

CLASSIC DRIVER

Autosport Designs Aston Martin DBRS9s at Road Atlanta 2006



Warm and breezy weather, the exact opposite of the monsoon experienced in Canada at the beginning of September, greeted teams competing in the penultimate 2006 Speed GT World Challenge round.

The practice sessions were uneventful, with both Tom Papadopoulos and Johnny Mowlem in the **Autosport Designs/Sinders Racing Team** DBRS9s continually lapping in the top half and third of the 32-car field. Qualifying turned into a real battle for supremacy amongst the championship contenders and the team's hope of being up in the top half of the grid was sadly not to be realized.

The two cars went out for practice sandwiching a rival car. After two laps Tom had overtaken that car and both he and Johnny decided they would push/pull each other round the track. This was a fine idea for the first two laps with Tom getting an excellent tow down the front straight then Johnny spun in turn seven and Tom had no alternative but to spin in order to try and avoid his team mate.

Well, at least he managed to limit the damage to both cars, his car (#43) had just a scratch on its nose but unfortunately Johnny (car #44) had a gash in the rocker panel (caused by the tow hook of the 43 car) and the passenger side door was hanging off its hinges - nothing some good old fashioned duct tape could not fix!

So it was off out again on flat spotted tyres to see how high up the grid they could get. The team ended up with Tom (#43) in 22nd place and Johnny (#44) in 18th spot. 3.9 seconds covered pole through to the 28th placed car.



Following a torrential downpour after qualifying, race day was absolutely perfect; sunny and warm with a very slight breeze. As the lights turned from red to green, twenty eight cars thundered into turn one with both Johnny (#44) and Tom (#43) gaining one place each as they disappeared out of sight. The race settled into a battle for the lead between the **Cadillac CTS-V**, and the **Dodge SRT Viper**, with the Cadillac eventually coming away with the win after fifty minutes of very hard racing throughout the field with battles being fought between **Chevrolet Corvette C6s**, **Porsche GT3s**, **Mustang Cobras**, **Pontiac GTOs** and of course the **Autosport Designs/Sinders Racing Aston Martin DBRS9s**.

Unfortunately, Johnny Mowlem (#44) lost his clutch on lap two but still managed to finish eleventh overall and Tom Padopoulos made the podium, being awarded the **Hard Charger Award** for gaining the most places during the race, going from 22nd to finishing 12th.

Tom Papadopoulos, team principal and driver said "Another good overall team result which ended with my

award and I am sure that if Johnny had not lost his clutch he would have been higher up the finishing list". Johnny said that, "Losing the clutch so early on in the race was a disappointment but there is very little one can do about it except carry on! Again another great drive for Tom and another good overall performance for the team".



This race, and the final race of the season at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, **Autosport Designs/Sinders Racing** will be carrying decals for two charities. One for a [state-of-the-art children's hospital in Oxford](#), England and the other for [Bridge House](#), a charity for addictions of many types. Bridge House was started in New Orleans in 1957 and has been helping people since then and has been especially active following Hurricane Katrina.

Autosport Designs Racing, Sindere Racing and **Jefferies** will be donating \$20,000.00 between these two charities and would like to see matching donations from the other teams involved in the SCCA Speed World Challenge GT and TC series. They would like these donations to be to the two charities we are supporting - but the important thing is to donate an amount to a charity which can be one of each team's choices.

Autosport Designs/ Sindere Racing would also like to congratulate Johnny for finishing second overall driving the Zytec P1 car in the Petit Le Mans 12 Hour Race over the same weekend.

This was Johnny's first drive of a prototype and what a great result!

2006 Speed GT World Challenge Calendar -

Oct. 19-22 - Monterey Sports Car Championship, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

For the latest news please visit www.world-challenge.com and of course Autosport Designs homepage: www.autosportdesigns.com where you can also view Tom and Barry's extensive inventory of automobiles.

Story: Classic Driver

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