



ASTON MARTIN

RACINGLINE

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THREE ASTON MARTIN DBR9S HUNT DOWN MASERATI AT BRNO

DOUBLE PODIUM FOR ASTON MARTIN IN CZECH REPUBLIC

The second round of the FIA GT Championship at the Automotodrom Brno, Czech Republic, provided thrilling entertainment to the end of the three-hour, 500km race, and Aston Martin was in the centre of the action all the way. Andrea Piccini and Jean-Denis Deletraz took their first podium this year when the pair, driving the Phoenix Racing Aston Martin DBR9, crossed the line in second place overall. They were only seconds ahead of Fabrizio Gollin and Fabio Babini, who finished third in their Aston Martin Racing BMS DBR9 to make it a double podium finish for Aston Martin. Gollin had driven a superb final hour to hold off Andrea Bertolini's Maserati MC12 and the Corvette of Dutchman Mike Hezemans, who was forced to retire just five laps from the end when he was hit

by Bertolini's team-mate, Thomas Biagi. Piccini had led the opening stages, and was able to control the gap to the chasing pack at the chequered flag. "At the end of the race I could see the others in my mirror, and my team gave me all the information that I needed," said Piccini. "Everything was under control." Gollin was delighted to have taken third, crossing the line just 1.8 seconds behind the Phoenix Racing DBR9. "Our set-up was not perfect for this race, so it is good to finish third," said Gollin. The RaceAlliance team qualified with hard compound tyres with the intention of completing the race on the same set. Philipp Peter ran fifth in the opening hour but Karl Wendlinger could not continue in the second hour, and slid off the circuit.

IN BRIEF...



ASTON MARTIN RACING BMS CONFIRMED ITS DRIVERS FOR LE MANS

Driver line-ups for the forth-coming Le Mans 24-hours have been finalised prior to the test weekend, which takes place on June 4. The Aston Martin Racing team has confirmed that Tomas Enge and Darren Turner will be joined by Andrea Piccini in the number 007 Aston Martin DBR9. The sister car, number 009, will be driven by Pedro Lamy, Stephane Sarrazin, and 1998 Le Mans winner Stephane Ortelli.

Aston Martin Racing BMS has announced that Fabrizio Gollin and Fabio Babini, who finished on the podium for the second time in two FIA GT Championship races, will share their Aston Martin DBR9 with Christian Pescatori for the Le Mans 24-hours. The team will run a single Aston Martin at the event in classic green with orange highlights (pictured above).

Spanish driver Antonio Garcia will drive the Russian Age Racing Aston Martin DBR9 with Christophe Bouchut and David Brabham at Le Mans. Bouchut and Brabham shared the car at the opening round of the FIA GT Championship at Silverstone on May 7.

The next round of the FIA GT Championship takes place in Oschersleben, Germany, on July 2, the same weekend as the fourth round of the ALMS in Lime Rock. Prior to that, all eyes now turn to France for the Le Mans 24-hours, which takes place on June 17/18, with the pre-race test this weekend.



PICCINI PREPARES TO DRIVE THE PHOENIX RACING DBR9 AT BRNO



CHRISTIAN PESCATORI AND MIGUEL RAMOS TOOK FIFTH OVERALL AFTER AN EARLY SPIN AT BRNO

LE MANS



A 1906 RENAULT ON THE ORIGINAL GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT IN FRANCE

The Automobile Club de l'Ouest celebrates its centenary year in 2006, and has organised the Le Mans 24-hours since 1923.

To mark the occasion the club has organised a field of more than 100 cars to celebrate its centenary, and that of the first ACF Grand Prix which took place in the Sarthe.

On June 10/11, the cars will drive around the very first circuit, a distance of 103.180 kilometres for each lap.

Prior to 1923, the first year of the 24-hour race, the cars raced from Le Mans to Saint-Calais, and then on to La Ferte-Bernard, a triangle of towns which had been used since the first Grand Prix in 1906.

The circuit was shortened to 17.262km in 1923, and Aston Martin's debut at Le Mans, in 1928, was the last time that configuration was used.

The ACO again shortened the track for the 1929 race, giving a new length of 16.340km. Today, in its twelfth configuration, the circuit stands at 13.650km.

Aston Martin has contested 29 of the 73 races held, and 95 of its cars have started the event.

PHOENIX RACING RISES TO FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP CHALLENGE WITH ASTON MARTIN DBR9

Phoenix Racing is new to the FIA GT Championship, but the team's Aston Martin DBR9 has already left its mark, as Andrea Piccini has led both of the opening two races.

The team is based at the Nurburgring, Germany, and was started in 1999 to take part in the German Touring Car Championship.

The team has supported the DTM ever since, and has run other racing programmes around the core series which led to victory in 2000 at the famous Nurburgring 24-hours with Uwe Alzen, Michael Bartels, Alfrid Heger and Bernd Maylander.

Team owner Ernst Moser had planned to buy a DB9 road car, "but I bought one for racing instead," while the team considered its future in the DTM during the winter in 2005.

"I was not sure that the DTM would continue," said Moser. "I had to think about what else I could do. I chose the FIA GT. I like the cars, I like the racing and the plan is to go to Le Mans next year."

The team hopes to extend its relationship with Aston Martin by running a DBRS9 in the VLN series on the Nurburgring Nordschleife. Aston Martin's Chairman and CEO Dr Bez has driven a V8 Vantage in the series, but Moser says; "that is a road car. I want to do a race car and go into competition with the Porsches.

"I want to beat Porsche with the Aston Martin DBRS9, and I think I can do it!"



PHOENIX RACING HAS MADE A BIG IMPRESSION ON FIA GT SERIES REGULARS



PICCINI LEADS THE SALEEN FOR PHOENIX RACING AT BRNO

ASTON MARTIN RACING BMS PREPARES FOR LE MANS



ASTON MARTIN RACING BMS IS LOOKING FORWARD TO LE MANS ON JUNE 17/18

Aston Martin Racing BMS announced that Fabrizio Gollin, Christian Pescatori and Fabio Babini will drive the team's entry at the 2006 Le Mans 24-hours, which takes place on June 17/18. The three Italian drivers will race the team's distinctive green DBR9, with orange highlights and on Pirelli tyres. All three are looking forward to their first experience in a DBR9 at Le Mans when they take part in the test this weekend, June 4. "Last year the Aston Martin was very quick, and BMS has a lot of experience of Le Mans," said Gollin. "Of course, the team's experience is with the Ferrari 550, but after these FIA GT races, we can compare the data between the two. Aston Martin will be, I think, much faster compared with the Ferrari. Last year we were not competitive, and I didn't finish the race. To finish this year is very important for me. I want to finish, and then I can say that I have really done Le Mans! And I think, if we can finish, we can be on the podium. The speed is not important, the important bit is not to have a problem." Babini, who finished sixth overall and won the GT2 class at Le Mans in 2001, has never driven a GT1 car at Le Mans. "It will be a good experience to have a faster car, more horsepower, and I am looking forward to the Le Mans test this Sunday to check the car," said the Italian. "This will be a 24-hour race, not three hours, so everything is different, including the way we approach the race. We will check our position after 20 hours, and then maybe we can push to make up more positions before the end."

CHRISTIAN PESCATORI



ASTON MARTIN RACING BMS DRIVER CHRISTIAN PESCATORI

WHAT DOES ASTON MARTIN MEAN TO YOU?

In Italy Aston Martin is a famous car, but only in the last five or six years because in Italy, you know, it is all Ferrari! The DB9 model has changed things.

WHAT WAS YOUR BEST EVER RACE?

When I won Sebring with Audi. It was my first time racing in the USA, and I liked the mentality, and the car which was the Audi R8. There was not a lot of pressure for the driver, I was pretty relaxed and it was a good race.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE CIRCUIT?

Spa, Le Mans, Suzuka. These three circuits have very fast corners, and now it is rare to have fast corners. The driver is important at these tracks.

HOW DO YOU RELAX AWAY FROM THE TRACK?

I stay with my mechanics, and with my girlfriend. I live around racing cars, but I have a friend who makes red wine which is nice for me after the races!

WHERE IS YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE IN THE WORLD?

Miami is very good, but my favourite city is Brescia where I come from. It is small, near to the beach, near to the mountains, and it is a very nice place.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST AMBITION?

I want to be a very good father, this is very important. My career is only for maybe ten years, and it is more important to be a good father.



PICCINI (LEFT) CHALLENGES FOR THE LEAD AS GOLLIN (RIGHT) AND PETER (FAR RIGHT) LOOK ON

CZECH TRACK YIELDS SECOND AND THIRD FOR ASTON MARTIN

The second round of the FIA GT Championship at Brno, Czech Republic, saw a thrilling battle to the finish with two Aston Martin DBR9s on the overall podium. Andrea Piccini and Jean-Denis Deletraz finished second in their Phoenix Racing Aston Martin DBR9, while Fabrizio Gollin and Fabio Babini crossed the line 1.8 seconds behind, and were less than a second ahead of a Maserati MC12.

Piccini leaped from third position to challenge the pole-sitting Saleen S7R at the first corner. On a damp track the Italian was cautious, and instead successfully passed to take the lead further around the 5.4 mile circuit. "I went carefully, and I was able to pass him at the next corner," said Piccini. "Then he was pushing very hard. A few times we were close to making contact, but it was fair."

The Saleen regained the lead on the 14th lap and led the rest of the way to the flag, crossing the line a minute clear. "It is like a victory for us, because the Saleen was too fast, and it was not possible to beat the Zakspeed team," said Deletraz. Behind, Gollin and Babini had driven an exemplary race, Gollin battling in the opening hour with Maserati and Corvette, never separated by more than a few seconds. "The race was very nice, with a hot fight in the beginning... maybe too much!" said the Italian.

The pair ran a consistent third until Babini took over for the second hour. He passed Deletraz to take second when the Swiss ventured off-line, and picked up some debris on his sticky tyres. "It took three laps to clean them," said the Swiss driver. "Then I ran behind him, and hoped that the team could service the car at the second pit stop faster than BMS could!" The Aston Martin Racing BMS team maintained its advantage, but 17 laps from the end, Piccini passed Gollin to take second position for Phoenix Racing.

Christian Pescatori, who shared the second Aston Martin Racing BMS car with Miguel Ramos, lost time at the start of the race. "During the first hour, I managed to maintain a very good rhythm in my DBR9," said Pescatori. "Unfortunately I was touched by a Maserati, and I spun." The Austrian RaceAlliance team started the race with an ambitious strategy of not changing its Dunlop tyres throughout the three-hour race. Philipp Peter moved up to fifth position in the opening hour, posting competitive lap times, but Karl Wendlinger could not maintain the pace in the second hour, and slid off the circuit after 20 minutes. "I had no grip from the start, especially at the rear," said Wendlinger.

RESULTS

FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME	LAPS
1	Bert/Janis	Saleen S7R	3:00:22.759	88
2	Deletraz/Piccini	Aston Martin DBR9	3:01:23.567	88
3	Gollin/Babini	Aston Martin DBR9	3:01:25.381	88
4	Bartels/Bertolini	Maserati MC12	3:01:26.083	88
5	Pescatori/Ramos	Aston Martin DBR9	3:02:13.485	88
6	Bouchut/Kox	Lamborghini Murcielago	3:01:31.866	87
7	Davies/Biagi	Maserati MC12	3:02:56.572	87
8	Sugden/Alexander	Ferrari 430 GT	3:01:21.212	84
9	Collard/Riccitelli	Porsche GT3 RSR	3:01:21.921	84
10	Bobbi/Melo	Ferrari 430GT	3:01:22.835	84



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