



## **ASTON MARTIN PREPARES TO RESUME WEC TITLE CHALLENGE WITH EUROPEAN LE MANS ENTRY**

- **Aston Martin Racing enters works Vantage GTE in first two ELMS rounds**
- **Augusto Farfus joins Paul Dalla Lana and Ross Gunn for remainder of WEC**
- **Mathias Lauda returns to the #98 Vantage GTE for ELMS races**
- **Darren Turner to focus on intensive Valkyrie hypercar development**

*Tuesday 7 July 2020, Gaydon.* Aston Martin Racing returns to action this month when it contests the opening rounds of the European Le Mans Series (ELMS) with the Aston Martin Vantage GTE. It will be the first time a works Aston Martin has been on track competitively since the team's victory in the 6 Hours of COTA in February and will act as preparation for the final three rounds of the World Endurance Championship (WEC) season.

Paul Dalla Lana will drive the #98 machine with Mathias Lauda (A) with whom he won the 2017 WEC title, and his regular team-mate Aston Martin Racing works driver Ross Gunn (GB) in the 4 Hours of Le Castellet on 18-19 July. This will also mark the ELMS series debut for the works team with the Vantage GTE. For the 4 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps (8-9 August), the second round of the ELMS, Gunn will make way for BMW works driver Augusto Farfus, a long-time family friend of Dalla Lana's, so he can take his turn to prepare for the WEC races ahead.

Refreshed and ready to race, Dalla Lana, Farfus and Gunn will pilot the #98 car for the remainder of the FIA WEC GTE Am campaign in Spa (15-16 August), the 24 Hours of Le Mans (19-20 September) and Bahrain (14-15 November). Gunn and Dalla Lana currently lie third in the standings, just 6.5 points away from the lead.

Three-time Le Mans class winner Darren Turner meanwhile has been asked to further step up his already significant involvement in the development of Aston Martin's Valkyrie hypercar programme as testing ramps up prior to going on sale in 2021. The Briton's focus will remain on this through 2020, while staying on standby to assist in the GTE and customer racing programmes ahead of a full return next year.

"Like all of us, I've really missed competing on the track and getting the opportunity to put in extra competitive miles in the ELMS is really exciting," said Dalla Lana. "I've been friends with Augusto [Farfus] for a long time, and we've wanted to race together for a while, but it's only now that a break in his programme has allowed us to do this. The ELMS presents a tough challenge and the races are long enough to test our skills and our systems as we prepare to return to WEC. And as we look towards Le Mans and the world championship challenge, I think it gives a good chance to fight at the front. It's going to be fun!"

Aston Martin Racing Managing Director John Gaw: "This is the longest break from active motorsport that we have ever had at Aston Martin Racing but we've used the time wisely to ensure we're in the strongest possible position to resume the WEC season. The ELMS is a strong series where we have historically had good success with our partner teams – in fact, works driver Darren Turner won the series with Beechdean AMR back in 2016 – and it presents exactly the kind of challenge we want to refresh our systems ahead of our WEC return. Paul has chosen to recruit Augusto Farfus to race with him and we look forward to welcoming him into the team."

The 4 Hours of Le Castellet begins at 1100, local time, on Sunday, 19 July.

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