



Walero in Le Mans 16-17 June 2018



Walero travels to Le Mans

June 16 -17th 2018

Driver exclusives



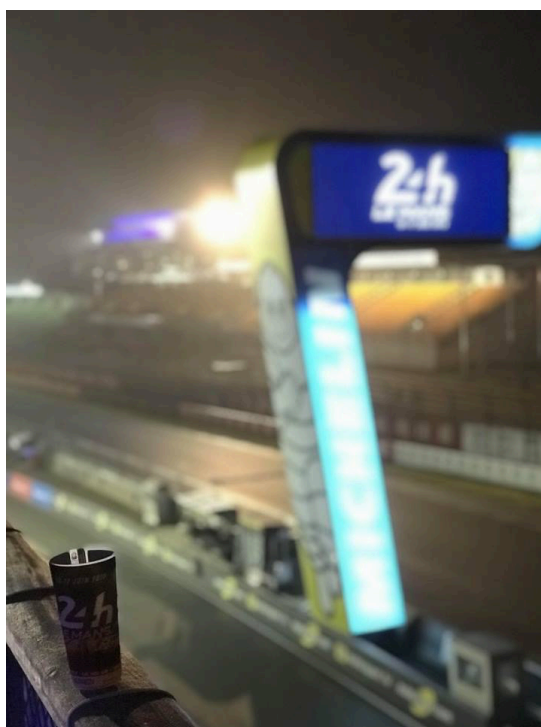
Les Vingt-Quatre Heures Du Mans. It's Thursday 14th June and Team Walero set up their tented base at the famous Tertre Rouge corner with cold beer aplenty ready to support Walero founder Fiona James in her Academy Motorsport Aston Martin GT4. It was practice day for the three yearly Aston Martin Festival support race. Racing the full Le Mans circuit is a bucket list opportunity for any race driver...

The start of our Le Mans journey was exciting watching Fiona improve her lap times gradually on each lap as she learnt the detail of the circuit and the differences between the iZone simulator and the track; thankfully they were minimal. I say we watched Fiona, but it was more watching the screen; the Walero Aston passed us in a flash as Fiona hit speeds of over 170 mph. Tertre Rouge was a great place to watch as the drivers fought to carry a lot of speed onto the long Mulsanne straight: any mistake at Tertre Rouge ruins the lap time as it means it takes longer to hit maximum speed on one of the world's longest straights. Small errors here results in hugely increased lap times...



Post practice is normally Fiona's nemesis as she races better than she qualifies. Fiona did much better than she expected, qualifying 10th in her class out of 24! What made it more satisfying was the fact she qualified ahead of the likes of ex F1 driver, Martin Brundle, track cycling star come race driver Sir Chris Hoy and TV baking sensation Paul Hollywood as well as some seasoned pro's.

There was no track time on the Friday which meant we could explore the town. The picture below was taken from our hidden little gem spot - well, at least we thought it was hidden but it turned out it was a bar open to all. Although, as it wasn't the night of the main event it wasn't too crowded, meaning we could get some pretty cool pictures of 'Team Walero' on the town!





WALERO


GULF RACING

BEN BARKER
BB


FIA WORLD ENDURANCE
CHAMPIONSHIP



Walero Ambassador

16th-17th June 2018

Insight into Le Mans 24hours

Have you ever wondered what must go on in a drivers mind ahead of the most iconic race in history? Their build up, their strategy, their mindset on and off stints and much more.

Well, fortunately we have got that exclusive insight. Walero ambassador, Ben Barker, has just competed in the Le Mans 24hour 2018 with Gulf Racing in the AM class of the World Endurance Championship. Following the race, we got some exclusive inside information from the man himself!

EXCLUSIVE Q & A with Ben Barker

Q: What preparation goes into the build-up of the 24hour race?

A: Le Mans is an event where sufficient preparation is paramount. The team arrived at the track three weeks in advance of the event to prep the car, set the garage up and run the pre event test. This build up puts even more enthuses and pressure on the 24hr race itself; finishing this event is an achievement let alone winning it.

Q: How did you remain focused in front of the huge audience?

A: 300k people blanket the grass hills and grandstands for the start. The warm up lap i try take the atmosphere in, but full focus is on in my opening stint and not bringing a months hard work to a premature end! Leading my class and setting a new class lap record is a notable credit i can take away with me; winning the Le Mans 24hour event is still my number one on my priority list!

Q: What is it you like most about this track?

A: Atmosphere here is authentic and unique, something i would imagine has not changed much since the first Le Mans. Fans go for the sounds, speed and emotion. The team is here to win; it is a race that is not lacking character.

Q: How do you stay fully focused and how does our clothing help?

A: I rest when I can, adrenalin is something the whole team are not short of, so sleep is minimal. Luckily i have a tasty coffee sponsor (Sacred) in which I shot half a dozen espresso's! Walero not only does the job inside the car when temperatures get peaky, it also keeps me relaxed and comfortable pre stint with their incredibly soft materials. The fact it reduces perspiration is very valuable during a 24hour race; it just means i can be comfortable and not have to worry about changing.



Ben Barker - Walero Ambassador



WALERO



ASTON MARTIN



Walero Founder - Driver

Saturday 16th June 2018

Aston Martin Festival - Le Mans

Saturday morning and it was time for the Aston Martin support race before the main event. Fiona James was both excited and nervous even though she competes in the demanding European GT4 Series in an Aston Martin Vantage GT4 – this was the Le Mans circuit on the day the famous 24-hour race will start in a few hours-time with a crowd of 250,000.

It was great to see whilst wandering round the paddocks, not only Fiona, but several other drivers wearing Walero on both the Aston Martin Festival grid, but also in the main event!



The pre-race training at iZone had helped Fiona prepare for the demands of the 8-mile long circuit; it is almost impossible to learn from scratch in 2 one-hour practice sessions. The circuit is very fast with little margin for error; any track with high speeds and many quick turns is very unforgiving. Fiona's preparation had been sensible and her place on the grid was just reward.

Fiona had a great start to the race overtaking several drivers and working her way up to 6th in class within 15 minutes & improving on her qually lap times. Sadly, the likelihood of any further advancement came to an abrupt end due to a ball joint failure as she braked into turn 2. It was a real shame as car was handling well and a podium finish was a real possibility. It was also sad for the Academy team as they had worked really hard to prepare the car as it had raced at Silverstone the week before in the British GT Series.

