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2008 ASTON MARTIN V8 VANTAGE GT2

2008 Aston Martin V8 Vantage GT2

- Chassis '002', supplied new to Lord Drayson
- Campaigned in the 2009 Le Mans Series by Drayson and Jonny Cocker
- Raced at the 2009 Le Mans 24 Hours
- Recently restored by Pursuit Racing
- Eligible for the Le Mans Classic Legends, plus Peter Auto and MRL series

Aston Martin's 21st-century GT-racing programme has been one of the great success stories of the marque's long and illustrious history. From the DBR9 of 2005 to the current Vantage AMR GT3 Evo, its cars have delivered multiple championship titles and Le Mans class victories.

Developed by Aston Martin Racing – a joint venture between the marque and Prodrive – the Vantage GT2 was a key part of that lineage when it was introduced in 2008. Although it was raced by the works team, it was aimed primarily at private customers who wanted to contest the FIA GT Championship, the American Le Mans Series and its European-based counterpart, and the biggest race of all: the Le Mans 24 Hours.

The Vantage GT2 used a modified, dry-sump, 4.5-litre version of the road car's all-aluminium normally aspirated V8, driving through a sequential gearbox. The bonded aluminium chassis was stiffened by the addition of a roll cage, the extensive use of carbon fibre panels helped reduce weight to 1150kg from the road car's 1600kg, and aerodynamic enhancements included a front splitter, flat floor and rear diffuser.

Including the prototype, only 10 Vantage GT2s were built, with most being sold to privateers. Chassis 001 and 002 were both supplied new to Drayson Racing – the team founded by successful British businessman and politician Paul Drayson. A member of the House of Lords since 2004, he worked for the Ministry of Defence until 2007, when he stepped back to focus on his passion for motor racing.

Drayson Racing campaigned '002' throughout 2009, with Drayson and Cocker in the Le Mans Series in Europe, a schedule that included racing the Aston at great venues such as Spa-Francorchamps, the Nürburgring and Silverstone.

They also tackled the blue-riband Le Mans 24 Hours, where they were joined in '002' by Marino Franchitti. Cocker qualified the car ninth in the GT2 class and they ran as high as seventh in the race itself, but with a little over two hours to go, an electrical problem stranded the car out on the circuit and it was forced into retirement.

Drayson kept both Vantage GT2s – '001' and '002' – after they'd been retired from active service, and in 2022 they were given a year-long restoration by historic-motorsport specialist Pursuit. Drayson's enthusiasm for next-generation technology meant that '002' had been raced in period using E85 bioethanol with a B-specification engine, but it was fitted with the latest Prodrive I-Specification engine during restoration. Comprehensive crack-testing was carried out, the gearbox was rebuilt, and new fuel tanks and plumbing were fitted, but as much as possible of the period livery and original wiring were retained and the original B-specification engine was kept separately.

The restoration was completed in 2023, a time when interest in the great GT racers of the 2000s was really beginning to take off. Now being offered ready to race and with a comprehensive spares package, '002' represents not only a fascinating piece of recent Aston Martin competition history, it's also a highly competitive entry into the Motor Racing Legends Endurance Icons series, Peter Auto's Endurance Racing Legends, and the Le Mans Classic Legends.

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