

09/09/2018 – No 60

## **Audi drivers Erhart and Kaffer spring surprise victory**

- Maiden ADAC GT Masters win for the pairing in Sunday's race at the Sachsenring
- Podium an all-Audi affair
- Porsche partnership of Renauer and Jaminet advance to top of championship table

Hohenstein-Ernstthal: There were two surprise winners at the Sachsenring on Sunday, as the championship took yet another twist ahead of the grand finale at Hockenheim in two weeks' time. The Audi duo of Elia Erhart (30, GER) and Pierre Kaffer (41, GER, both EFP by TECE) exploited one of many safety car deployments in Sunday's race to make a tactically well-timed pit stop and claim a maiden ADAC GT Masters victory. With Sheldon van der Linde (19, ZA) and Kelvin van der Linde (22, ZA, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) in the runner-up spot and Jeffrey Schmidt (24, CH) and Stefan Mücke (36, Berlin, both BWT Mücke Motorsport) finishing third, the podium ceremony was monopolised by Audi R8 LMS drivers. Meanwhile, fourth place for the Porsche partnership of Robert Renauer (33, GER) and Mathieu Jaminet (23, FRA, both Precote Herberth Motorsport) was enough to take them to the top of the championship table, with only one more event remaining on the calendar. "Magnificent," said a jubilant Erhart. "I'm actually speechless. It was such a tough fight towards the end. It became clear to me that racing is all about what's going on in your head, and my head really wanted to win."

### **Key facts Sachsenring, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, Round 12 of 14**

**Length of track:** 3,645 metres

**Weather:** 15° C, slightly cloudy

**Pole position:** Klaus Bachler (KÜS Team75 Bernhard, Porsche 911 GT3 R), 1:18.224 mins

**Winners:** Elia Erhart and Pierre Kaffer (EFP by TECE, Audi R8 LMS)

**Fastest race lap:** Klaus Bachler (KÜS Team75 Bernhard, Porsche 911 GT3 R), 1:20.647 mins

**Spectators:** 20,000+ over the whole weekend

### **Pole sitter Bachler leads for first half of race**

Porsche driver Klaus Bachler (27, AUT, KÜS Team75 Bernhard) booked the prime starting position in qualifying and went on to defend his lead at the start. Behind him, several cars collided in the second turn, causing the race to be red-flagged. One of them was the Mercedes-AMG of Markus Pommer (27, GER) and Maximilian Götz (32, GER, both Mann-Filter Team HTP), who had gone into the race leading the championship. At the subsequent restart, Bachler reasserted his lead ahead of the Audi driven by Kelvin van der Linde and the Mercedes-AMG of Indy Dontje (25, NL, Mann-Filter Team HTP) and retained it until the driver handover.

The appearance of the safety car to facilitate recovery of the BMW M6 GT3 driven by Jens Klingmann (28, GER, MRS GT-Racing) just as the pit stop window was opening served to mix things up in the field. While almost everyone dashed for the pits to switch drivers before the safety car slowed everything down, Kaffer stayed out on track, took the lead and handed the Audi over to Erhart during the safety car period. And so, the Audi was again out in front after the restart, while Bachler's partner, Adrien de Leener (28, BEL), had dropped back down to seventh place. The Belgian retired shortly thereafter following a collision.

Erhart's pursuers, chief among them Sheldon van der Linde, then put him under considerable pressure. In the closing stages of the race, the 19-year-old South African tried several times to pass the other Audi driver but eventually dropped back. Erhart finally won with a lead of just 0.317 seconds to secure a maiden ADAC GT Masters victory for himself and for Pierre Kaffer who had driven the first stint. It was also a first ever win for EFP by TECE in the series.

The van der Linde brothers came second, as they had done yesterday, thus consolidating fourth place in the standings and keeping their title chances alive ahead of the season finale at Hockenheim in two weeks' time. Sheldon van der Linde also claimed his second win of the weekend in the Pirelli Junior classification, at the same time extending his lead in this particular contest. Third place went to Jeffrey Schmidt and Stefan Mücke in another Audi, albeit entered by BWT Mücke Motorsport.

Fourth over the line were Porsche drivers Robert Renauer and Mathieu Jaminet, who are the new championship leaders with just the season finale left. They were followed home by Saturday's winners, fellow Porsche drivers Timo Bernhard (37, GER) and Kévin Estre (29, FRA, both KÜS Team75 Bernhard).

Indy Dontje and Maximilian Buhk (25, GER, both Mann-Filter Team HTP) were sixth across the finish line after looking to be on course for a podium in the first stint. However, they subsequently received a 30-second penalty for crossing the line at the pit exit and so dropped out of the points. Nicolai Sylvest (21, DK) and Kim-Luis Schramm (21, GER, both Team Zakspeed BKK Mobil Oil Racing) in another Mercedes-AMG GT3 were thus promoted to sixth.

Marvin Kirchhöfer (24, GER) and Daniel Keilwitz (29, GER, both Callaway Competition) went on a strong charge, fighting their way up from 31st on the grid to P7 and thereby picking up six championship points. This means that the two drivers in the Corvette are currently third in the championship with a 17-point deficit and still very much in contention for the title. Completing the Top Ten were Mikkel Jensen (23, DK) and Timo Scheider (39, GER, both BMW Team Schnitzer) in the BMW M6 GT3, the Audi pairing of Oscar Tunjo (22, COL) and Ivan Lukashovich (27, RUS, both Phoenix Racing), and Christopher Mies (29, GER) and Alex Riberas (24, ESP, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport).

The previous championship leaders, Markus Pommer (27, GER) and Maximilian Götz (32, GER, both Mann-Filter Team HTP Motorsport), came away empty-handed, just as they had done on Saturday. Götz, who took the first stint, sustained a puncture in the pile-up on the first corner that caused the race to be temporarily halted. He then found himself at the back of the field for the restart. They ultimately had to settle for P16. The upshot is that Pommer and Götz have now dropped down to second in the championship, four points behind new leaders Renauer and Jaminet.

In the Pirelli Trophy stakes, Remo Lips (35, GER) and Maximilian Hackländer (28, GER, both Aust Motorsport) emerged victorious. Lips has thus extended his lead in this category for amateur drivers.

### Comments from the winners

**Elia Erhart (EFP by TECE, Audi R8 LMS):** "When we managed to take our pit stop during the safety car deployment, I calculated and was actually pretty certain that we would come out well ahead of the Porsche that had led the race up to then. I came under a lot of pressure from Sheldon towards the end, but I concentrated especially hard at those places where he was faster and made sure I always carried a lot of momentum onto the straights. That way, he was unable to outbrake me. It was tough, but everything was fair. Now we intend to celebrate."

**Pierre Kaffer (EFP by TECE, Audi R8 LMS):** "The race was chaotic. We were lucky on the first start and had only minimal contact with one other car. Our car was really good yesterday and also in today's race. Yes, we were lucky with our pit stop during the safety car, but I don't think anyone begrudges us that. Everyone in this series works hard for success, and today we were the lucky ones. Elia came out just ahead of the safety car, and that took us forward. On the final laps of

## MEDIA INFORMATION

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the race, he probably drove the stint of his life. Many thanks to everyone who made this victory possible.”

### 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 (AUT)              |
| 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](http://www.adac.de/gt-masters)

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