



ASTON MARTIN WINS BRITISH GT CROWN AS FLICK HAIGH MAKES HISTORY

- **V12 Vantage GT3 bows out of British GT with multiple championship titles**
- **Flick Haigh first woman to win the British GT Championship outright**
- **Jonny Adam secures third title and becomes series' most successful driver**
- **TF Sport clinches Team's Championship crown with second position**

Sunday 23 September, Donington Park: Aston Martin drivers Flick Haigh and Jonny Adam clinched the 2018 British GT Championship title at Donington Park in a historic day for the sport.

Haigh became the first woman to be crowned outright British GT champion in a stellar year racing the Aston Martin V12 Vantage GT3 alongside Optimum Motorsport team-mate Adam. Her debut season in the series included the first pole position and victory for a woman in the season-opener at Oulton Park in April, followed by another at Brands Hatch last month.

Having come into Donington with a 27.5-point lead over their nearest rivals, and with two other cars still in title contention, Haigh and Adam needed to secure sixth position or higher to confirm their status as champions. In the end, they brought the car home fourth overall following a tough examination of race-craft under pressure, ensuring that Optimum won a championship in their first year as an Aston Martin Racing partner.

The result also confirmed Adam as the most successful driver in the series' history, with a third title (to add to those he won in 2015 and 2016), and a victory tally of 14 wins in 80 race starts in the domestic series. The 34-year-old Scot is also the only driver to have won the title with three different teams and drivers, though all in the Aston Martin V12 Vantage GT3.

Aston Martin Racing partner team TF Sport claimed the Teams' Championship, and almost the final race victory for the venerable V12 Vantage GT3, which is set to be replaced as Aston Martin's frontline customer programme machine by the new Vantage GT3 in 2019. Works driver Nicki Thiim and Mark Farmer drove brilliantly on the Dane's first visit to Donington. Thiim took the lead halfway through his stint to ensure the 'Old Lady' crossed the line first, but was denied victory by a penalty.

Haigh said: "I had never driven an Aston Martin until the start of this year, but Jonny is incredible and he knows the car inside out. He's helped the team and myself learn the car which was really important, and his work with me in the simulator really brought my driving on. To win when the car is seven years old and being replaced next year is fantastic, and I'm incredibly proud to be part of that story. The thought that a woman had never won the championship hadn't even crossed my mind because I have come up through the levels of motorsport and have always seen women around. It wasn't until Oulton Park that I realised there aren't as many as I thought at this level. I feel as though I have been embraced by the public and the paddock and that I am respected as a driver. That gives me a lot of confidence, and I hope it inspires anyone considering getting in to motorsport because the community really does open arms to women and men. This feels like the start of a journey. I started racing 11 years ago and I always wanted to make something of it, this year has just proved to me that I am with a really good brand and I'm excited about the future."

Adam said: "Flick has done a great job this year. Optimum was a new team to Aston Martin at the beginning of the year, but they believe massively in the brand. To see Flick put in so much effort behind the scenes off-track, and with the level at the front being quite high now, to have achieved this is great. It was a weird last lap because obviously it was potentially my last lap in this car so that was a nice feeling passing the chequered flag knowing we had won the championship with it. I'm very proud to be the most successful driver in the history of the championship and to have done it all with Aston Martin only makes it all the more special"

Aston Martin Racing President David King added: "This is a tremendous result for Flick Haigh, Jonny Adam and Optimum Motorsport. In their first year with the brand, Flick and Optimum have delivered all we could have hoped for, and proved along with all our other customers just how competitive the old V12 Vantage GT3 still is in its seventh and final year of competition. There is not much more to say about Jonny that we didn't already know, but a third title is no less than he deserves. As for the 'Old Lady', we shall miss her, and it is a testament to the durability and

competitiveness of the car that in its final race it finished first on the road, clinched two championships and won six out of nine races this season. The new Vantage GT3 and GT4s have a great deal to live up to.”

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