



ASTON MARTIN  
RACING

### **Aston Martin Racing debuts new LMP1 car at Paul Ricard Test**

Paul Ricard, 9 March 2009. Following weeks of intense preparation Aston Martin Racing ran its new LMP1 cars for the first time at the Le Mans Series test held at the Paul Ricard Circuit in France on 8/9 March.

Car numbers 007 and 009 resplendent in their Gulf Oil International orange and blue livery took to the French circuit on Sunday morning. All six of the team's drivers, Jan Charouz (CZ), Tomas Enge (CZ), Stefan Mücke (DE), Harold Primat (CH), Miguel Ramos (PT) and Darren Turner (GB) got an opportunity to test the new cars.

Members of the public were granted access to the Paul Ricard Test Track for the first time in 10 years and 3,500 spectators arrived on Sunday to view the on-track action from the newly installed grandstands. In total 28 of the 50 cars that will compete in the Le Mans Series took part in the official test with the Aston Martins taking centre stage.

The team was encouraged by the performance and reliability over the course of the test and encountered no significant issues despite the cars having barely turned a wheel prior to the start of the test.

The team suffered a setback on the afternoon of day one when the 007 car suffered an accident with Czech driver Tomas Enge at the wheel. Although the car sustained heavy damage, Enge walked away uninjured from the accident.

Also taking part in the test was Official Partner Team of Aston Martin Racing - Drayson Racing with their No. 87 Aston Martin Vantage GT2. Drivers Paul Drayson and Jonny Cocker used the test to benchmark the off-season improvements the team has made to the V8-powered machine. The results were encouraging as the Vantage GT2 performed well on its new Michelin tyres.

The Le Mans Series consists of five 1,000km races, the first of which is the 1,000km of Catalunya which will take place on 5 April at the Circuit de Catalunya near Barcelona, Spain. The other races take place at Spa in Belgium, at the new Algarve circuit in Portugal and at the Nürburgring in Germany where Aston Martin has its Test Centre facility. The series finale takes place on the team's home turf of Silverstone in the UK.

In addition to the Le Mans Series, Aston Martin Racing will compete in the Le Mans 24 hour race which takes place on 13/14 June 2009.

#### **Quotes**

**George Howard-Chappell Team Principal** "It's a credit to the team that both of our cars have run so reliably after such an intense and tiring build period. For a first test with two brand new cars we have run very successfully. Obviously the accident has set us back to a degree but as always we will recover and we will be in Barcelona with two race-ready cars. I am pleased that the new drivers are getting to grips with the car and are integrating well with the team and the 'old hands' are also performing well."

## **Car 007**

**Jan Charouz** “The first impression of the car is that it looks stunning. I didn’t get to do many laps, just 10, but the car was very stable and quick and we didn’t experience any technical difficulties which was great as it is a completely new car. I’m looking forward to the first race to see how we compare to the competition.”

**Tomas Enge** “Considering how short a time the team had to build up the two cars we were running really well without any major problems. Unfortunately because of my error the test was compromised but prior to the accident the car was good and I believe that we will be even stronger than we were last year.”

**Stefan Mucke** “It was the first time for me in the new LMP1 and the first time it has run on a race track. The aerodynamics have changed quite a lot and I was expecting less down-force with the smaller rear wing but actually the car felt really good and the feeling was very close to that of last year’s entry so I felt at home after only a couple of laps. The team has changed the exhaust system from last season and the engine note from the V12 is fantastic, especially on the long straight here at Paul Ricard. I am looking forward to the first race; it will be interesting to see where we are against the diesel cars. We had a good result at Barcelona in 2008 so I hope we can repeat this and get another podium this year.”

## **Car 009**

**Harold Primat**: “My first test was ok, the car was good out of the box and it was impressive to see that it is running trouble free straight away. The team did a great job of preparing the car. I think the car has got great potential; we tried a few different set-ups finding a good solution for all of the drivers. The aim of the test was to get mileage under our belts, to understand the car and to find ways to improve it which is exactly what we did. My height can cause me trouble as I am pretty tall for a driver but I’m working with the team to improve the comfort.”

**Miguel Ramos**: “The LMP1 feels great, the speed on cornering is great, I’m not yet used to it as I normally drive a GT car but it is getting easier. I am taking everything step by step and I’m trying to understand the car and how it reacts rather than pushing too hard. I’m comparing my lap data with the more experienced drivers and making adjustments each time I drive which means I’m improving every lap. My last lap was my fastest of the two days. The Paul Ricard circuit is really challenging for someone who is just starting out in LMP1 and the g-force is really tough physically.”

**Darren Turner**: “The test has been really good, the car has run like clockwork and it is fitting reward for the guys from Aston Martin Racing who have put so much effort in over the last few weeks that we have managed to complete lots of miles. The main focus right now is to put miles on the new car and to allow me and my team mates to get up to speed. For me it is a big step from the DBR9 to LMP1 but I’m happy that after two days of testing I am starting to feel comfortable and I’m really looking forward to the first race in Barcelona and the rest of the year.”

-ends-

### **For further information please contact:**

Sarah Durose  
Motorsport Communications Manager

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

Web site

[www.astonmartinracing.com](http://www.astonmartinracing.com)