



## 31 July, 2009 Drayson Racing to Grid 8th for 1,000km Algarve Night Race



**PORTIMÃO ALGARVE, PORTUGAL** – Drayson Racing has qualified eighth in LMGT2 class for Saturday night's history making 1000km of Algarve. Jonny Cocker (Guisborough, Yorks, UK) piloted the No. 87 Drayson Racing Aston Martin Vantage GT2 - which he will share with Paul Drayson (London/Gloucestershire, UK) - around Autodromo do Algarve in a time of one minute, 46.636 seconds. The time placed the Official Partner Team of Aston Martin Racing (AMR) securely in the top ten for the first-ever Le Mans Series night race scheduled for a 19:15 (GMT) start tomorrow.

The first professional sports car racing event to be held at the Portimão Algarve circuit will cover 215 laps in no more than six hours and it will do so entirely after sunset. The darkness is welcome news to drivers, crews and spectators who have faced the extremely hot temperatures of the Portuguese coast while visiting the beautiful, new 4.65-Km (2.89-mile) facility. During the heat of the day, despite the air conditioning mandated by Series regulations, cockpit temperatures inside the road car-based V8-powered, British car soared over 40C (104F) adding to the challenge of driving this dynamic course.

While the cooler temperatures of night promise excellent racing and more comfortable working conditions, hidden within the dark is the trial of a new track still unfamiliar to many. Its multiple elevation changes and blind corners will make the multi-class event even more taxing to drivers because of the blackness. The track has taken a traditional approach to night racing with few floodlights on course to help illuminate the way for the drivers. Therefore, the headlamps and skill of the drivers will separate the contenders with the drop of the green flag.

Drayson Racing proved itself a true contender for a podium earlier in the day through one of its best-ever performances with the Aston Martin Vantage GT2. Cocker was fourth quickest in the third session of the weekend after running third for most of the practice. The crew was left to question the old racing adage that new tyres make for quicker lap times when the speed did not translate to the later 20-minute qualifying session which came under cooler conditions on new tyres. However, the race setup is excellent and bodes well for the long stints expected in tomorrow night's race.

Despite the frustration of qualifying, the team's confidence and spirit remain high as both drivers enjoy the track. By virtue of an endurance test held here prior to the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Dale White (Bozeman, MT, USA)-managed operation has extensive night-running at Algarve giving them an additional edge not common for the first-year operation in a league of veterans. This experience could prove pivotal in the final standings at 01:15 Sunday morning.

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### Quotes

**Paul Drayson, Driver/Owner:** "I'm really looking forward to the race tomorrow. I think its going to be a classic. First of its kind, of course, because the LMS has not run a night race before. Just from the night practice last night you really get a sense of how busy it is going to be and how complex the racing. There are so many blind crests and blind corners where traffic is going to be a real issue. In a six hour race there is going to be a real premium on being careful and making sure you don't make any contact with anything. Keep a nice clean race and we could do really well."

**Jonny Cocker, Driver:** "A little bit disappointed in qualifying. We had a really good run earlier in the day in free practice. We were running P3 and just got pipped for P4 but didn't run new tyres. So we were really quite confident that going into qualy we would be able to do a mid- to low-45 [one minute, 45 second lap] which would have seen us top-four, maybe top-three. But, for some reason, bolting on the new tyres actually cost us some time. Very odd and something I had not experienced myself before. We are still looking good for the race. Me and Paul are comfortable with the circuit and we are running well in the dark. It's a very long race and plenty of stuff can happen."

To visit the official web site of Drayson Racing, please go to [www.draysonracing.com](http://www.draysonracing.com).

To learn more about Aston Martin Racing, please proceed to [www.astonmartinracing.com](http://www.astonmartinracing.com).

For more on the Le Mans Series visit [www.lemans-series.com](http://www.lemans-series.com).

Drayson racing supports the Science: So What? So Everything! campaign aimed at raising the profile of science and the part it plays in our day-to-day lives. To find out more visit [sciencesowhat.direct.gov.uk](http://sciencesowhat.direct.gov.uk).

To see up-to-the-minute notes on Drayson Racing, please follow "[DraysonRacing](https://twitter.com/DraysonRacing)" on Twitter.

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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.

**Contact:** Tom Moore, Drayson Racing, VP of Marketing and Communications  
+1-615-778-1614 (office), +1-615-509-5000 (cell),  
[tom.moore@draysonracing.com](mailto:tom.moore@draysonracing.com)





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