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The Magnificent Seven: Home race for Dutch drivers in ADAC GT Masters at Zandvoort

- Seven Dutchmen will race at Zandvoort in front of home crowd
- Jaap van Lagen is a previous ADAC GT Masters runner-up
- Free access to standing area in dunes with 'dunes ticket'

Munich: The penultimate ADAC GT Masters race weekend of 2016 at Zandvoort (19th - 21st August) is also the last meeting of the season to take place outside of Germany. This fixture on the spectacular roller-coaster of a track set in the middle of the North Sea dunes will also be a home race for seven Dutch drivers, ranging from a championship runner-up to a number of GT3 newcomers. Let's take a closer look at the local favourites.

Dutch drivers have always been firmly established in the ADAC GT Masters. Drivers like Peter Kox, Jaap van Lagen and Jeroen Bleekemolen have in the past secured a total of 21 victories for their country. After Germany, Holland is the most represented country in the series and is even ahead of Austria and Switzerland in the 2016 line-up of the Super Sports Car League.

“I really like the ADAC GT Masters,” said series newcomer and Lamborghini driver, Kelvin Snoeks (28, NL, HB Racing WDS Bau). “There are so many cars from different manufacturers represented on the grid. The fans are enthusiastic. The television partner of the series is very committed, and best of all, the competition is incredibly strong. If a particular circuit doesn't really suit your car, then you'll finish five or maybe six tenths of a second down. That makes a difference of maybe two or three places in qualifying in other series but can easily be ten or twelve positions in the ADAC GT Masters.”

Jaap van Lagen (39, NL) is also signed to Team HB Racing WDS Bau. The man from Ede is contesting his second full season in the 2016 ADAC GT Masters. He was a title contender up until the season finale at Hockenheim in his first season in 2014. What most of the Dutch drivers in the ADAC GT Masters have in common with one exception is that they are lining up for teams who are in their first full season in the series, like HB Racing WDS Bau. Van Lagen supports his engineers and mechanics where he can with his years of experience in GT3 motor racing. “My team-mate Norbert Siedler and I are old hands at racing sports cars. We help the team with tips and tricks, which works well. We were still looking to find the right set-up during the first two race weekends in Oschersleben and at the Sachsenring, but our Lamborghini has been really good to drive in recent fixtures.”

With 46 ADAC GT Masters starts under his belt, Christiaan Frankenhout (34, NL, MRS GT-Racing) is the most experienced Dutchman among them. He pulled off a major coup in his very first full season in 2011. “It was the first season of the new Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3 in the ADAC GT Masters. I achieved a podium in the first race during the fourth race weekend at the Nürburgring along with Andreas Wirth. We then managed to take a win in the second race, the first for Mercedes, the first for my team at the time, HEICO Motorsport, and the first for me personally.” Frankenhout raced initially for Audi team, Car Collection Motorsport, during the initial four race weekends of the 2016 season before switching to Nissan team, MRS GT-Racing, for the Nürburgring weekend.

While he may be a rookie in the ADAC GT Masters, Xavier Maassen (36, NL, Aust Motorsport) has been active in GT3 motor racing since 2008 and has already gained experience in the FIA GT1 world championship, with three appearances in the 24-Hours of Le Mans and in various national championships. “I wanted at all costs to contest an international championship during 2016,” said the Audi driver. “I opted for the ADAC GT Masters. I know of many Dutch companies



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who want to increase their involvement in motor racing in Germany. The ADAC GT Masters is the ideal platform for them with its extremely high profile.”

Corvette driver Loris Hezemans (19, NL, Callaway Competition) and Audi driver Peter Hoevenaars (21, NL, Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) are two of the youngest in the field. For Hoevenaars, however, age plays no role at all in motor sport: “You just have to look at fellow Dutchman Max Verstappen. He became the youngest Formula 1 driver ever aged 17. It's more about your talent and skill, but experience obviously plays a role.” Loris, the son of Dutch racing legend Toine Hezemans is of the same opinion: “Most of my fellow competitors have spent a lot more time racing than I have and have more experience, for sure, but I can see that there's also an advantage in being young. You get even more attention when you secure a great result.”

As for the two young drivers, this is not only their first season in the ADAC GT Masters in 2016 but also their first in a GT3 car. Hoevenaars took a little time to get used to the switch from the Porsche one-make cup car to the Audi R8 prepared by his team, Montaplast by Land-Motorsport. “For example, I had to get used to the electronic driving aids. I got the hang of everything eventually, and once you've done that, it's then all about getting the most out of the car. That can be just as difficult in any vehicle, especially when you're talking about the last few tenths of a second.”

Jeroen den Boer (29, NL, Schubert Motorsport) will be making a very unusual ADAC GT Masters comeback. The Dutchman lined up in the Super Sports Car League in 2012 and 2013, secured the first race win in the series for BMW at Zandvoort in 2012 and then stopped actively competing. He worked as an engineer with Schubert Motorsport during 2014 and 2015 and is with BMW this year, 2016. He's now returning to the fray as a racing driver at Zandvoort and will share Schubert's second BMW M6 with Claudia Hürtgen (44, Germany). “She approached me and asked if I would like to partner her at Zandvoort – I told her yes,” said den Boer. “Of course, technically, I know the new BMW inside out but have never driven it. In any case, it's now been three years since I last drove a GT3 car. I will use the practice sessions mainly at Zandvoort to get used to the car. What is a big advantage is that I know the track really well. Once it had been agreed that I would be racing, a lot of people messaged me to offer their congratulations, which I thought was really great.”

Access to the standing area in the dunes is free with a 'dunes ticket' which can be downloaded at www.cpz.nl. Grandstand tickets, including access to the paddock, are available at www.adac.de/motorsport, starting at 20 euros.

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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