



Difficult debut for Amàlia Vinyes in the EUROcup Seat León 2014.

Amàlia Vinyes had a very tough weekend in the first meeting of this season's European Seat León competition. It looked good at first, she was 12 in an excellent qualification heat, but she was out of luck in the races. In the first race, she encountered an electronic problem in the Seat León and in the second race, she was knocked out by one of her rivals.

Amàlia was first on the Nurburgring Circuit's track during the free practices (30' + 30'). In the first practice the track was wet and there was fog in some parts of the circuit, so the conditions were not ideal to do the scheduled tests. In view of the situation, the Andorran driver decided to use this first practice to do some km behind the wheel of the new Seat León and to get used to the layout of such a famous circuit among the racing fans. Also described as one of the most difficult circuits by those who have to race.

The conditions were different some hours later, more precisely at 4pm, when the second free practice started. The track was dry, but there was a clear threat of rain and the fog was still a nuisance. This time Amàlia focussed on preparing for the races, the forecast was clear skies for Saturday and Sunday. She was 12th (2'13"181) out of 21 drivers who were racing in the first event of the EURO CUP Seat León.

At the end of the first hours on the Nurburgring circuit, Amália was optimistic, she was positive she had made the most of such a tough day to get to know the circuit and improve the car; nonetheless she regretted: ***It's been a pity to have such dreadful weather. On the first free practice, we started from scratch since we had no previous experience with the León on a wet track. Later in the afternoon, on a dry road, everything has been easier. We have managed a good time, which has placed us half way up the ranking and this makes us look forward to keep improving. There is still a lot to do, we still have some problems with the brakes, but it looks like all the Leóns have the same general handicap. The goal is to find the limit of the car and make it as competitive as possible.***

During the **official practice (30')**, optimism was high in the Andorran driver's team. With a temperature of around 10° and a dry track, the strategy was to warm up the tyres properly and once few competitors were around get the best possible time. From the very first try at a great time, Amàlia took 12th position, but on a lap at the end of the qualifying time she managed to go up one spot in the ranking. Her time was 2'12"075. Here is what she had to say about this last lap: I think I could have done even better, but in one of the complicated zones of the circuit I found more cars than I would have liked. Anyway I am happy with the time; I will start from an awkward position but close to the leaders.

In the **first race (12 laps)**, Vinyes' good streak stopped all of a sudden. She had an excellent start and managed to advance one spot, but on the third lap the Seat León lost power and all the high expectations were lost in that moment.

This was Amalia's comment: ***Suddenly the León couldn't go faster than 60km/h, I asked my team what to do and they said to stop the car when possible, start it again and see what happened. That's what I did and from then on the León was back to its normal performance; the problem was that, having lost some time, all my rivals had overtaken me and I had no chance of improving my position in the ranking. Apparently it's a problem with the youth of the car, five other drivers had the same problem. The solution? As of now we have to wait until tomorrow and see what happens.***

In the **second race (12 laps)**, the situation wasn't better but the reasons were completely different. Amàlia had a great start and when she was overtaking one of her rivals (Jordi Oriola), she was struck on the rear of her León. The rear axle was damaged, the left back wheel was stuck... all in all, the Andorran driver was out of the race just as it started. Amàlia, very angry, couldn't believe what had happened: ***I started so well and suddenly I heard a blow on the rear, the car turned all the way around, so I was facing the rivals that were behind me and then back facing forward again. After the issue from yesterday, I wanted to see if the problem was solved but I had no chance.*** It is worth mentioning that Jordi Oriola was penalized 30" by the sporting stewards for this incident.

The Circuit of Salzburg (Austria) will be the setting for the second race of the EURO CUP Seat León on the 23rd, 24th and 25th of this month of May.

Press service

Results EURO CUP Seat León - Nurburgring.

Race 1			Race 2		
	Driver	Time		Driver	Time
1	Stefano Comini	26'09"222	1	Stian Paulsen	26'26"868
2	Julien Briché	a 0'05"497	2	Manuel Gilaó	a 0'00"926
3	Stian Paulsen	a 0'11"162	3	Fran Rueda	a 0'12"852

15	Amàlia Vinyes	a 1'11"550		Amàlia Vinyes	AB

