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## Mercedes-AMG first to top timesheets in ADAC GT Masters finale

- Luca Ludwig goes quickest in FP1 at Hockenheim
- Title rivals from Audi and Corvette on level pegging
- Entertaining support programme for the whole family

Hockenheim: The grand finale to the 2016 ADAC GT Masters is underway at Hockenheim. The fastest time in the first free practice session was set by Mercedes man Luca Ludwig (27, DEU, AMG Team Zakspeed). The two main contenders for the title driving an Audi and a Corvette were placed seventh and eighth respectively. SPORT1 will be showing the climax to the closest championship battle in ten years of the Super Sports Car League live on free-to-air TV. Coverage on Saturday and Sunday commences at 13:00 CEST.

The one-hour session, which took place in pleasant late summer temperatures, was used by the teams and drivers to acclimatise themselves to the Hockenheimring and to identify the right setup for their supercars. Luca Ludwig was in impressive form at this early stage of the weekend, setting a fastest lap of 1:39.958 minutes. “Our car felt good, and I managed to put in a near-perfect lap,” said the defending champion who shares the cockpit of his Mercedes-AMG with Sebastian Asch. “But free practice is normally not an accurate yardstick. It’s certainly going to be a lot tighter in qualifying and in the races. Having said that, posting the best time is always a terrific motivational factor. Our objective this weekend is to get a good result. Mathematically, we can still win the championship, but it’s a long shot.”

The Bentley Continental of Fabian Hamprecht (21, DEU) and Christer Jöns (29, DEU, both Bentley Team ABT) went second fastest with a deficit of two and a half tenths of a second. In third place were Nicolai Sylvest (19, DK) and Nikolaj Rogivue (20, CH) in the second of the two Zakspeed Mercedes ahead of Markus Pommer (25, DEU) and Jaap van Lagen (39, NL, both HB Racing WDS Bau). Pommer made the switch from Audi specialists Aust Motorsport to HB Racing WDS Bau just before the season finale and is now on his first competitive outing at the wheel of a Lamborghini Huracán. Fifth fastest in the morning session were Robert Renauer (31, DEU) and Martin Ragginger (28, A, both Precote Herberth Motorsport) in the best of the Porsche 911s followed by sixth-placed Rolf Ineichen (38, CH) and Christian Engelhart (29, DEU, both GRT Grasser Racing Team) in a Lamborghini.

The two contenders for the title were virtually neck-and-neck, separated by just six hundredths of a second. Championship leaders Connor De Phillippi (23, USA) and Christopher Mies (27, DEU, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) booked P7 in their Audi R8 and are two points up in the standings on the second-placed Corvette pairing of Jules Gounon (21, F) and Daniel Keilwitz (27, DEU, both Callaway Competition) who finished eighth. Supercars from seven different manufacturers occupied the first eight places. The Top Ten was completed by Andreas Weishaupt (43, DEU) and Marco Holzer (28, DEU, both Bentley Team ABT) in another Bentley and by David Jahn (25, DEU) and Kévin Estre (27, F, both KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard) in their Porsche.

### Fresh recruits

Some of the teams have arrived with a different driver line-up for the last two races of 2016. Le Mans winner Stéphane Ortelli (46, MC) will partner Christopher Haase (29, DEU) in one of the two Audi R8s prepared by Montaplast by Land-Motorsport as he makes his maiden ADAC GT Masters outing. The driver pairing of DTM champion Martin Tomczyk (34, DEU) and regular squad member Jesse Krohn (26, FIN) in the BMW M6 fielded by Schubert Motorsport is the same as for the season opener. Team Aust Motorsport are using the services of former DTM



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driver Pierre Kaffer (39, DEU) who replaces Marco Bonanomi (31, I) and shares the Audi R8 with Mikaela Åhlin-Kottulinsky (23, S).

Two drivers who are completely new to the team will take their places in the second Aust Audi, namely Steve Feige (37, DEU) and Bas Schothorst (37, NL) who contested the first four race weekends for Nissan team MRS GT-Racing. Car Collection Motorsport also have fresh faces in the cockpit as Marc Basseng (37, DEU) shares the drive in the Audi R8 with ADAC GT Masters rookie Max Edelhoff (20, DEU). Callaway Competition are offering Maximilian Hackländer (26, DEU) and Lucas Mauron (18, CH) the opportunity to notch up their first ADAC GT Masters race kilometres in a Corvette C7.

### Motorsport galore

Five more racing series will ensure plenty of action in addition to the ADAC GT Masters. New champions will also be crowned in ADAC Formula 4 and in the ADAC TCR Germany. Hockenheim also marks the end of the season for the Renault Clio Cup Central Europe and Formula Renault 2.0. The Special Touring Car Trophy has been held under the banner of the ADAC GT Masters for the fourth time this year and is now into its penultimate race weekend.

### Getting up close to your idols

Take note, all you autograph and selfie hunters! There are two occasions on which you can obtain your heart's desire. ADAC GT Masters contestants will take their places in front of the ADAC Hospitality for Meet the Drivers on Saturday at 16:20. On Sunday, fans have a chance to visit each team's garage in turn during the pit walk at 11:50 and to chat with their idols in a relaxed atmosphere.

Fans who want to attend the ADAC GT Masters season finale at Hockenheim in person can buy tickets in advance, starting at just 20 euros, including access to the paddock, at [www.adac.de/motorsport](http://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](http://www.adac.de/gt-masters).

### Media contact

#### ADAC e.V.

Oliver Runschke, Tel: +49 (0) 89 7676 6965, E-mail: [oliver.runschke@adac.de](mailto:oliver.runschke@adac.de)

Kay-Oliver Langendorff, Tel: +49 (0) 89 7676 6936, E-mail: [kay.langendorff@adac.de](mailto:kay.langendorff@adac.de)

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