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Audi quickest in ADAC GT Masters dress rehearsal at Oschersleben

- Christopher Mies posts best time in Audi R8 during testing
- New super sports cars impress in Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
- 2016 ADAC GT Masters will start in ten days' time at same venue

Oschersleben: Dress rehearsal successfully completed – the serious business can now begin. In the official pre-season tests for the ADAC GT Masters at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, teams and drivers had two days to prepare for the first race weekend which will open the 2016 season at the same venue (15th-17th April). Apart from Christopher Mies (26, DEU/Montaplast by Land Motorsport) who was fastest in the Audi R8, the other new supercars were also very impressive. The field showed its highly competitive nature even in testing. One second covered the fastest 21 cars in the final session on Tuesday afternoon.

The list of participants in testing at Oschersleben was very full. 19 of the 20 teams entered turned up for the dress rehearsal with 31 vehicles and 69 drivers in all. Glorious spring weather heralded in the first day of testing at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben. Lap times were really fast right from the very start. In the first of three sessions, newcomer Laurens Vanthoor (24, B/kfzteile24 - APR Motorsport) in the new Audi R8 successfully posted the best lap of the day. "That was a good test," said Vanthoor, who will be lining up for his first season in the ADAC GT Masters in 2016. "I stepped on the gas. At any rate, I feel quite at home in my new team. I won last year's ADAC Zurich 24-hours race at the Nürburgring with Audi, so I know the new car really well. I'm also familiar with the Oschersleben circuit from Formula 3. I'm looking forward to the start of the season."

The rookies really left their mark on the first day of testing. The fastest times were achieved by drivers who will be competing in the ADAC GT Masters for the first time in 2016: Jules Gounon (21, F/Callaway Competition), son of ex-formula racing driver Jean-Marc Gounon, in the new Corvette C7, Marco Bonanomi (31, I/Aust Motorsport) in the Audi R8 and Connor De Philippi (23, USA) in another R8 fielded by Team Montaplast by Land-Motorsport.

Gounon's team-mate and ADAC GT Masters record-breaking race winner Daniel Keilwitz (26, DEU/Callaway Competition) told about his first outing in the Corvette: "The basis is good. The potential is there. However, we still have to sort out one or two teething problems before the season opener. The car was only finally screwed together here just before testing." Whereas the first two sessions were dominated by drivers in the new super sports cars, the more established models came to the fore in the third session on Monday. Ex-Le Mans winner Guy Smith (41, GB) in the Bentley Continental fielded by newly formed Bentley Team ABT, set the second-fastest lap. Marc Gassner (25, DEU) finished third in the Nissan GT-R prepared by MRS GT-Racing.

Oschersleben greeted participants in the ADAC GT Masters tests with a short downpour on the morning of the second day of testing. Times in the first session on wet tarmac were initially well down on those of the previous day. Best time went to Robert Renauer (31, DEU/Precote Herberth Motorsport) in a new Porsche 911. Then the track began to dry out and get considerably faster. Christopher Mies in the Audi R8 secured the fastest time of testing in the second session. His time of 1:27.244 minutes was just under four tenths of a second slower than the fastest qualifying time in the 2015 season opener of the Super Sports Car League at Oschersleben. "It obviously feels good to post best time," said Mies. "But you never know whether the other teams have laid all their cards out on the table or not. We went through our test programme here without any problems and worked on set-up. The advantage for all Audi teams is, of course, that the R8 has already competed in several races during the previous year. I'm hoping for a close field and plenty of excitement in the season opener."

MEDIA INFORMATION

Peter Hovenaars (20, NL/Montaplast by Land Motorsport), who drives another Audi R8, finished at the top of the time sheets in the final test session. The two defending champions, Luca Ludwig (27, DEU) and Sebastian Asch (29, DEU) in the new Mercedes-AMG GT3 fielded by AMG Team Zakspeed, were in the midfield in sessions one to five. Ludwig managed to post third-best time in the final session.

Teams and drivers will be back in Oschersleben in just ten days' time for the first of seven race weekends during the 2016 season, when, for the first time, drivers will be aiming to secure points towards the championship, the team championship, the trophy for amateur drivers and the new Junior Cup for drivers under 25 years.

Top 5, Test Day 1

1. Laurens Vanthoor (kfzteile24 - APR Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.294 mins.
2. Jules Gounon (Callaway Competition, Corvette C7), 1.27.758 mins.
3. Connor De Phillippi (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.940 mins.
4. Marco Bonanomi (Aust Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.985 mins.
5. David Jahn (KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard, Porsche 911), 1.28.042 mins.

Top 5, Test Day 2

1. Christopher Mies (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.244 mins.
2. Markus Winkelhock (Phoenix Racing, Audi R8), 1.27.702 mins.
3. Marc Basseng (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.757 mins.
4. Christopher Haase (Car Collection Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.882 mins.
5. Kelvin van der Linde (Car Collection Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.883 mins.

Top 5, both test days combined

1. Christopher Mies (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.244 mins.
2. Laurens Vanthoor (kfzteile24 - APR Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.294 mins.
3. Markus Winkelhock (Phoenix Racing, Audi R8), 1.27.702 mins.
4. Marc Basseng (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8), 1.27.757 mins.
5. Jules Gounon (Callaway Competition, Corvette C7), 1.27.758 mins.

All ADAC GT Masters races will once again be broadcast live and in full during 2016 by SPORT1 on free-to-air TV. The 2016 ADAC GT Masters season opens on the weekend of April 15th-17th, 2016, in the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben. Tickets are available in advance online at www.adac.de/motorsport from 20 euros upwards.

2016 ADAC GT Masters schedule

15/04/16 - 17/04/16	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
29/04/16 - 01/05/16	Sachsenring
03/06/16 - 05/06/16	Lausitzring (with DTM)
22/07/16 - 24/07/16	Red Bull Ring/Austria
05/08/16 - 07/08/16	Nürburgring
19/08/16 - 21/08/16	Circuit Park Zandvoort/Netherlands
30/09/16 - 02/10/16	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

Further information at: www.adac.de/gt-masters.

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