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Drayson Racing Continues March toward Le Mans at Legendary Spa



FRANCORCHAMPS, BELGIUM – Drayson Racing continues its march towards the 24 Hours of Le Mans with a stop at the legendary Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps, “Spa”, on 10 May. The 1000 Km de Spa, round two of the five event Le Mans Series schedule, provides an additional six hours of competition-bred intensity to develop the No. 87 Drayson Racing Aston Martin Vantage GT2 for the team’s Le Mans debut on 13-14 June. Drivers Paul Drayson (London/Gloucestershire, UK) and Jonny Cocker (Guisborough, Yorks, UK) will co-drive the LM GT2 class Aston Martin for the 143 lap contest. The event marks Cocker’s return to Spa and Drayson’s first time on the circuit which winds its way through the Belgium forest.

A legendary event in its own right, the 1000Km/621.3 mile race at Spa harkens back nearly as far, 1954, as the grandfather of all sports car races, the Le Mans 24. Despite multiple facility changes, the Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps, 7.003 Km/4.35 miles in length, remains an iconic track the world over. That fact alone provides additional motivation to the Official Partner Team of Aston Martin Racing (AMR) even as it readies for Le Mans; long the dream of Paul Drayson.

Since the Le Mans Series’ season-opening event in Barcelona, Spain in April, Drayson Racing has put in an overwhelming amount of preparation and testing towards the 77th Annual 24 Heures du Mans. Overall, team manager Dale White (Bozeman, MT, USA) has outlined an intense 34 hours of testing, plus the six hours of racing at Spa to prepare the team and car for Le Mans

25-26 April, Drayson Racing impressed at the official Le Mans Series test on the Bugatti Circuit in France. Tucked within the Circuit des 24, the Bugatti course gave the team its first taste of Le Mans. While far shorter than the full track, which measures 13.629 Km/8.468 miles, Bugatti utilises the front-straightaway of the celebrated course and offers insight to what the week of Le Mans will be like for the first year team. The energy and passion created by the 24 Hour was evident during the test. It was an awe-inspiring time for Drayson and Cocker who have yet to race at Le Mans. Following first impressions the team is eager to return to La Sarthe as the No. 87 lapped within 3/10ths of a second of the class leading Ferrari in the four session event.

More recently, the United Kingdom-based organisation completed a 24 hour test at the Autodromo de Algarve in Portugal. The test, in conjunction with the AMR LMP 1 class factory team, was the first full-length run for the Vantage GT2 and Drayson Racing. The car proved quick for Drayson, Cocker and Le Mans co-driver Marino Franchitti (Edinburgh/London UK) providing the team, AMR and Michelin Tyre engineers vital information on the endurance performance of the front-engine, British sports car.

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Paul Drayson, Driver/Owner: "Spa is among the elite of legendary race courses. It will be one of the highlights of the year. Spa has such a reputation and history and I expect it to live up to its reputation. I have driven down the hill and up into Eau Rouge many times in my head but doing the first lap for real in the Vantage GT2 will be another great moment for me. Our recent testing has further improved my concentration and consistency through the stints. My main objective is to take that progress and build on it during the six hour race. My primary goal for the team at Spa is to improve upon our eighth at Cataluña and to keep the momentum building toward the big race in June."

Jonny Cocker, Driver: "Spa is a fantastic track. The first time I raced there, in the 24 Hour race, it was an amazing experience. I will never forget the first time that I raced down the hill towards Eau Rouge in the dark; pretty awesome! It's important that we really look after the car for the whole weekend. It's a long race and we want to be there at the end. I think you will see a big improvement in the pace of our car. The Le Mans and Algarve tests have been the first time really we have been able to 100 percent concentrate on making the car faster. We have made huge progress as a result and I'm really looking forward to seeing how we stack-up against the other cars. The aim is to finish the race, but I'm really hoping that Spa will be a fresh start for the car in terms of outright pace. A top-five qualifying position would be a great start to the weekend."

Dale White, Team Manager: "After all the testing we have been doing, I can't wait to get back to racing. Overseeing a programme of this nature you worry about how you keep everyone focused. When prepping for Le Mans your mind has to be on that but you have to be able to switch completely and focus 100 percent on Spa when that is the task. We have been able to do that very well. Right now, the energy is building at the right pace. The whole team is at a higher level than I have ever seen us before. Everyone is set to attack at Spa. We won't think about Le Mans again until this race has seen the chequered flag. Our goal right now is to win in Belgium."

To visit the official web site of Drayson Racing, please go to www.draysonracing.com.

To learn more about Aston Martin Racing, please proceed to www.astonmartinracing.com.

For Live Timing and Scoring as well as more on the Le Mans Series visit www.lemans-series.com.

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Digital images and complete team and driver bios available upon request. Please do not publish contact information other than web sites. Thank you.



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