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SRT Motorsports - Riley Technologies' Past Experiences Help Lead SRT Motorsports Back to Le Mans

June 11, 2013, MOORESVILLE, N.C. - Following Sunday's successful test day, SRT Motorsports and Riley Technologies are taking advantage of the 10-day break until on-track activities resume on Wednesday, June 19, for the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The 90th anniversary of the first event in 1923 is set for June 22-23.

Despite the 10-day dark period of on-track activity, crew members are using the time adjusting to life away from home and the many nuisances associated with traveling overseas. At the same time, the team of engineers are sifting through the valuable data collected Sunday.

Preparation is the key. It started at the Riley Technologies facility in Mooresville, N.C., in February when SRT Motorsports received an invitation from the ACO. Now the focus is on race week with the final tweaks to the race cars and the mental and physical preparation to successfully handle the 40 straight hours the team faces during the race weekend.

Race week activities kick into high gear Sunday with a two-day administrative check and scrutineering (inspection) for all 61 entries. Drivers will meet spectators for an autograph session on pit lane Tuesday afternoon. The first of two practices sessions is scheduled for Wednesday.

"We have been here a week and came pretty well prepared so we haven't had too many late nights," said Bill Riley, vice president and chief engineer at Riley Technologies. "The team is doing well.

"Adjusting to Le Mans isn't difficult at all. With the internet, everyone is staying in touch with everyone back home. We are using the same caterer that we use at the long races in the U.S. so there are a lot of familiar faces around the paddock."

Endurance racing is nothing new for Riley Technologies as company-built cars have won the last seven overall championships in the Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona. The passion to win is shared by the 50-plus team members making the trip to France. The only difference is balancing the strains of the 4,000-mile trip and lifestyle of Le Mans.

"We do have a lot endurance experience, championships and wins," he added. "Racing at Le Mans is a bit different. We have raced here several times but it is always a challenge. The Viper is so special and has such a great history, we are hoping all the blood, sweat and tears will pay off."

Preparation, attention to detail and a positive mental attitude are all key attributes that drive the Riley Technologies efforts for Le Mans. The traveling crew is a mixture of first timers and veterans. Riley explained the importance of attitude.

"If you go over there with the attitude that you're not going to have a good time, then you're not going to have a good time," he said.

Riley oversees the two identically-prepared SRT Viper GTS-Rs making their return to the Le Mans stage for the first time since finishing one-two in the GTS (now called LM GTE Pro class) class three consecutive years – 1998-2000.

"It's a huge honor and privilege to be involved in this race in any way, shape or form," Riley said. "And it's a huge honor to represent SRT Motorsports with the return of the Viper."

With the world watching the highly-anticipated return of Viper to the Circuit de la Sarthe stage, Riley's keen eye for detail is evident in the quest to conquer the ultimate test of speed, efficiency and endurance. Le Mans is the focus but there's also attention to the return to competition in the American Le Mans Series (ALMS).

"The biggest challenge is yet to come," Riley added. "The green flag at Lime Rock is 13 days after the checker at Le Mans. We need to ship everything back and prep two cars after a grueling race. The team will get one day off before it starts again."

And so goes the life of a race team.

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