

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Aston Martin V12 Zagatos at the 2011 Nürburgring 24 Hours](#)

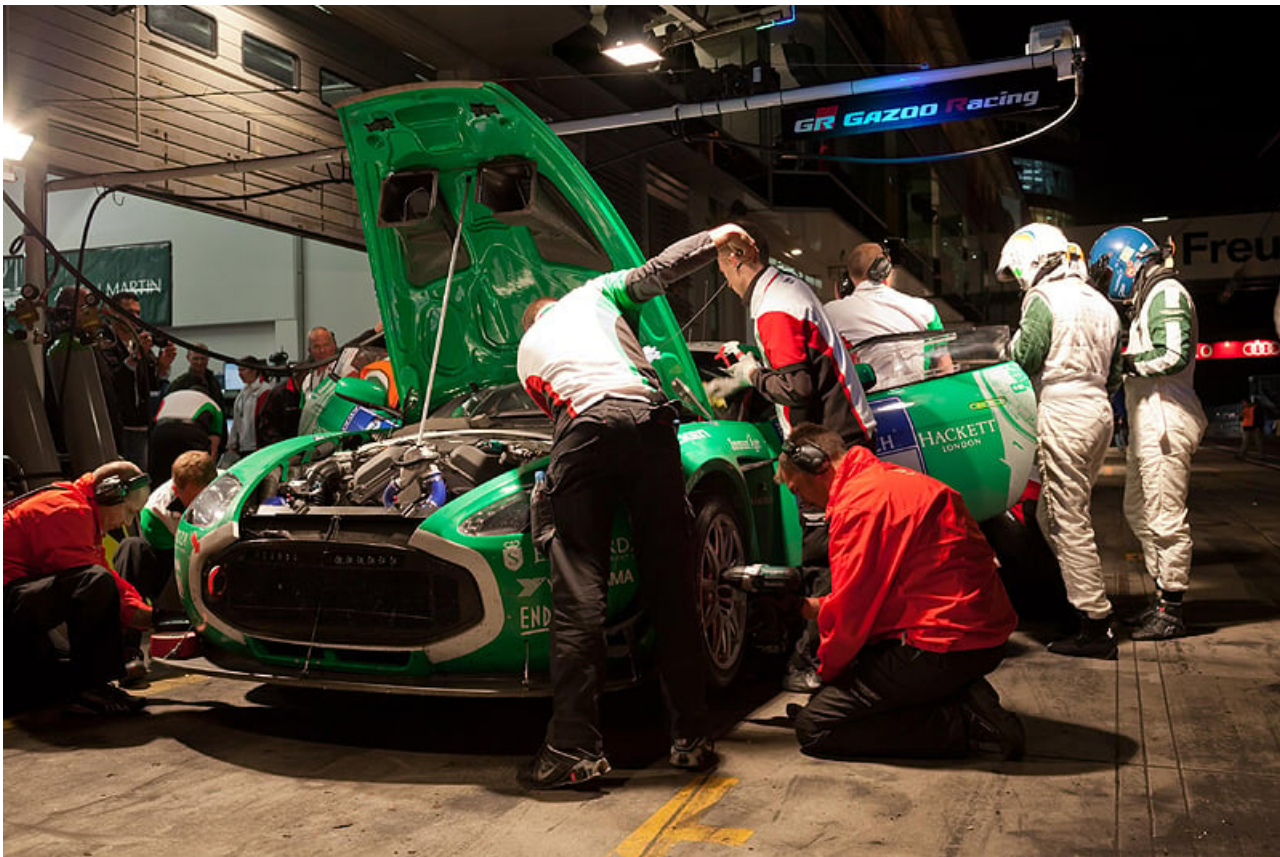


Two Zagato-bodied Astons (officially 'concepts') successfully completed 24 hours of the hardest racing possible at the famous 'Green Hell': the Nürburgring, set deep in the Eifel Mountains.

The V12-powered GTs were joined by a third works-supported Aston, the orange V8 Vantage N24 nicknamed 'Smurf' in honour of its blue livery in 2010 (the Zagatos were 'Zig' for the green car, and 'Zag' the red). 'Zag', before final race preparation, was the same chassis that [won the Design award for Concepts and Prototypes at Villa d'Este in May](#) this year.

The two concepts were running in the SP8 class and featured a semi-professional driver line-up of 'Ring veterans, experienced journalists, the company's Nürburgring Test Centre Director, Wolfgang Schuhbauer and One-77 Chief Engineer Chris Porritt.





Team leader was Aston Martin CEO Dr Ulrich Bez in the Villa d'Este car, while Aston Martin Racing stalwart, Britain's Darren Turner, was to share the orange N24 car in SP10.

Over 24 hours at such a tough circuit, it was inevitable that each car should experience mechanical maladies and accident damage. The green #5 car suffered at the hands of other drivers (twice) and #3, the red 'Zag', needed a new gearbox in the early hours of the morning. The V8 was also hit by another competitor, driver Jürgen Stumpf being forced to nurse the car back to the pits for repairs to its steering.

As the flag fell, the Zagatos finished fifth (#5, 'Zig') and sixth (#3, 'Zag') in the SP8 class. In SP10, fifth place went to the orange N24 car of Darren Turner/Shinichi Katsura/Rob Thomson/Jürgen Stumpf.



Having crossed the line behind the wheel of the red V12 Zagato, Dr. Ulrich Bez commented: "All our cars finished today, and two out of the three customer teams also crossed the line. This includes two brand new cars which we launched only four weeks ago.

"With a little more luck we could have finished higher up the order, but finishing first wasn't the goal, we aimed to have the cars running at the end - I am really pleased with the team who did such a great job keeping the cars running throughout."

The race was won by Lieb/Bernhard/Dumas/Luhr driving a Porsche 911 GT3 RSR. *Text: [Steve Wakefield](#)
Photos: Aston Martin*

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