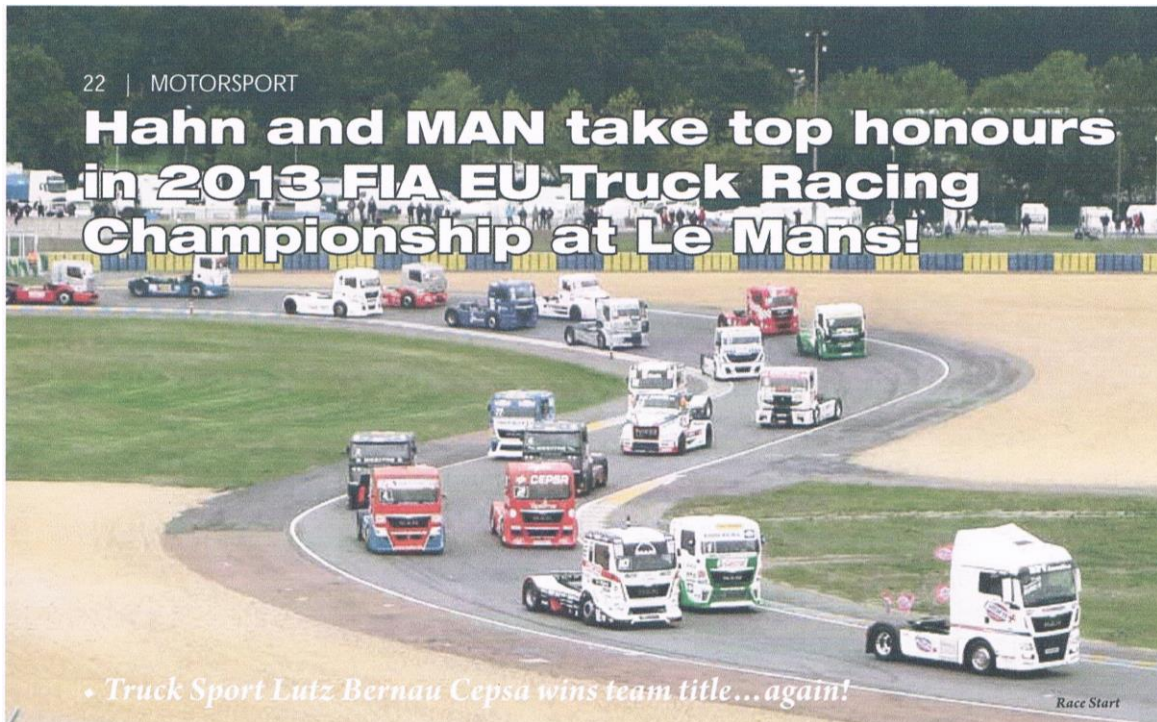


Fleet Transport (Ireland)

November 2013



Racing lines and Line Dancing combined to provide a most entertaining finale to the 2013 FIA European Truck Racing Championship at Le Mans. The world famous endurance racing track played host to an exciting climax to the season, and dovetailed static displays of customised trucks with on-track truck stunts. Over 51,300 attended the full weekend extravaganza where racing trucks slip-slided around the track and country music brought out the Line Dancers on stage. The activities went on well into the night culminating in a big fireworks display.

However, it was nothing like the fireworks that went on earlier that day as the two main contenders for the drivers title - reigning champ Jochen Hahn (Team Castrol MAN)

from Germany and Antonio Albacete (Equipo Cepsa MAN) from Spain were neck-and-neck going into the final four races around the shorter Bugatti Circuit than the one used for the iconic 24 hour race. Just 11 points separated the two racing gladiators in their high powered German chariots. By the end of Race 1 Hahn had closed that gap to a mere four points, with yet another win while Albacete was third. Race 2 went MKR Technology's way after a red flag incident at the first attempt, with Markus Bösiger (CHE) and Adam Lacko (CZE) scoring a memorable 1 - 2 for the partisan Renault Trucks following on home ground. Albacete's Red MAN TGS chalked back two points from Kahn by finishing one place ahead of the green and white MAN TGS in sixth. Track conditions remained greasy and slippery throughout the day due to the damp and misty conditions.

Day 2 was met with great anticipation added to by a low fog and a wet track. Many of us knew that the first race of the day would probably decide the overall winner of the Driver's Championship. Jochen Hahn made his objective quite clear with second in the Superpole qualifying, while Alberto was three rows back. As Hungary's Norbert Kiss (OXO Energy MAN) led the field for the majority of the race, Hahn got the upper hand and took the chequered flag and all the glory for his third title in three years. Albacete in fairness did his utmost and gained three places to finish fourth. The Spaniard got the better of the Bavarian in the final handicap race won by Benedek Major (OXO Energy MAN), taking the final place on the podium, despite a clash with Kiss to secure the Team Championship for Truck Sport Lutz Bernau for the third year-in-a-row.



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One wonders if the third position in the overall team rankings will be enough to maintain Renault Trucks' backing of MKR Technology and into next season. In speaking with lead driver Adam Lacko, the Czech outfit faces uncertainty and he stated clearly that without Renault Trucks' full support, there will be no MKR next year. An engine supply deal like Renault does in Formula 1 will not be enough he said. Adam, who finished 6th in the 2013 Driver Standings stressed that the new race truck was built pre-season to take on the new technology developed by the new Range models from Renault Trucks but the innovations were not available in time to install. "The engine was not strong enough either," he said. "Fourth and fifth on the starting grid is not good enough," emphasised Adam.

If Renault Trucks does not come on board for next season, Adam will look to drive for another team but feels for the MKR team-mates who work so hard over the years. A move to GTR Racing



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would also be considered if all else fails as the Czech driver loves racing on circuits.

Fabien Calvet, FIA Co-ordinator for the EU Truck Racing Championship is, in contrast, confident that Renault Trucks will be on side next year. He has spoken with Bruno Blin, President, Renault Trucks but knows that no decision will be made for a few weeks or more. Ultimately he thinks that the approval to back the MKR team and the series itself as primary sponsor will be made by Renault Trucks' parent the Volvo Group in Sweden. The Frenchman, who is also President of TRO-Truck Racing Organisation (which runs the series) has Plan B in that an independent engine manufacturer such as Cummins or Caterpillar will be deployed to develop and supply sealed race engines to the teams, making the series more competitive, entertaining and at less cost to the teams. "The racers and spectators will want it to continue," he stressed. He added that a British round to follow the two successful hostings at Donington Park is unlikely to return next year, much to the disappointment of the large UK following.



Podium MKR Technology 1-2

## TEAM BUGGYRA 'GO PINK' CAMPAIGN WITH ELLEN LOHR



Ellen Lohr promoting the Go Pink campaign

With former German DTM Touring Car Racer Ellen Lohr moving from the Tankpool 24 Racing Team (Mercedes-Benz) to Red Ice Racing for the latter part of the 2013 FIA EU Truck Racing Championship, the switch brought added attention as it coincided with the Breast Awareness Campaign undertaken by one of the team's main sponsors Meritor. The US headquartered global suppliers of commercial vehicle components headlined a 'Go Pink' campaign throughout the company during October, which transcended down to Ellen and the Red Ice Racing team.

Management and crew members pulled out all the stops to promote the 'Go Pink' project by changing the team colours on Ellen's Buggyra Freightliner Race Truck in a matter of days from the Spanish rounds in Jarama to the final races in Le Mans. This was done by flying body panels back to the Czech Republic for repainting to pink and refitting at the Le Mans pit garage. "The whole team gave 110% effort in supporting the campaign and even to the point of wearing the new team clothing promoting the 'Go Pink' logos," said Ellen. The initiative certainly drew attention to the cause around the Le Mans Circuit and Paddock and all concerned deserve great credit and continued support.



Text: Jarlath Sweeney - editor@fleet.ie Photos: Jarlath Sweeney, Katarzyna Biskupska and MKR Technology www.fleet.ie