

18/08/2018 – No 53

Lamborghini duo Perez Companc and Mapelli win at Zandvoort

- Victory for GRT Grasser pairing in Saturday's ADAC GT Masters race at Zandvoort
- Van der Linde brothers take runner-up spot ahead of team-mates Dennis and Mies
- Pommer and Götz go top in the championship

Zandvoort: The winners of Saturday's ADAC GT Masters race at Zandvoort were Ezequiel Perez Companc (24, RA) and Marco Mapelli (31, ITA, both GRT Grasser Racing Team). The Lamborghini drivers prevailed by the relatively narrow margin of 0.703 seconds over Sheldon van der Linde (19, ZA) and Kelvin van der Linde (22, ZA, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) in an Audi R8 LMS and their third-placed Montaplast team-mates Jake Dennis (24, GB) and Christopher Mies (29, GER). "I am very happy about this victory," said pole-sitter and race winner Perez Companc. "The race was very tough, as our pursuers put us under constant pressure. The fans saw a lot of wheel-to-wheel action today."

Key facts, Circuit Zandvoort, Zandvoort, Round 9 of 14

Length of track: 4,307 metres

Weather: 22 °C, cloudy

Pole position: Ezequiel Perez Companc (GRT Grasser Racing Team, Lamborghini Huracán GT3), 1:35.768 mins

Winners: Ezequiel Perez Companc and Marco Mapelli (GRT Grasser Racing Team, Lamborghini Huracán GT3)

Fastest race lap: Ezequiel Perez Companc (GRT Grasser Racing Team, Lamborghini Huracán GT3), 1:37.615 mins

Team-mates collide in battle for first place

The start to Saturday's race at Zandvoort was fast and furious. Pole-sitter Ezequiel Perez Companc stayed ahead as he got away off the line, but Mirko Bortolotti (28, ITA, ORANGE1 by GRT Grasser), who had qualified second on the grid in the sister car, overtook the Argentinean on the exit from Turn 2. However, the two Huracán GT3s made contact with one another just two corners later. Perez Companc reclaimed the lead as Bortolotti spun off the track. The safety car was deployed for three laps. Perez Companc then defended P1 against the two Montaplast by Land-Motorsport Audis which stayed hot on his heels until the compulsory pit stop and change of drivers, after which the Lamborghini remained out in front. Marco Mapelli, making his first appearance in the 2018 ADAC GT Masters at Zandvoort, then secured the win at the finish line. After the Lausitzring in 2017, this was Perez Companc's second victory in the series and also his second in the Pirelli Junior class, while partner Mapelli claimed a maiden win in the series.

Audi drivers Sheldon and Kelvin van der Linde finished second after pitting sooner than team-mates Jake Dennis and Christopher Mies, who dropped to P3 after switching drivers. For the van der Linde brothers, this was their second podium finish of the season after their win on the opening weekend at Oschersleben. It was the first podium finish of the 2018 campaign for their team-mates.

Fourth place went to another pair of Audi drivers, Mike David Ortmann (18, GER) and Markus Winkelhock (38, GER, both BWT Mücke Motorsport). They were followed home by Max Hofer (19, AUT) and Philip Ellis (25, GB, both Phoenix Racing), also in an Audi. The eight points for sixth place were enough to give Mercedes-AMG drivers Markus Pommer (27, GER) and Maximilian Götz (32, GER, both Mann-Filter Team HTP Motorsport) the lead in the championship. The Corvette pairing of Marvin Kirchhöfer (24, GER) and Daniel Keilwitz (29, GER,

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both Callaway Competition), who had occupied the top spot until this point, came away empty-handed in P17.

Timo Scheider (39, GER) and Mikkel Jensen (23, DK, both BMW Team Schnitzer) finished seventh in the best-placed BMW M6 GT3. Florian Spengler (30, GER) and Dries Vanthoor (20, BEL) made a strong charge up the field behind them in the Audi R8 LMS to finish eighth from 19th on the grid. This was the best result so far for Team EFP by TECE, who are contesting the ADAC GT Masters for the first time this season.

Pirelli Trophy winner Rolf Ineichen (40, CH) and Christian Engelhart (31, GER, both GRT Grasser Racing Team) were ninth in their Lamborghini. Audi drivers Ricardo Feller (18, CH) and Christopher Haase (30, GER, both BWT Mücke Motorsport), who started from 24th on the grid, completed the Top Ten.

Comments from the winners

Ezequiel Perez Companc (GRT Grasser Racing Team, Lamborghini Huracán GT3): “It was a very tough race. I had a good stint, after which Marco brought the victory home in an assured manner despite pressure from behind. The collision with Mirko was unfortunate and is something that should not happen between team-mates. We will sort this out within the team.”

Marco Mapelli (GRT Grasser Racing Team, Lamborghini Huracán GT3): “The team did a great job and gave us a great car. We were already very fast in qualifying, and we succeeded in maintaining that pace in the race, even though we had to watch our tyres carefully towards the end. I’m feeling very happy.”

Calendar for the 2018 ADAC GT Masters

13/04/18 – 15/04/18	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
27/04/18 – 29/04/18	Autodrom Most (CZ)
08/06/18 – 10/06/18	Red Bull Ring (A)
03/08/18 – 05/08/18	Nürburgring
17/08/18 – 19/08/18	Circuit Zandvoort (NL)
07/09/18 – 09/09/18	Sachsenring
21/09/18 – 23/09/18	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

Further information can be found at www.adac.de/gt-masters

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