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ADAC GT Masters returnee Götz: Going all out for race victories right from the start

- Maximilian Götz in ADAC GT Masters comeback
- The 2012 champion talks about his motivation and his aspirations

Munich: The ADAC GT Masters welcomes a former champion back to the grid. Maximilian Götz (31, GER), champion in the 2012 season, has signed for Mercedes-AMG Team HTP Motorsport and will be sharing the cockpit of a Mercedes-AMG with Patrick Assenheimer. The Super Sports Car League gets underway at Motorsport Arena Oschersleben on the weekend of 28th - 30th April.

How does it feel to know that you'll be battling for points in the ADAC GT Masters again in a few weeks?

Maximilian Götz: "The ADAC GT Masters is very close to my heart, so from that perspective I'm glad to be back. In sporting terms, it was a very successful time for me. In 2012, which was only my second full season in the series, Sebastian Asch and I won the drivers' championship together. And in 2013, I also came close to retaining the title with Maximilian Buhk as my co-driver, but unfortunately we had a retirement in the final race and finished third overall."

What was the reasoning behind your decision to return to this competition?

"As a German racing driver, I want to profile myself in the German racing market. The ADAC GT Masters is one of the most popular GT3 racing series ever and therefore offers me an ideal platform. And besides, the best sports car drivers and a lot of interesting teams are in the mix. Last but not least, brand diversity is yet another reason why it's so good to be part of the ADAC GT Masters."

In the 2015 and 2016 seasons, you were competing in the DTM. What's the difference between a DTM car and a GT3 sports car?

"First of all, you need to remember that the two race series are based on completely different concepts and are therefore difficult to compare. In the DTM, I drove alone, whereas in the ADAC GT Masters I share the cockpit with a team-mate. Consequently, the setup on the vehicle is always a compromise solution to ensure that both drivers are satisfied. On the other hand, the team spirit that this engenders is highly motivational. Especially if both drivers are at a similar level of performance, this can again release additional potential. The cars differ too, mainly in their power-to-weight ratio. They are similar in terms of horsepower, but the DTM car is significantly lighter and thus faster. Personally, I like GT3 cars and enjoy driving them."

Last year, the ADAC GT Masters and the DTM held a joint race weekend at the Lausitzring. For you as a DTM contestant, this must have been a very welcome chance to link up with the Super Sports Car League again...

"Most certainly. To the extent that my own schedule permitted, I watched the ADAC GT Masters races. It was especially nice to meet up with so many old acquaintances and catch up with their news at the official press photo session when cars from the DTM, the ADAC GT Masters, ADAC Formula 4 and ADAC TCR Germany were all lined up together. In 2017, they will be having the same double bill event. Only this time, I will be there as an ADAC GT Masters driver."

Your new team HTP Motorsport are also returning to the ADAC GT Masters after a one-year absence. What led up to you signing for them?

"I drove a Mercedes SLS AMG for HTP in the 2014 ADAC GT Masters. In 2015, they entered a Bentley. Last year, they returned to Mercedes. When it became apparent that I would no longer

be in the DTM, I got in touch with HTP and we considered whether a collaboration would make sense, and more specifically in which racing series. It quickly became clear that we would indeed join forces, namely in the ADAC GT Masters. I'd also like to thank my new team-mate, Patrick Assenheimer, who came along with an attractive sponsorship package to get this commitment by HTP to the ADAC GT Masters off the ground."

You drove a Mercedes during your previous time in the ADAC GT Masters, then you spent two years with Mercedes in the DTM, and now you're back in a Mercedes again. What are the ties that bind you to this marque?

"It's just my favourite brand. As a boy, I was a big fan of Bernd Schneider who had phenomenal success in the DTM with Mercedes. I've also driven for Mercedes in Formula 3. It wasn't so much a conscious choice – it wasn't as if other brands were a no-go – but it just seems to have worked out this way, and I'm glad about that. Ultimately, my record of success proves that it was the right choice."

At HTP, you'll be sharing a Mercedes AMG with Patrick Assenheimer. Have you already driven this model?

"Yes. I shared a Mercedes AMG in the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring with Uwe Alzen, Lance David Arnold and Jan Seyffarth. We were in the lead at one point but unfortunately only finished third. So I'm quite familiar with the car and I'm looking forward to contesting the ADAC GT Masters sprint races in it."

Which circuits are you looking forward to most?

"There's Zandvoort for one. I've had good results there in the DTM, and back in 2003 it was where I won the Formula BMW ADAC Masters. It's a simply spectacular track. Because of the wind and sand that blows in from the North Sea, you sometimes find yourself wobbling all over the tarmac rather than driving a controlled race. I also like the Red Bull Ring. It's a fabulous setup there, and there is always a thrilling atmosphere. My Austrian fan club come along for the event."

Which drivers would you like to see lining up for the 2017 ADAC GT Masters?

"Some of the other former DTM drivers. Because the DTM manufacturers are entering only six cars this year instead of the previous eight, several of my former colleagues are now on the market. I'd love to see them in the ADAC GT Masters."

What are your sporting objectives for the 2017 ADAC GT Masters season?

"First and foremost, we want our preparations to go smoothly. The ADAC GT Masters is no picnic. You have your work cut out if you want to be up amongst the front-runners. When we're competing for points from late April onwards, everything has to be just right. But one thing is clear: we're definitely going all out for race victories."

2017 ADAC GT Masters schedule

28/04/17 - 30/04/17	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
19/05/17 - 21/05/17	Lausitzring (with DTM)
09/06/17 - 11/06/17	Red Bull Ring/Austria
21/07/17 - 23/07/17	Circuit Park Zandvoort/Netherlands
04/08/17 - 06/08/17	Nürburgring
15/09/17 - 17/09/17	Sachsenring
22/09/17 - 24/09/17	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

Further information at www.adac.de/gt-masters

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