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Bentleys dominate opening ADAC GT Masters practice at Red Bull Ring

- Bentley Team ABT monopolise positions one to three in first free practice
- Famous names making their ADAC GT Masters debut at the Red Bull Ring
- SPORT1 to show both races live on free-to-air TV

Spielberg: The ADAC GT Masters says a cheery “Servus” from Austria! As the summer holidays get underway, the Red Bull Ring is hosting the fourth of seven Super Sports Car League race weekends. The fastest lap in the first practice session on the spectacular up-hill and down-dale circuit in the Austrian mountain province of Styria was set by series newcomer Marco Holzer (27, DEU, Bentley Team ABT) in a Bentley Continental ahead of two team-mates. SPORT1 will be showing the two races live and in full on free-to-air TV. The broadcast starts on Saturday at its usual time of 1pm CEST, but please note that Sunday’s coverage begins one hour earlier at 12 midday. A livestream of both qualifying sessions and both races is available at www.adac.de/gt-masters.

The new track surface laid earlier this year made itself immediately noticeable, as cars were lapping more than a second faster than even the pole position times from 2015. In the second half of the hour-long session, Christian Engelhart (29, DEU, GRT Grasser Racing Team) driving a Lamborghini Huracán became the first contestant to crack the 1 minute 29 seconds mark. In the closing minutes, this was bested by Bentley Team ABT who have had a change of personnel ahead of the Austrian fixture. On his first ADAC GT Masters outing, Marco Holzer set the fastest lap with a time of 1:28.738 minutes. “The car is running really well,” said Holzer, who has replaced Guy Smith (41, GB) as partner to Trophy titleholder Andreas Weishaupt (43, DEU) in the ABT line-up. “Setting the best time is obviously fantastic, but you don’t get any points for that. We now have to make sure that we get the setup for qualifying as good as we’ve done for free practice.”

Claiming the second and third spots on the timesheets were the two other Bentleys driven by Jordan Pepper (19, ZA)/Daniel Abt (23, DEU) and by Fabian Hamprecht (21, DEU)/Christer Jöns (28, DEU). The Lamborghini of Engelhart and partner Rolf Ineichen (38, CH) placed fourth. Nikolaj Rogivue (20, CH)/Nicolai Sylvest (19, DK, both AMG Team Zakspeed) came fifth in the best of the AMG-Mercedes, followed by Jesse Krohn (25, FIN) and newcomer António Félix da Costa (24, P, both Schubert Motorsport). The BMW DTM driver is making his ADAC GT Masters debut in the Schubert BMW M6. The Corvette C7 of Patrick Assenheimer (24, DEU)/Dominik Schwager (39, DEU, both Callaway Competition) in seventh position was followed by the two driver pairings who are currently battling it out at the top of the table: second-placed Jules Gounon (21, F)/Daniel Keilwitz (26, DEU, both Callaway Competition) in another Corvette just ahead of championship leaders Connor De Phillippi (23, USA)/ Christopher Mies (27, DEU, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) in the best of the Audi R8s. Florian Stoll (35, DEU)/Laurens Vanthoor (25, B, both kfzteile24 APR Motorsport) in another Audi complete the Top Ten.

‘Rookies’ of renown

The ADAC GT Masters welcomes two prominent series newcomers at the Red Bull Ring. As mentioned above, António Félix da Costa (24, P) is stepping into the frame at Schubert Motorsport, while Eric Curran (41, USA, Callaway Competition), who is currently second in the American IMSA sportscar series, has been recruited to drive a Corvette C7. Making their first series appearances of the season are Porsche works driver Kévin Estre (27, F, KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard) in a Porsche 911 and ex-Formula 1 and DTM driver Karl Wendlinger (47, A, Car Collection Motorsport) in a Mercedes Benz SLS AMG.



At GRT Grasser Racing Team, Michele Beretta (21, I) arrives as co-driver to Nicolas Pohler (20, DEU) in a Lamborghini Huracán. Two of the Audi teams also report a change of faces: YACO Racing regular Rahel Frey (30, CH) has to miss out on the Red Bull Ring due to a prior engagement. The new partner for Philip Geipel (29, DEU) is Marc Basseng (37, DEU).

More than just motor racing...

In addition to the two ADAC GT Masters races, spectators travelling to the Red Bull Ring can also enjoy the action provided by various other racing series. ADAC Formula 4 and ADAC TCR Germany are about to commence the second half of their own seasons. Exciting wheel-to-wheel racing is guaranteed in the two single-make cups – the Renault Clio Cup Central Europe and Trofeo Abarth Europe. Fans of the ADAC GT Masters will have several opportunities during the weekend to mingle with their idols, e.g. the Pitwalk (Saturday 12:10 and Sunday 11:10) and the Meet the Drivers session (Saturday 15:45 in front of the ADAC Hospitality Suite). Drivers will be signing autographs and posing for selfies.

Not forgetting those stuck at home

The ADAC GT Masters offers extensive live coverage from the Red Bull Ring. SPORT1 will broadcast the race on Saturday starting at 1pm local time and on Sunday from 12 midday. The dedicated sports channel is showing all of the 2016 ADAC GT Masters on free-to-air TV. Action from the Super Sports Car League can also be watched live on the internet. Both races are shown on SPORT1.de (German commentary) and adac.de/motorsport (English commentary).

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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