

Press Release – 11th September 2012 / No. 70

## Alexandros Margaritis: “Aiming for highlights”

- Nürburgring home race for Margaritis and the SCHÖNER WOHNEN Polarweiss Team HEICO at the ADAC Masters Weekend
- Cologne-based Mercedes-Benz driver has podium in his sights

It's just a short drive to the Nürburgring for ADAC GT Masters defending champion Alexandros Margaritis (27, Cologne). The ex-DTM driver grew up in Bonn and now lives in Cologne, so he has only a short trip to the ADAC Masters Weekend at the Nürburgring (14th to 16th September). The ADAC GT Masters guests for the second time this season at the Nürburgring and it's a home race too for the SCHÖNER WOHNEN Polarweiss Team HEICO for whom Margaritis and Lance David Arnold (26, Duisburg) are battling for points in the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG. The HEICO team prepare the Gullwing Mercedes for action in the ADAC GT Masters just around the corner from the Nürburgring. Local driver Margaritis intends turning his home race in the Eifel into a real highlight.

### What makes a 'home game' so special for you?

“I know every blade of grass at the Nürburgring. You just feel at home from the very first moment you arrive and know your way around, which is an added bonus for a driver during a hectic race weekend. I have many fond memories of the track. I've competed in plenty of races at the Nürburgring and have achieved good results in almost every series in which I've raced. In addition, I always get a lot of support from friends, of course, since the Nürburgring is so close to home.”

### What do you expect in the two ADAC GT Masters races at the Nürburgring?

“We will be utilising the long grand prix circuit that weekend, which should suit us better than the short version where we raced at the first ADAC GT Masters race weekend at the Nürburgring in July. It's where we achieved our best result so far this season. The Nürburgring's flowing track layout should really suit the superb aerodynamics of our Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG.”

### Finally, you are now regularly in the points after a difficult start to the season. Is anything in particular keeping you off the podium?

“At the beginning of the season, we had the new Yokohama tyres to contend with and had to get to grips with the car's setup. We have worked hard and now our speed in races is quite good. However, we are still not where we want to be. Our Polarweiss Mercedes has more to give. We have to do better, especially in qualifying. So far, we have been unable to get the maximum out of the Mercedes in the course of a hot qualifying lap. Our current focus is clearly on improving our results in the qualifying. If you are among the top twenty on the grid in the ADAC GT Masters, then you can fight your way up into the top ten. If, however, we can be in the top eight in qualifying, I see a good chance of securing a podium.”

**In 2011, you achieved four race victories and took the title at the end of the season along with Dino Lunardi. How do you as a driver deal with not being able to mount a successful title defence in 2012?**

“We certainly started the season with very different expectations. We knew what the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG can do from last year, and my team-mate,

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Nürburgring \*  
13/07/12 – 15/07/12

Red Bull Ring (A)  
10/08/12 – 12/08/12

Lausitzring  
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\* same weekend as  
ADAC Truck Grand Prix



Audi  
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Lance David Arnold, whom I've known for a long time, is very quick. Our package is actually very good. Nevertheless, I've had to set my sights lower this season after winning the title last year. If you are continually finishing on the podium in one season and then the following year, you are only in the top fifteen, then firstly, you must work harder and secondly, you must also lower your expectations, otherwise you would be constantly stressed out. I've already achieved one good result in the drivers' championship, but we still want to see some real highlights this season. The Nürburgring is a track where such a thing is possible. I've always been quick at the Nürburgring and this is a circuit where you can still make some difference by using one's skill and expertise as a driver."

**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](http://www.adac-gt-masters.de).

**Note for press:** ADAC GT Masters Web site: access to Press Area via the 'Press' in the top menu bar at [www.adac.de/motorsport/](http://www.adac.de/motorsport/). Further information available at [www.adac.de/motorsport](http://www.adac.de/motorsport) and [www.adac-gt-masters.de](http://www.adac-gt-masters.de)

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