

21/09/2017 – No 82

Crunch time at Hockenheim: These are the six contenders for the ADAC GT Masters title

- Six drivers from four brands in title fight
- Jules Gounon (Corvette) and Philipp Eng (BMW) have best chance
- Mercedes-AMG and Audi drivers also in title contention

Munich: The season finale of the ADAC GT Masters at Hockenheim this weekend is certain to be full of excitement and drama. Six drivers, racing cars from Corvette, BMW, Mercedes-AMG and Audi are still in with a chance of being crowned champion of the Super Sports Car League. Fifty points in all will be awarded at Hockenheim. The top two drivers, Corvette's Jules Gounon (22, F, Callaway Competition) and BMW driver Philipp Eng (27, A, BMW Team Schnitzer) are separated by just 15 points. Mercedes-AMG and Audi drivers – Sebastian Asch (31, DEU, BWT Mücke Motorsport), Kelvin van der Linde (21, ZA, Aust Motorsport) and last year's champions, Connor De Phillippi (24, USA) & Christopher Mies (28, DEU, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) – still have a slim chance of success at Hockenheim.

Jules Gounon (Callaway Competition, Corvette C7 GT3-R), 131 points:

The championship leader has a cushion of 15 points as he heads to Hockenheim. So far, Gounon has secured two wins and two more podiums in 2017. The Corvette driver has shown impressive consistency in the 12 races held to date and has only failed to score points twice. The Frenchman fought for the title in the final race of the year in his debut season in the ADAC GT Masters but failed to achieve success following a crash. Gounon will line up again at Hockenheim with regular partner Daniel Keilwitz (28, DEU), who had to miss a number of races because of a broken leg. Gounon: "I'm looking forward to the weekend. It's good to come to Hockenheim ahead on points. I was two points down last year on Connor De Phillippi and Christopher Mies, who subsequently became champions. I've still got a score to settle at Hockenheim after the crash in Sunday's race in 2016."

Philipp Eng (BMW Team Schnitzer, BMW M6 GT3), 116 points:

Philipp Eng has also taken points from ten of the twelve races held so far, including four podiums. The Austrian has a 15-point deficit on Gounon. He returned to the ADAC GT Masters this season after a one-year break. He took his only win of the year so far to mark his comeback weekend at Oschersleben. What was remarkable is that this win was the first for the BMW M6 GT3 in the ADAC GT Masters and the first for BMW Team Schnitzer, who are contesting their debut season in the Super Sports Car League in 2017. Eng: "We have every chance of lifting the title with a deficit of just 15 points. Hockenheim, however, is not the best of circuits for our car. The BMW likes high-speed turns, but Hockenheim has a lot of slow sections. We'll have to see how things go. I personally have fond memories of the track. I won my first ever title in a racing car there. If I can take the title, then it will be my fourth in three years and my first with BMW after winning championships in one-make cups. That would be terrific, for sure."

Sebastian Asch (BWT Mücke Motorsport, Mercedes-AMG GT3), 104 points:

Sebastian Asch is 27 points adrift of the front-runner as he travels to Hockenheim. The BWT Mücke Motorsport driver has something in common with Philipp Eng, they both line up for teams competing in the ADAC GT Masters for the first time in 2017. The two-time ADAC GT Masters champion kept his chances of lifting his third title alive with his second win of the season at the Sachsenring last Sunday. Asch: "I've been saying the whole season that I won't give up until there's nothing doing. Of course, a lot of things will have to come together in order for me to make up the 27 points. Hockenheim is one of my absolute favourite tracks and should really suit our Mercedes-AMG GT3. Still, we've seen again and again in the past that the ADAC

GT Masters can produce some amazing upsets in the finale. I only have to think back to 2012 when Maximilian Götz and I won.”

Kelvin van der Linde (Aust Motorsport, Audi R8 LMS), 101 points:

Van der Linde is fighting for the ADAC GT Masters title again for the first time since 2014 when he became the youngest ADAC GT Masters champion ever at the tender age of 18, driving an Audi. He lines up for Aust Motorsport, who are the surprise team of the season. He took the outfit’s maiden victory at the Nürburgring together with Markus Pommer, who will be back in the Audi R8’s cockpit at the weekend after an enforced break due to illness. Van der Linde “My chances of lifting the title are small, being realistic, but we intend to fight for wins and podiums and round off the season with decent results. Actually, Hockenheim doesn’t really suit the Audi, but there have been plenty of upsets so far this season. Why not there as well? I’ve got some good memories of the circuit. It’s where I won the ADAC GT Masters title along with René Rast back in 2014 and achieved a podium in 2015.”

Connor De Phillippi and Christopher Mies (both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8 LMS), 98 points:

Thanks to their second win of the season at the Sachsenring last weekend, last year’s champions still have a small chance of defending their title at Hockenheim. The Audi drivers have achieved two more podiums as well. However, in contrast to last year, when consistency was the cornerstone of their title win, the two of them have had to cope with the pressure of failing to score points four times this year. De Phillippi: The battle for the title is not over yet. We’ll fight until the final lap. Hockenheim is not an Audi circuit. However, we’ll test again on Thursday and try out one or two things to maximize performance. We must score as many points as possible by being well prepared and having an intelligent strategy. You never know what might happen. If it rains, then that will greatly improve our chances.”

ADAC GT Masters calendar for 2017

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|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 28/04/17 - 30/04/17 | Motorsport Arena Oschersleben |
| 19/05/17 - 21/05/2017 | Lausitzring (with DTM) |
| 09/06/17 - 11/06/17 | Red Bull Ring/Austria |
| 21/07/17 - 23/07/17 | Circuit 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 available from www.adac.de/gt-masters

Media Contact

ADAC eV

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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