

Press Release – 15/09/12 No 72

Lunardi and Martin win to keep title challenge alive

- BMW ALPINA drivers reduce championship deficit
- Third win of season for Lunardi/Martin
- Poulsen celebrates victory in amateurs for Aston Martin

With just three races to go, the ADAC GT Masters title chase has opened up again as current championship leader Christian Engelhart (25, Kösching / Team Geyer & Weinig EDV – Schütz Motorsport) suffers a significant points loss to his nearest challengers. The Porsche man's three closest pursuers – driving a BMW ALPINA, a Corvette and a Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG respectively – shared out the podium places between themselves in Race 1 on Saturday. Dino Lunardi (33, France) and Maxime Martin (26, Belgium / ALPINA) kept their title hopes alive with victory in their BMW ALPINA B6. Finishing in second place were Diego Alessi (40, Italy) and Daniel Keilwitz (23, Villingen / Callaway Competition) in their Corvette ahead of third-placed Sebastian Asch (26, Ammerbuch) and Maximilian Götz (26, Uffenheim / kfzteile24 MS RACING Team) who are currently second in the standings. Engelhart and co-driver Nick Tandy (27, GB) finished seventh in their Porsche 911. After four races without scoring a single championship point, Lunardi has returned to form with a third win of the season: "We're back in contention for the title, but we didn't progress up the table quite as far as we had hoped, because our closest rivals also came away with a decent points haul."

Key facts, Nürburgring Grand Prix circuit, Race 1

Length of track: 5,137 metres

Weather: 13 °C, overcast

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

Winners of Race 1: Dino Lunardi/Maxime Martin (ALPINA-BMW ALPINA B6)

Fastest race lap: Ferdinand Stuck (Young Driver AMR Aston Martin V12 Vantage) 01:57.547 (new ADAC GT Masters lap record)

Ferdinand Stuck leads first stint of race

It was not the pair battling for the title who took centre stage in the first half of the race but Ferdinand Stuck (21, Austria / Young Driver AMR) in the Aston Martin V12 Vantage. The son of racing legend Hans-Joachim 'Strietzel' Stuck took advantage of a scrap at the start between Alessi and Lunardi. Corvette driver Alessi and BMW ALPINA driver Lunardi misbraked on the approach to the first turn whilst battling for the lead. Stuck saw his chance and took the lead from Lunardi. Stuck, at the wheel of the Aston Martin, gradually drew away from Lunardi. Alessi was the big loser in the start phase, dropping back down the field to eighth place. Stuck handed over the British supercar to his older brother Johannes at the end of the first stint, having secured a lead of 5.4 seconds, but Johannes only managed to hold on to P1 for a single lap. The Stuck brothers were given a stop-and-go penalty as a result of a pit stop that was too short. Johannes Stuck dropped back down the field to sixth after serving his penalty.

Maxime Martin inherited the lead in the BMW ALPINA, whilst right behind him followed the Corvette of Keilwitz / Alessi that had moved up into second place due to a good pit stop and Alessi charging up the field during the first half of the race. Keilwitz, who was at the wheel of the Corvette in the second half of

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13/07/12 – 15/07/12

Red Bull Ring (A)
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Lausitzring
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Nürburgring
14/09/12 – 16/09/12

Hockenheim
28/09/12 – 30/09/12

* same weekend as
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the race, was unable to put pressure on Martin before the chequered flag was waved and so came second with a deficit of 0.8 seconds. Martin drove to victory together with Lunardi, repeating their success from the first time that the ADAC GT Masters was staged in the Eifel last July, when the ALPINA duo emerged victorious. "Dino did a great job in the first half of the race, meaning that in the second half, I needed only to keep an eye on tyres and concentrate on staying in the lead," said Martin after his third win of the season.

"The pace was blistering at the start, I was a little quicker on the accelerator than the Corvette, but Alessi was able to catch up with me," said Lunardi recounting what happened on the first turn. "We were both late on the brakes and then had to take a wide sweep, but luckily, I was able to come home in second place. I was unable to set off in pursuit of the Aston Martin, so I focused on saving the tyres for Maxime."

Asch/Götz completed the podium party in third position. The Mercedes-Benz drivers are still waiting for their first win of the season but closed the gap on championship leader Engelhart to 16 points with their sixth podium finish this season. Dutch duo Simon Knap (23) and Jeroen den Boer (25 / DB Motorsport) in the BMW Z4 took fourth place from the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG of Maximilian Buhk (19, Dassendorf) and Andreas Simonsen (22, Sweden / HEICO Junior Team). The Stuck brothers missed out on a possible sixth place on the last lap; Johannes skidded into the barriers on the final lap whilst exiting the Mercedes Arena and retired. Consequently, Florian Stoll (31, Rickenbach) and Daniel Dobitsch (28, Austria / kfzteile24 MS RACING Team) were sixth in the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMS ahead of Engelhart /Tandy and the Porsche duo of Robert Renauer (27, Jedenhofen) and Nicolas Armindo 30 , France / FROGREEN CO2 neutral).

Win for Poulsen narrows gap in amateur standings

With just three races left, the amateur championship has also opened up. Kristian Poulsen (36, Denmark) partnering Christoffer Nygaard (26, Denmark / Young Driver AMR) finished ninth overall ahead of Christopher Mies (23 / Heiligenhaus) and Edward Sandström (33, Sweden / Prosperia uhc speed) in their Audi R8 to claim the amateur honours in today's race. The Danish driver thereby reduced the deficit on championship leader Swen Dolenc (44, Maulbronn / FACH AUTO TECH) to 17 points. Dolenc was second-best placed amateur driver of the day ahead of fellow Porsche 911 driver René Bourdeaux (37, Munich / Team GT3 Kasko).

Front row for Race 2 on Sunday promises exciting start

The starting line-up for the second race of the weekend tomorrow looks to be an explosive affair. The front row has been booked by the same two cars as on Saturday – the BMW ALPINA of Lunardi/Martin and the Corvette of Alessi/Keilwitz. Andreas Simonsen in the Mercedes-Benz and Johannes Stuck in the Aston Martin will head up the second row.

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.

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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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