan as I have already faced the challenge we are all now facing. Our goal is to reach the podium and ultimately win Le Mans. However we are all aware that at Le Mans there are no shortcuts and we will only achieve our goals with time and hard work, especially now that it is probably the most competitive Le Mans ever with four different manufacturers."

What does it feel like to win Le Mans?

"Winning Le Mans was the most intense feeling I have ever had as a racing driver. I was lucky to be in the car for the final stint and on that long last lap, with all the marshals congratulating me and with more than 200,000 spectators cheering, it was impossible to contain my feelings. Then came the podium and all you can see is this huge crowd, thousands of fans who have followed the race from the beginning."

You will compete in the full FIA World Endurance Championship season. What are your expectations for the year ahead?

"This season we should just focus on learning about and improving the car every time we head out onto the track, whether for testing or racing. Making it to the finish would already be an achievement on its own. I hope we can show that the car is competitive, especially at Le Mans."

What can you tell us about the Nissan GT-R LM NISMO from a driver's perspective?

"I like the aggressive look of the car, which is a consequence of a well-thought and different design, not seen before at Le Mans. From the very first laps I felt very comfortable. I could feel the very powerful engine and high efficiency of the aerodynamics."

Are you happy to become a Nissan driver?

"I am delighted and very excited to drive for Nissan. I have always looked closely at Nissan and its motorsport programmes, especially at the GT-R activities and of course its road car models. Now to be competing with Nissan in the LM P1 GT-R in the most demanding and prestigious race in the world is something I am very proud of."

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