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Dream start to season for Maxime Martin in ADAC GT Masters

- Belgian racing driver impresses at season opener
- Martin and defending champion Lunardi top leader board in run-up to Zandvoort round of ADAC GT Masters

Maxime Martin (26, B) is currently one of the hottest prospects in European sports car racing. The ALPINA driver, who lives in the Belgium capital Brussels, demonstrated his skill at the start of the ADAC GT Masters season along with defending champion Dino Lunardi (33 F). The Belgian/French pair took the BMW ALPINA B6 to a pole position and a win at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben for ALPINA. After their successful start to the season, Lunardi/Martin are the first to head the leader board in the League of Super Sports Cars as the next ADAC Masters Weekend of 2012 gets underway (4th – 6th May) in the Dutch town of Zandvoort. Martin spoke about the start of the season, his connections with ALPINA, and his prospects for the next race in an interview with ADAC.

The season opener at Oschersleben got off to an almost perfect start for you and your team-mate Dino Lunardi. Were you expecting that?

“We were fairly optimistic about Oschersleben but never thought that things would go so well. A pole position, a win and the lead in the standings – like a dream come true, well almost. However, we found that we’ve still got our work cut out; the weight that we had to carry in the second race at Oschersleben due to regulations made itself felt. It even caused me to slide a little in the first race towards the end. We had to run with a success ballast after winning that first race and were carrying quite a bit of extra weight due to our driver pairing. The challenge for us now in the race at Zandvoort is to set up our BMW ALPINA to give better consistency over the race distance.”

You secured fourth place in the second race at Oschersleben and are consequently initial leaders for the new 2012 season, but it meant the end of your terrific run of wins in Oschersleben.

“Yes, that was a bit unfortunate. I’ve now contested four ADAC GT Masters races and have won three of them, all at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben. Of course, I would like to have cleared the board and won all four races, but we’ll perhaps secure another win in Zandvoort.”

YOKOHAMA tyres were used for the first time in the ADAC GT Masters at the season opener in Oschersleben. What do you think of the new tyres?

“My first impressions of the YOKOHAMAs were good. Of course, there’s always a lot to learn about tyres at the start of the season, and there wasn’t much chance for testing prior to the season. The tyre suits our BMW ALPINA really well over one lap, as the pole position showed. As I’ve already said, we now have to tweak the car’s setup to better suit the tyre and improve consistency.”

Oschersleben
30/03/12 – 04/01/12

Zandvoort (NL)
05/04/12 – 05/06/12

Sachsenring
06/08/12 – 06/10/12

Nürburgring *
13/07/12 – 15/07/12

Red Bull Ring (A)
08/10/12 – 08/12/12

Lausitzring
24/08/12 – 26/08/12

Nürburgring
14/09/12 – 16/09/12

Hockenheim
28/09/12 – 30/09/12

* same weekend as
ADAC Truck Grand Prix



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You race an ALPINA and also have certain family ties with ALPINA.

“My father, Jean-Michel Martin, was also a successful racing driver and has been ALPINA official main dealer in Belgium for many years now. However, the fact that I am under contract to ALPINA in the ADAC GT Masters this year has nothing to do with any business connections, but of course, there’s no better advertisement for my father than me winning races with ALPINA.”

You have a full programme of events in 2012 and will contest almost every major GT series in Europe. What are your initial impressions of the ADAC GT Masters?

“The ADAC GT Masters is a terrific series with plenty of strong teams and excellent drivers. It’s great to be part of it. The series is on a sound footing through things like live TV broadcasts; also, professional racing drivers can compete in the ADAC GT Masters, which is not the case in other series. That makes it interesting for me and ultimately for fans. In my opinion, the ADAC GT Masters is currently the best GT3 series in Europe.”

What are your predictions for the next race at Zandvoort?

“I know the track a little bit but have never driven a GT sports car there before. The circuit makes big demands on tyres, and our task is to have a car that is tuned accordingly. The BMW ALPINA B6 should suit this track since there are a number of fast turns where we can benefit from our good aerodynamics. However, it’s practically impossible to make any accurate predictions for the weekend since anything can happen in a race with such a large, strong field of more than 40 vehicles.”

As in previous seasons, all 16 races in the ADAC GT Masters are broadcast live on *kabel eins*, the free-to-air TV channel. Viewers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland can tune in at 12.15pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Check out the live timing page at [www.adac.de / motorsport](http://www.adac.de/motorsport) for continuous updates on completed laps and times during free practice and races.

Further information available at [www.adac.de / motorsport](http://www.adac.de/motorsport) and www.adac-gt-masters.de

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