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## Champions Niederhauser and van der Linde victorious in finale – Team title for HCB-Rutronik Racing

- Audi duo win Sunday race at the Sachsenring
- HCB-Rutronik Racing add team title to drivers' championship
- Max Hofer in P3 wins 2019 Pirelli Junior trophy

Hohenstein-Ernstthal: It could hardly have been a more clear-cut outcome. Newly crowned champions Patric Niederhauser (27, CH) and Kelvin van der Linde (23, ZA) have now secured the ADAC GT Masters team championship for series newcomers HCB-Rutronik Racing with a comfortable win on the last Sunday of the 2019 campaign. Jimmy Eriksson (28, SWE) and Daniel Keilwitz (30, GER, both Team Zakspeed BKK Mobil Oil Racing) in a Mercedes-AMG GT3 were second. Third place went to Max Hofer (20, AUT) and Christopher Mies (30, GER, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) in another Audi R8 LMS. P3 overall was enough for Hofer to clinch the Pirelli Junior classification for young drivers. "It's great to finish the season with a victory," said Kelvin van der Linde. "The team title is a well-deserved reward for the whole team. Their commitment is reflected in the great successes we have had on the track."

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

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

**Weather:** 20°C, cloudy

**Pole position:** Kelvin van der Linde (HCB-Rutronik Racing, Audi R8 LMS), 1:17.857 mins

**Winners:** Patric Niederhauser and Kelvin van der Linde (HCB-Rutronik Racing, Audi R8 LMS)

**Fastest race lap:** Kelvin van der Linde (HCB-Rutronik Racing, Audi R8 LMS), 1:20.285 mins

**Gate:** 25,000 approx over the weekend

### Niederhauser and van der Linde never under threat

Three Audis dominated the first half of the race. Pole-sitter van der Linde defended his lead at the start followed by fellow Audi drivers Christopher Mies and Frank Stippler. Van der Linde had opened up a gap of almost eight seconds on Mies by the mandatory pit stop. After the driver handover, van der Linde's partner Niederhauser increased the gap to more than ten seconds at times but eased off a little in the closing stages to finally take the chequered flag with a lead of 2.8 seconds. It was the third win of the season for the driver pairing after securing the championship last time out. The 25 points for the win were enough for HCB-Rutronik Racing to comfortably win the team title in their debut season in the ADAC GT Masters. An appeal is still pending, so the final scores in the team standings remain provisional.

Second place went to Jimmy Eriksson and Daniel Keilwitz in a Mercedes. Keilwitz, who took the first stint, dropped down the field from second to fifth on the first lap. Eriksson was in third place after an early pit stop and fought his way past the Audi of Christopher Mies up into second place during the closing stages. Mies and Hofer finished the race in third, which brought Hofer victory in class and the title in the Pirelli Junior stakes.

Filip Salaquarda (35, CZ) and Frank Stippler (44, GER, both Team ISR) in another of the many Audis finished the race fourth, failing to take their first podium of the season by the slender margin of 0.4 seconds. 1.8 seconds covered the next four cars. Saturday's winners Indy Dontje (26, NL) and Maximilian Götz (33, GER, both Mann-Filter Team HTP) were fifth in their Mercedes-AMG GT3 but missed out on the championship runner-up spot by one point. That distinction went to the

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Lamborghini pairing of Christian Engelhart (32, GER) and Mirko Bortolotti (29, ITA, both Orange1 by GRT Grasser) who came home directly behind them. Luca Ludwig (30, GER) and Sebastian Asch (33, GER, both HB Racing) in the only Ferrari 488 GT3 scored nine points for seventh place. Last year's champion, Robert Renauer (34, GER), and partner Thomas Preining (21, AUT, both Precote Herberth Motorsport) ended the season in eighth place. Audi drivers Mike David Ortmann (19, GER) and Markus Winkelhock (39, GER, both BWT Mücke Motorsport) were ninth. David Jahn (28, GER) and Sven Barth (38, GER, both RWT Racing) completed the Top Ten in the only Corvette C7 GT3-R in the field. Barth took his ninth win of the season in the Pirelli Trophy classification; he already holds the Trophy title which he won the previous event.

### Comments from the winners:

**Patric Niederhauser (HCB-Rutronik Racing, Audi R8 LMS):** "This morning, Kelvin booked a sensational pole position. The car was handed over to me with a seven-second lead, so all I had to do was maintain the pace. I was even able to extend the gap to the pursuing bunch. But despite that, it was by no means easy out there. Away from the ideal line, the track was very dirty, so it required a lot of concentration to stay error free. In the end, though, it all worked out, and it's great to have wrapped up the team championship with this victory. After winning the drivers' championship at Hockenheim, we had another special weekend here at the Sachsenring. Now, of course, we will be celebrating with the whole team. I am looking forward to that!"

**Kelvin van der Linde (HCB-Rutronik Racing, Audi R8 LMS):** "Yesterday was made really difficult for us by that puncture, so today we set our sights on a fight-back, just as we did at Hockenheim. It worked out just as we had planned. It is always good to have an open track ahead of you at the Sachsenring. Christopher Mies was very strong initially, but I gradually managed to pull out a gap."

### Calendar for 2020 ADAC GT Masters (subject to change)

24/04/20 - 26/04/20	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
15/05/20 - 17/05/20	Autodrom Most (CZ)
05/06/20 - 07/06/20	Red Bull Ring (AUT)
14/08/20 - 16/08/20	Nürburgring*
21/08/20 - 23/08/20	Circuit Zandvoort (NL)
18/09/20 - 20/09/20	TBA
02/10/20 - 04/10/20	Sachsenring*

\* = subject to agreement with the organisers

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