



*3<sup>rd</sup> June 2007*

## **2007 Avon Tyres British GT Championship**

### **Round 5 - Snetterton**

## **Historic Win for Bio Fuelled Aston**

The bio fuelled Aston Martin DBRS9 of Jonny Cocker and Paul Drayson made British motorsport history by winning round 5 of the Avon Tyres British GT Championship. The Aston has become the first bio fuelled car to win a major championship race in the UK.

### **Race**

The drama began even before the race got underway as the pitlane closed while five of the competitors were still in the garages. The Viper of Mike Gardiner (17), the Ferrari of Stephane Daoudi (23), the Porsche of Lee Atkins (4) and the GTC Porsche of Graeme Mundy (54) all lined up at the end of the pitlane and would be starting the race from there. The Viper of Bradley Ellis (6) had got out onto the track in time but a puncture on the out lap forced the Team RPM driver back into the pits where he joined the other four cars at the end of the pitlane. The other car absent from the grid was the Beechdean Ferrari of Andrew Howard as the gearbox problem that had caused them problems earlier returned and the team would be forced to miss the race.

As the pace car came into the pitlane it was the Aston Martin of Paul Drayson in pole position and led the pack away as the race began with the Mosler of Craig Cole getting onto the rear bumper of the Aston with Phil Burton's Ferrari 430 in the mix as well. As the cars entered Riches for the first time there was contact in the pack and Burton's Ferrari and the Team Modena Lamborghini of Adam Jones were delayed as the rest of the field continued.

Drayson was now under pressure from Cole in the Mosler and it wasn't long before the 7-litre American supercar moved into the lead of the heavily fuelled bio-ethanol powered Aston. Behind the battling leaders Tom Alexander was in third place just ahead of the Tech 9 Porsche of Matt Harris which had started back in 11<sup>th</sup>. Further down the field the CiM Ferrari of Stephane Daoudi was making rapid progress after starting in the pitlane and by lap 3 was up to 9<sup>th</sup> and catching the Team RPM Viper of Henry Fletcher.

Further back a battle for the lead of GTC was shaping up as the Porsche of Graeme Mundy, which had also started in the pitlane, was catching the Team Aero Morgan of Steve Hyde at a rapid rate of knots.

Bradley Ellis brought the Team RPM Viper into the pits again with an ECU problem which the team quickly fixed and sent him on his way but with two unscheduled stops, the day certainly wasn't going their way.

Meanwhile Cole was pulling away from Drayson and by lap 11 held a commanding 11 second lead and was opening up the gap by 0.5 seconds per lap. Meanwhile the Ascari of David Jones was moving through the field and passed the Porsche of Matt Harris on

lap 4 and then overtook Tom Alexander a lap later to move into third position. Drayson was able to maintain an 8 second lap over Jones, who was now come under pressure from the other Aston Martin of Guy Harrington, who had also made rapid progress from 13<sup>th</sup> on the grid. Harrington got on the rear bumper of the Ascari and for five laps tried to find a way around but he had to wait until lap 13 before he could move ahead and set off after his Barwell Motorsport teammate.

In the meantime Daoudi in the CiM Ferrari and Jones in the Team Modena Lamborghini had caught up with the leading group, both cars demoting David Jones back to 6<sup>th</sup> place on lap 15 as Daoudi secured 4<sup>th</sup> position and Adam Jones in 5<sup>th</sup> on the Lamborghini's debut.

Daoudi was now about to challenge Harrington for 3<sup>rd</sup>, but the French driver had to be careful as Adam Jones was waiting to pounce if the Ferrari slid wide. It took a lot of effort but Daoudi finally moved ahead of Harrington on lap 22 and was quickly followed by Jones in the Lambo.

Nick Foster brought the RPM Porsche 997 into the pitlane and retired because the car was stuck in 2<sup>nd</sup> gear. He was followed into retirement a few laps later by the Team 4Car Porsche of Lee Atkins, with front end damage from contact somewhere out on circuit.

While Cole maintained a 20 second lead over the number 1 Aston, Drayson was coming under increasing pressure from Daoudi but was defending his position well. So much so, the French driver was forced into a mistake which Jones took advantage of and the Lamborghini moved into a podium position. He then swept past Drayson at Sear, with the Ferrari following suit before the end of the lap.

Adam Jones now had a clear track ahead and stretched the Lamborghini, setting the fastest lap of the race on lap 30, clearly showing the potential of this new car to British GT to all of the other competitors. Such was his pace, Jones was eating into the Mosler's lead and by lap 39 was just 15 seconds adrift.

Phil Burton's VRS Motor Finance Ferrari was once again in the wars. Having suffered body work damage in the first corner encounter, the Ferrari came down the pit straight with smoke pouring from the rear wheel where bodywork was rubbing on the Avon tyre. Burton pitted to fix the problem and taking the opportunity to hand over the car to Adam Wilcox. However he struggled along until lap 50 when the car retired from the race.

On lap 41 the whole race changed as the safety car was deployed to recover some debris on the track. Paul Drayson was one of the first drivers to take advantage of this development and dived into the pits to hand over to Jonny Cocker.

He was followed by most of the leading drivers, but disaster struck for the CiM Ferrari, ending their race. Stephane Daoudi pulled into the pit box and climbed out to allow the car to be refueled. Suddenly there was a flash of flame from the engine bay but with the fire marshals on hand this was quickly extinguished as the Ferrari disappeared in a cloud of dry powder, but it also signaled the end of the race after a superb change from the back of the field.

The race went green again on lap 44 with Guy Harrington leading from David Jones, but both drivers had not yet made their stops. Elliot Cole was now at the wheel of the Eclipse Mosler and was effectively in the lead of the race, with Jonny Cocker now in 4<sup>th</sup> but gaining a second a lap. Harrington and Jones pitted a couple of laps later, rejoining in 5<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively, split by the Tech 9 Porsche, which now had Oliver Bryant in

the driving seat.

Bryant's drive also came to an end after he pitted with an oil leak, but it also ended the race of Matt Griffin in the number 8 Team RPM Porsche, sliding off the track into the gravel at Riches on the oil dropped on the circuit. Then the leading Mosler also slid off the circuit at Riches ending a magnificent drive by the team. Cole recovered the car, rejoining in 4<sup>th</sup> place but a few laps later the Mosler was nose deep in the tyres at Corum after an incident involving the Viper of James Saggars.

As the race entered the final stages Jonny Cocker was now in the lead of the race, with Godfrey Jones in the Team Eurotech- Preci Spark Ascari 5 second behind in 2<sup>nd</sup> and Ben de Zille Butler in number 3 Aston in 3<sup>rd</sup> a further 5 second adrift and this was despite a drive through penalty imposed for Guy Harrington overtaking under the safety car.

The Lamborghini Gallardo, with Rob Wilson now at the wheel, was in 4<sup>th</sup> place but a lap behind the leading trio, with Paul Fenton on course for the best finish of the year for the Moore Racing Viper. However Michael Bentwood, who was right behind Jonny Cocker but a lap down from the leader, was catching Fenton at 3 to 4 seconds a lap. Bentwood finally caught and passed the Viper on Lap 84 to move into 5<sup>th</sup>.

There was also drama in the GTC class battle. Jamie Smyth driving the RSS Performance Porsche was catching the Team Aero Morgan of Keith Ahlers, but would have to go some to pass the leading Morgan before the end of the race. Smyth, who was 27 second adrift on lap 84, was taking huge chunks out of Ahlers lead and he had reduced this to less than 8 seconds by the end of the race. Richard Hollebon in the Richmond Racing Ginetta was lying in 3<sup>rd</sup> place ahead of Jim Bickley in the David Dove Racing Ferrari, but the little Ginetta's race ended on the grass at The Esses, gifting the final podium position to the Ferrari. Hollebon and Marsh were classified 4<sup>th</sup> and gained them 5 championship points but nothing could disguise the disappointment on the faces of the team.

At the front Jonny Cocker took the chequered flag to secure that historic win for a bio fuelled race car. Paul Drayson and Jonny Cocker also become the fifth different driver pairing to win in the five rounds of the 2007 Avon Tyres British GT Championship, underlining the competitiveness of this years series.

The Eurotech - Preci Spark Ascari of Godfrey Jones, with Ben de Zille Butler claiming the third podium on the trot for himself and Guy Harrington in their first season of British GT.

Jonny Cocker and Paul Drayson (34) now lead the British GT Championship by 3 points from Guy Harrington and Ben de Zille Butler (31). David and Godfrey Jones are now tied on 26 points with Tom Alexander and Michael Bentwood.

Rounds 6 & 7 of the Avon Tyres British GT Championship will take place on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit on July 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **ROUND 5 - CLASSIFICATION**

1 1 GT3 Paul DRAYSON / Jonny COCKER Aston Martin DBRS9 2:00:06.839 95 Laps

2 22 GT3 Godfrey JONES / David JONES Ascari KZ1R 2:00:13.287 +6.448

3 3 GT3 Guy HARRINGTON / Ben de ZILLE BUTLER Aston Martin DBRS9 2:00:20.135 +13.296

4 21 GT3 Adam JONES / Rob WILSON Lamborghini Gallardo +1 lap  
5 2 GT3 Tom ALEXANDER / Michael BENTWOOD Aston Martin DBRS9 +2 laps  
6 17 GT3 Mike GARDINER / Paul FENTON Viper Competition Coupe +2 laps  
7 41 GT3 Gunnar JEANNETTE / Eric de DONCKER Ford Mustang +3 laps  
8 50 GTC Steve HYDE / Keith AHLERS Morgan Aero 8 GT +3 laps  
9 54 GTC Graeme MUNDY / Jamie SMYTH Porsche 996 GT3 +3 laps  
10 6 GT3 Bradley ELLIS / Alex MORTIMER Viper Competition Coupe +4 laps  
11 70 GTC David DOVE / Jim BICKLEY Ferrari 360 Modena +6 laps  
12 88 GTC Richard HOLLEBON / Nick MARSH Ginetta G20 GTR +11 laps  
13 5 GT3 Henry FLETCHER / James SAGGERS Viper Competition Coupe +18 laps

#### **NOT CLASSIFIED**

44 GT3 Elliot COLE / Craig COLE Mosler MT900 +27 laps Accident  
8 GT3 Peter BAMFORD / Matt GRIFFIN Porsche 997 GT3 +33 laps Accident  
9 GT3 Matt HARRIS / Oliver BRYANT Porsche 997 GT3 +34 laps Retired  
12 GT3 Phil BURTON / Adam WILCOX Ferrari 430 GT3 +46 laps Retired  
10 GT3 Stephen KEATING / Richard STANTON Ascari KZ1R +49 laps Accident  
23 GT3 Stephane DAOUDI / Hector LESTER Ferrari 430 GT3 + 53 laps Refuelling Fire  
4 GT3 Lee ATKINS / Fergus CAMPBELL Porsche 997 GT3 +74 laps Retired  
7 GT3 Nigel REDWOOD / Nick FOSTER Porsche 997 GT3 +78 laps Retired

#### **FASTEST LAP**

21 GT3 Adam JONES / Rob WILSON Lamborghini Gallardo 1:10.274 99.98 mph 160.90kph  
54 GTC Graeme MUNDY / Jamie SMYTH Porsche 996 GT3 1:13.324 95.82 mph 154.21 kph

*Issued by Motion Works UK Limited on behalf of*

Jeff Carter  
Press & PR Manager  
T: +44 (0) 1327 856024  
M: +44 (0) 7799 404962  
E: jeff@motion-works.co.uk



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