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Drayson Racing to Make Le Mans Series Premiere in Spain

BARCELONA, SPAIN – Drayson Racing has committed to a global race schedule in 2009 which will see the Lord and Lady Drayson-owned operation compete in three, international sports car racing series on three continents in the USA, Europe and Asia. Paul Drayson (London/Gloucestershire, UK) and Jonny Cocker (Guisborough, Yorks, UK) opened the race season on 21 March with the 12 Hours of Sebring (Florida) - the first race of the American Le Mans Series – in North America. Sunday, 5 April the Official Partner Team of Aston Martin Racing opens its Le Mans Series GT2 championship campaign at the Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona, Spain. The 1000 Km of Catalunya marks the first time the No. 87 Aston Martin Vantage GT2 Chassis 002 will race in the European-based, five race Le Mans Series and the first time for either driver to compete on the track. The Dale White (Bozeman, MT, USA) managed programme will close the season in China and Japan with the Asian Le Mans Series.

The team's 2009 debut in Sebring showed great promise for both the new Drayson Racing organisation and the updated Aston Martin Vantage GT2. However, an oiling problem cut the team's day four hours short of the chequered flag. The 1000 Km distance on the 4.655 Km/ 2.89 Mile, 13-turn course should be covered in approximately six hours by the four classes of the Le Mans Series.

Testing for the first race stop on the Le Mans Series schedule here in Barcelona has been limited due to off-season preparations and travel. However, the official Le Mans Series test at the Circuit Paul Ricard in early March and the race weekend in Sebring have provided the team strong insight into the gains made by the team and Aston Martin Racing over the winter. The knowledge garnered over the extensive lead-in and eight hours of competition at Sebring in particular has helped team engineer Graham Moore fine tune the V8-powered entry to the Michelin tyres. Understanding of off-season advancements in the powertrain and suspension have also benefited from the extended stay in the United States.

Drayson, the Minister of State for Science and Innovation for the United Kingdom and a member of the House of Lords, has pioneered "green", environmental causes in motorsports since the start of his career. The effort has a high priority on the winning the *Michelin® Green X® Challenge Award* – presented to the team that completes the race distance the quickest while having the smallest impact on the environment – at the Catalunya event. At the time of its retirement at Sebring, the Drayson Racing Aston Martin was running third in the *Michelin® Green X® Challenge* just fractions behind two 'works' entries from the GT1 class.

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Lady Drayson, Owner: "It's been an exciting, and at times nerve-wracking, period since Christmas getting the team set up and running. I was hugely relieved to see it all work so well at Sebring. Now Barcelona is the next important step in our build-up to the Le Mans 24 hours in June. The target in Spain is a good finish; to put all the reliability issues we had last year behind us. If we can have a trouble-free run in the build up and during the race I will be happy."

Paul Drayson, Owner/Driver: "We've made a great start as a new team at the Paul Ricard test and at Sebring. We made a lot of progress in understanding how the car behaves on the new Michelin tyres which is going to be very useful. We are closer to the pace now but we need to work on the car's reliability and I'm hoping that the changes we've made in the run up to Barcelona pay off. With a bit of luck we could have a good result."

Jonny Cocker, Driver:

About his goals for the season: "My personal goal for the Le Mans Series championship is to have the car running at the front of the field. I think the car has showed a lot of potential at the Paul Ricard test and at the Sebring 12 hour race. We are still learning all the time. I think we're all feeling good about the prospect of some podiums and potential pole positions later in the season."

About progress made while in Sebring: "Sebring is a very hard track and the 12 hour race is one of the hardest races around for a car to withstand. If anything is going to test a car to destruction; Sebring will do that for you. We have learnt a huge amount about the car when running on the Michelin tyres. That's required quite a different approach to the setup and it takes a little time to adapt to. I really think we're on the edge of making the next step forward in terms of pace compared to the leading Porsches and Ferraris. Hopefully, that will be at Barcelona."

About learning a new facility: "Three of the circuits in the Le Mans Series championship this year will be new to me. Last year in the ALMS championship each weekend was a new circuit, so I feel I have had plenty of experience of learning new tracks with limited track time. Myself and Paul always work very hard to learn the circuits as much as possible before we even arrive at the event; driving simulators, on-board footage and circuit notes all help. Of course, nothing prepares you like driving the car for real, but once I have had five laps around the track in the race car I will feel comfortable."

Dale White, Team Manager: "We learned a great deal at Sebring. Endurance events have a way of bringing everything to the surface. Between the Paul Ricard test and the American Le Mans Series event at Sebring, we have addressed many critical items that will improve our performance in Barcelona. I feel confident that those areas we have not been able to resolve 100% yet will be improved each race until we have this exactly where Elspeth, Paul and I demand it to be. I think the weekend at Cataluña will move us closer to that and, as a result, move us closer to the front of the grid."



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 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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