



ASTON MARTIN RACING

ASTON MARTIN SETS FASTEST TIME IN FREE PRACTICE AT CATALUNYA

Barcelona, 3 April, 2009. Aston Martin Racing has got its first full season in the premier LMP1 category of the Le Mans Series off to the best possible start by setting the quickest time in the opening free practice session.

Round one of the series gets underway at the Circuit de Catalunya near Barcelona on Sunday, in which the 43 competitors will cover 1000 kilometres of the Spanish track in approximately six hours. The distinctive pair of blue and orange Aston Martin Racing cars took to the Spanish track for the first time this afternoon, for the opening free practice session that lasted an hour and a half.

Stefan Mücke – driving the 007 car – set the quickest time of 1m35.014s at the start of the session, which remained unbeaten.

Aston Martin Racing is entering two cars in the Le Mans Series this year, as well as contesting the legendary Le Mans 24 Hours. The two Aston Martin Racing cars, numbered 007 and 009, experienced no problems during the initial free practice session – which was designed primarily for the drivers to acclimatise themselves to the circuit and work on the set-up for tomorrow's qualifying session and Sunday's race.

The Circuit de Catalunya, which is also the home of the Spanish Grand Prix as well as a popular Formula 1 testing venue, provides a highly-technical challenge to all the teams as it contains a wide variety of slow and high speed corners. A versatile set-up is necessary to cope with the changing demands of the track, but as is always the case in endurance racing, outright speed is not the only important factor.

All six drivers – Jan Charouz (CZ), Tomas Enge (CZ) and Stefan Mücke (DE) in car 007 plus Harold Primat (CH), Miguel Ramos (PT) and Darren Turner (GB) in car 009 – were able to carry out some useful set-up work during the session, held in cool temperatures. Uncertain weather is expected again tomorrow, which means that the Aston Martin Racing team – victorious in the GT1 class at Le Mans last year for the second time – will once more have to be prepared for anything.

Team Principal George Howard-Chappell commented: “The session went very well, and we’re starting to find a good car set-up for the event. It’s very pleasing for us to be at the top of the time sheets but it’s sure to be an extremely close race as some of our competitors are clearly very quick.”

Tomorrow the cars will be back on track for another free practice session between 10:45 and 12:15 before the all-important qualifying session between 15:30 and 15:50. With comparatively little track time before qualifying begins and the possibility of rain, all the drivers will have to think on their feet to underline the potential of the Aston Martin V12-engined LMP1 car. A strong field in the Le Mans Series this year ensures that the competition, in the first of five LMS races this season, is sure to be tight.

Aston Martin is also represented in the GT2 class by the Vantage GT2 of Drayson Racing, driven by Englishmen Paul Drayson and Jonny Cocker. The team spent the session learning the circuit in their first European race, making useful progress during this afternoon’s free practice session.

-ends-

For further information please contact:

Sarah Durose
Motorsport Communications Manager

+44 (0) 7801 265 126
e-mail: sdurose@astonmartin.com

Website:

www.astonmartinracing.com