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ADAC GT Masters at the Nürburgring: Battle for championship title hotting up

- Championship leaders Jules Gounon & Daniel Keilwitz on top form
- Ten years in the ADAC GT Masters for Nürburgring: Where it all began
- Home races for Land, Zakspeed, Phoenix and Luca Ludwig

Munich: After four of seven race weekends in the 2016 ADAC GT Masters, the driver pairing of Jules Gounon (21, F) & Daniel Keilwitz (26, DEU, both Callaway Competition) has emerged as favourites in the battle for the drivers' title. But anything can happen, as previous races have shown. The Super Sports Car League will be returning to its roots with the next round at the Nürburgring (5th - 7th August). SPORT1 will broadcast both races from the Nürburgring live on Saturday and Sunday at 13:00.

Key facts, Nürburgring, Nürburg, Races 9 and 10 of 14

Track length: 3.629 km (sprint track)

Layout: 11 turns (seven right-, four left-handers) taken in a clockwise direction

Last year's winners, Races 1 + 2: Daniel Dobitsch & Edward Sandström (kfzteile24 MS Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), Florian Stoll & Marc Basseng (kfzteile24 MS Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra)

ADAC GT Masters live on TV from the Nürburgring: SPORT1 will broadcast both races live on Saturday and Sunday. See attachment for programme times

The ADAC GT Masters made its debut in June 2007 with two races under the banner of the ADAC Zurich 24-hour race at the Nürburgring. The spectacular GT3 cars were warmly greeted right from the start by the motor racing scene. Christopher Haase (28, DEU, Car Collection Motorsport) is the only driver in the current line-up who was there ten years ago. "The series has developed in a very positive manner during the intervening years," said the Audi driver. "There are more cars, more manufacturers, and most of the drivers are full-time pros. If you can compete up front in this series, then you know you're good."

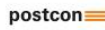
Corvette duo Gounon & Keilwitz are currently out in front this season, 2016. They have a lead of 29 points in the championship standings after taking a third place and a win during the last race weekend at the Red Bull Ring. ADAC GT Masters record race winner Keilwitz is nevertheless inclined to be cautiously optimistic: "Of course, our present situation is very good, for sure, but it's too early to focus exclusively on winning the title just now. One retirement for us and a win for the opposition would wipe out our lead. We simply have to carry on as before, secure a good haul of points and drive without making mistakes. If we're still ahead in Zandvoort on the penultimate race weekend, we'll then focus on the title. The Nürburgring is next up. I feel optimistic about our showing there. I think we'll do well. The weather can have a big influence at the Nürburgring. I hope it stays dry."

Drivers in pursuit of Gounon & Keilwitz will not necessarily find it easy to take points out of them at the Nürburgring, because in the last ten years, their team, Callaway Competition has been the most successful there with four wins in the ADAC GT Masters. What's more, Frenchman Gounon will be on familiar territory. "At last, we're heading to the Nürburgring. This is the only track on the current race calendar that I already know," said the series newcomer. "Things have gone perfectly for us so far, and I think that we'll again have a big part to play there."

Connor De Phillippi (23, USA) and Christopher Mies (27, DEU, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) are still their main rivals in the standings. The two Audi drivers suffered a setback at the most recent round at Red Bull Ring. "We'll do everything we can," said De Phillippi. "The car still feels great. Let's wait and see what the Nürburgring brings."



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MEDIA INFORMATION

With a twelve point deficit, defending champions Sebastian Asch (30, DEU) and Luca Ludwig (27, DEU, both AMG team Zakspeed) are right behind De Phillippi & Mies, waiting for their chance to seize the initiative. The next race meeting will be a very special one for local driver Ludwig. "I feel a close association with the Nürburgring, both to the race track where I practically grew up thanks to my dad's involvement with races there and to the area. I really enjoy driving from my home in Bonn through the forest to the Eifel." Ludwig's outfit, Team AMG Zakspeed and Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, the team of De Phillippi & Mies, also have their headquarters in the nearby area. But this fixture could hardly be more of a home round for Audi team, Phoenix Racing. Their workshop on the business park at the Nürburgring is just three kilometres away from the track. "If we forget something, then it's a five-minute drive to go and fetch it," said team principal Ernst Moser. "Many of our staff are locals, which is nice and also saves costs."

Seven of the eight drivers, who have notched up wins in the past four ADAC GT Masters races at the Nürburgring are also in the 2016 line-up. David Jahn (25, DEU) is one of them. He took his only win in the ADAC GT Masters at the Nürburgring with Sven Barth (35, DEU) in 2014. This year, Jahn is sharing a Porsche 911 with Kévin Estre (27, F). In the first race at the Red Bull Ring, they jointly secured a maiden victory for KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard, who are contesting their first season in the Super Sports Car League during 2016.

"We always knew that we're a strong team and could achieve this success. We're very pleased about it," said Jahn. "So far, we've improved every day that we've driven the car. We're growing closer as a team, but at the same time, we've still got our feet firmly planted on the ground. We're confident that we can take points from the last six races of the season."

Fans wishing to experience the ADAC GT Masters live at the racetrack can purchase tickets for all fixtures for the price of 20 euros, which includes access to the paddock, from www.adac.de/motorsport.

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.

Media contact

ADAC e.V.

Oliver Runschke, Tel: +49 (0) 89 7676 6965, E-mail: oliver.runschke@adac.de
 Kay-Oliver Langendorff, Tel: +49 (0) 89 7676 6936, E-mail: kay.langendorff@adac.de

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