

Press Release – 14/09/12 No 71

Corvette and BMW ALPINA fight back in title chase

- Closest pursuers of championship leader Engelhart to start both races from first three rows of grid
- Corvette and BMW ALPINA on front row for both races
- Diego Alessi and Maxime Martin secure pole positions

The title chase hots up again at the Nürburgring as Christian Engelhart (25, Kösching / Team Geyer & Weinig – Schütz Motorsport) comes under pressure from the chasing pack. On the penultimate ADAC GT Masters weekend of the 2012 season, the Porsche driver's closest pursuers in their Corvette, BMW ALPINA and Mercedes-Benz put in blistering qualifying performances to earn themselves a strong platform for the two races to be staged on Saturday and Sunday. Corvette driver Diego Alessi (40, Italy / Callaway Competition) claimed pole position for Race 1 on Saturday ahead of defending champion Dino Lunardi (33, France / ALPINA) in the BMW ALPINA B6. The team-mates of Alessi and Lunardi – Maxime Martin (26, Belgium / ALPINA) and Daniel Keilwitz (23, Villingen / Callaway Competition) respectively – will likewise be sharing the front row in Sunday's race. "Having booked ourselves two slots on the first row, we have made our intention clear that we are going all out on the attack in the title race," said Alessi after taking his third pole position of the 2012 season. Meanwhile, championship leader Engelhart has to content himself with P11 on the grid in the first race.

Key facts, Nürburgring Grand Prix circuit

Length of track: 5,137 metres

Weather: 13 °C, overcast, drizzle

Pole position for Race 1: Diego Alessi (Callaway Competition-Corvette), 01:56.288 mins

Pole position for Race 2: Maxime Martin (ALPINA-BMW ALPINA B6), 01:56.201 mins

Alessi prevails over Lunardi in first qualifying heat

The three closest pursuers of championship leader Engelhart will be starting from the first four positions in Race 1 on Saturday. However, it was Ferdinand Stuck (21, Austria / Young Driver AMR) in his Aston Martin V12 Vantage who initially set the pace in qualifying after a long run of mediocre form in the ADAC GT Masters. The son of racing legend Hans Joachim (AKA 'Strietzel') Stuck took an early lead on the timesheets before being dislodged by Lunardi. The pistachio green BMW ALPINA was in turn edged out by the Corvette of Diego Alessi, leaving Stuck back in third. Alessi: "My qualifying was almost perfect; now we have to see if the two races go just as well. But one thing is certain: in this title chase, we won't be yielding an inch on the track." Fourth fastest was Sebastian Asch (26, Ammerbuch / kfzteile24 MS Racing Team) in the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG ahead of Simon Knap (23, NL / DB Motorsport) in the BMW Z4.

Martin times qualifying run perfectly to claim pole

In the second qualifying session to decide the starting positions for Sunday's race, a looming weather front made it necessary for everyone to get their laps in early. Maxime Martin went out on track right at the start of the session. The Belgian set two fastest times in his BMW ALPINA, which worked to his advantage when gentle drizzle started up after ten minutes, thwarting any

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Nürburgring *
13/07/12 – 15/07/12

Red Bull Ring (A)
10/08/12 – 12/08/12

Lausitzring
24/08/12 – 26/08/12

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Hockenheim
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* same weekend as
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realistic challenge from the rest of the field. Daniel Keilwitz driving a Corvette came within 0.186 seconds but was unable to crack the BMW ALPINA time. "One pole and one front row start is about as good as it gets," said Martin after claiming his second ADAC GT Masters pole position. "Now we have to contest the two races themselves, but we are starting from a perfect position." His team-mate Dino Lunardi is expecting exciting sprints to the first corner in both races. "With the Corvette and us together on the front row, it's going to be a competition between late brakere. The Corvette has a slightly better top speed than we have, so it will be exciting to see who gets to Turn One first."

The second row for Sunday's race is shared by Andreas Simonsen (22, Sweden / HEICO Junior Team) in the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG and Johannes Stuck (25, Austria / Young Driver AMR) in the Aston Martin V12 Vantage GT3. Maximilian Götz (26, Uffenheim / kfzteile24 MS RACING Team) in the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG starts from fifth ahead of Corvette driver Frank Kechele (26, Ulm / Callaway Competition). Nick Tandy (27, GB), team-mate of championship leader Engelhart, was out of luck today. The Porsche driver missed the right moment to set a personal best and will consequently be starting from 27th.

ADAC GT Masters on TV: All 16 races of the ADAC GT Masters are broadcast live at 12.15pm on Saturdays and Sundays in Germany, Austria and Switzerland on free-to-air TV channel *kabel eins*. Sports channel SPORT1 will feature highlights of the ADAC GT Masters from the Nürburgring in the ADAC Masters Weekend Magazine on 22nd September at 10.15am. In addition, live timing from all practice sessions and races to supplement live TV broadcasts can be found at www.adac-gt-masters.de.

Note for Press: ADAC GT Masters Web site: access to Press Area via 'Press' in the top menu bar at www.adac.de/motorsport.

Further information available at www.adac.de/motorsport and www.adac-gt-masters.de

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