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### ADAC GT Masters anniversary season about to get underway

- ADAC GT Masters enters its tenth season in 2016
- Oschersleben hosts first of seven race weekends
- Large field of contestants and many innovative features promise thrills galore

Munich: This coming weekend (15th - 17th April) at Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, the ADAC GT Masters enters its tenth season. Fans can look forward to the first of seven race weekends in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands contested by a chock-full line-up of new teams and new supercars. The Saturday/Sunday programme has been fine-tuned to enhance the thrill factor for fans. All of the 2016 ADAC GT Masters races will be broadcast live and in full on the free-to-air TV channel SPORT1.

The starting field for this tenth season is impressive: 19 teams entering more than 30 supercars from eight different manufacturers and a fascinating mix of drivers guarantee a phenomenal curtain-raiser to the anniversary season of the ADAC GT Masters at Oschersleben. Picking favourites for the first two races is by no means an easy task. An analysis of the official preseason tests in Oschersleben suggests that the newcomers of Team Montaplast by Land-Motorsport have a strong hand to play. In three of the six test sessions, the two Audi R8s entered by the Niederdreisbach-based outfit topped the timesheets. Christopher Mies (26, DEU) set the fastest lap over the two days. "Any times posted under test conditions should always be treated with caution," says Mies, who will share one of the brand new Audis with Connor De Phillippi (23, USA). "None of the teams have revealed their hand at this stage. All they have done is work through their programme. Which is of course to the advantage of all the Audi teams for the 2016 season – the R8 has already contested and won races in 2015. At Oschersleben, however, everything is still to play for. I'm looking forward to being part of a large and competitive field. Good qualifying results will be important on such a narrow track in putting you up there with the front-runners."

On paper at least, the two reigning champions from last year, Luca Ludwig (27, DEU) and Sebastian Asch (29, DEU), have to be considered decent prospects for retaining their title. The duo are once again driving for AMG Team Zakspeed and will be sharing a new Mercedes-AMG. It's a case of *déjà vu* for Asch who went into the 2013 season as ADAC GT Masters title holder. He is confident that the upcoming campaign will not fizzle out the same way as three years ago when he finished his title defence in a lowly 18th position: "That year, my team switched manufacturer and I had a new partner. This year we are a close-knit team. Our Mercedes has performed well in the tests. I hope that we will be among the Top Six in the season opener. I always seem to do quite well at Oschersleben."

Defending the team title are Schubert Motorsport. That alone should be sufficient motivation. But the outfit led by team principal Torsten Schubert who are entering the new BMW M6 in 2016 also have a home race to spur them on – their workshop is located within view of the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben. "The races at Oschersleben are of course always very special from our perspective," says Schubert. "The people from roundabout keep their fingers crossed for us." On this first race weekend of 2016, BMW Motorsport Junior Jesse Krohn (25, FIN) shares a cockpit with Martin Tomczyk (34, DEU). The DTM driver is standing in for regular driver Louis Delétraz (19, CH), also a BMW Motorsport Junior, who has to miss out due to a prior engagement. Schubert: "We are especially looking forward to Martin's debut, as we have already worked with him in the ADAC Zurich 24 Hours race at the Nürburgring."

The championship for amateur drivers – previously known as the Gentlemen class and now rebranded as the Trophy – was won last year by Andreas Weishaupt (43, DEU) who is back to

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defend his title in 2016. He shares one of three Bentley Continentals entered by the newly formed Bentley Team ABT with co-driver Jordan Pepper (19, ZA). "It's great to be starting out on Mission Title Defence in the Trophy," says Weishaupt. "But as regards the races at Oschersleben, I'm no more than cautiously optimistic. For a start, it's not really a track on which I do well, and furthermore I still need to get used to the new car. But I have an experienced team backing me up and a highly professional partner in Jordan Pepper. These two factors should at least partially offset the lack of test kilometres. Looking at the entry list, it has to be said that it hasn't got any easier to make your mark as an ambitious amateur, but that's precisely the attraction of the ADAC GT Masters for me."

Among the large pool of drivers without any current title honours, there are some other exciting partnerships to watch out for. At the wheel of one of the new Lamborghini Huracáns entered by HB Racing will be Norbert Siedler (33, DEU) and Jaap van Lagen (38, NL), two experienced GT specialists, both of whom have already notched up ADAC GT Masters race victories in the past. By contrast, the Phoenix Racing Audi R8 will be driven by Markus Pommer (25, DEU), a rookie from Heilbronn, and the veteran Markus Winkelhock (35, DEU). One of three Porsche entrants is KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard managed by World Sports Car Champion and Le Mans winner Timo Bernhard. In their ADAC GT Masters debut season, they will be counting on the duo of David Jahn (25, DEU) and Kévin Estre (27, FRA) to deliver results. Substituting for Estre in the season opener at Oschersleben is Chris van der Drift (30, NZ).

The category of title contenders can be extended to include Laurens Vanthoor (24, B), surprise package of last season and fastest on the first day of testing at Oschersleben, partnered by Florian Stoll (34, DEU) who has the experience of competing in no fewer than 80 ADAC GT Masters races to date. They will be driving the Audi R8 entered by kfzteile24 - Apr Motorsport. Car Collection Motorsport have recruited two former ADAC GT Masters champions to drive their Audi: Christopher Haase (28, DEU), winner in 2007, and Kelvin van der Linde (19, ZA), winner in 2014. Those longstanding contestants, the Callaway Competition team, are bringing along their new Corvette C7 and are lucky enough to have the services of record ADAC GT Masters championship winner Daniel Keilwitz (26, DEU).

### New format, new Junior competition and an even bigger pot of prize money

In the 2016 season, the drivers will be competing for more prize money than ever before, and there will also be a new Junior title up for grabs. At stake in this year's ADAC GT Masters is a pot worth 500,000 euros in cash and other gratuities. In each of the 14 races of the season, the drivers are challenging for prizes worth 25,000 euros. The contestants in the new Junior standings and in the Trophy (formerly Gentlemen class) are competing for tyres from ADAC GT Masters exclusive tyre partner Pirelli for use in the 2017 season. The Junior classification is open to entrants from the silver and bronze driver categories up to the age of 25. Fans can look forward to even more action during the two race days of each weekend this season. The qualifying sessions now take place on Saturday and Sunday, a few hours before the races themselves.

### Exciting support programme at Oschersleben

The busy timetable for the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben includes other ADAC racing series punctuating the action from the ADAC GT Masters. After its successful debut last year, ADAC Formula 4 enters its second season. Brand new on the calendar is the ADAC TCR Germany. This touring car series will be staged on six of the seven race weekends as part of the ADAC GT Masters event package. The season opener also hosts the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland and the Deutsche Tourenwagen Cup (German Touring Car Cup).

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### 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](http://www.adac.de/gt-masters).

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