

The MKR team heading for a full podium like an unstoppable train

Nogaro – One day, the team is going to make it! The truckers from Židovice were within a hair of turning their dream about a podium full of their pilots into reality. At the fourth event of the European truck racing championship in Nogaro they crossed the finishing line one after another like cars of an express train. Their hope was spoilt in the last race by a single opponent.

The French stop showed how incredibly equal this year's grid is. Moreover, there are very few places for overtaking at the Paul Armagnac track, so it came down to rough starts to decide the races. Indeed, more than often did the pilots reach the chequered flag in the same order as they had roosted for the opening lap. Unfortunately, this meant that MKR men had a narrow miss of the winners' podium on the first racing day. The main race was dominated by Jochen Hahn again, who has been having hard time finding an equal match in this season. Surprisingly, his fellow German Nittel finished right behind him and the bronze was seized by the reigning champion Albacete, who beat our Adam Lacko in the fight for this position, the young pilot coming to the finish on the fourth. *"It's great. I was really close to the podium but I'm happy because my machine gives me the possibility to fight for it,"* said the optimistic Adam Lacko, whose colleagues, Markuses Oestreich and Bösiger recorded points for seventh and eighth spots.

This meant that the handicap race saw both Marcuses in the first row. Nevertheless, the advantage at the start did not turn into joy at the finish. They both lost these exclusive positions at the opening brushes and hard collisions right after the start. Bösiger got out of them easily but was taken over by Vršecký, Albacete and Hahn. Afterwards, all three of them guarded their spots carefully. Adam Lacko secured fifth position and Markus Oestreich finished the race in spite of technical difficulties, collecting points for the overall team ranking. *"The start was hell this time, literally. One moment I couldn't see a thing for all the dust. I only felt how the others were bumping into me. Yet I didn't cause any major damage to the car, which is crucial, and neither Bösi nor me lost precious points that could be missed somewhere else. There's a battle for every rank and the races are getting still more interesting,"* summed up Adam Lacko on the first day in Nogaro.

The second racing day in France brought about substantial improvement, with the Židovice pilots imitating a fast train already in the morning race. Unfortunately, the eye-pleasing red and black ensemble was moved to the back of the pack by four other pilots, the sovereign Jochen Hahn, the current champion Antonio Albacete and surprisingly also Uwe Nittel and David Vršecký. Finally, MKR drivers were forced to accept points for ranks five to seven, finishing in the following order, Oestreich, Bösiger and Lacko. However, thanks to a more equal race the team competition left us with a silver medal. *"Mariezcurrana from Spain was pushing on me from behind the whole time. This guy always has a sudden flare of power and becomes unbeatable. The whole season you haven't even heard about him and now he showed his hidden strength again. While in the first race he was closing up on me from the back, he did something incredible in the afternoon,"* commented the Czech pilot Adam Lacko.

Luck was on the side of the party from north Bohemia in the afternoon handicap race. If it had not been for the Spanish Mariezcurrana, its pilots would have filled the podium. In the end, the



silver went to Adam Lacko, the bronze to Bösiger and Oestreich ended up one spot shy of the winners'podium. The sensational result was highlighted by a win in the team competition plus a silver spot for the juniors'project MKT Team 14 Juniors. *"The weekend had a fantastic ending for us. It felt great to see guys in front of me the whole race. I had to fight off attacks from behind, which was quite unnerving because Albacete had no mercy with us, so I even lost a bit of the plastic, but we managed to hold our positions and could celebrate triumph. Simply, our team made the race for themselves,"* smiled Markus Oestreich happily.

Front positions of the European championship's classification are not changing after the fourth stop. Germany's Jochen Hahn increased his headstart and is followed by the reigning champ Antonio Albacete. The third rank is occupied by Markus Oestreich. Adam Lacko is on the fifth place and Markus Bösiger on the seventh. *"The podium was evading us for a long time in France but the guys made me really happy at the end, it was amazing to see them follow one another, leaving the others behind. I can never grow tired of this look. On the contrary, now we have three weeks to get even better,"* added the team's boss Mario Kress with his typical determination.

The fifth stop of the series is going to take the European truck racing championship to the German track of Nürburgring in less than three weeks (8.-10.7.).

