

Press Release – 21/09/12 No 75

## Showdown in Hockenheim: Seven-way contest in ADAC GT Masters finale

- Septet of drivers still in with a chance of winning championship
- Corvette, Porsche, Mercedes-Benz and BMW ALPINA in title chase
- Amateurs a tussle between Porsche and Aston Martin

Seven drivers in four super sports cars, all of them with a more or less realistic chance of claiming the title: as the most exciting ADAC GT Masters season of all time draws to a close at Hockenheim (28th - 30th September), the championship remains wide open. Corvette, Porsche, Mercedes-Benz and BMW ALPINA will be battling it out for the ultimate honour at the Baden-Württemberg venue. Will current leaders Diego Alessi (40, Italy) and Daniel Keilwitz (23, Villingen / Callaway Competition) emerge triumphant in their Corvette, or can the pursuing group of Christian Engelhart (25, Kösching / Team Geyer & Weinig EDV / Schütz Motorsport) and Mercedes duo Sebastian Asch (26, Ammerbuch) / Maximilian Götz (26, Uffenheim / kfzteile24 MS RACING Team) snatch victory from their grasp? Also in with a mathematical chance are last year's champion Dino Lunardi (33, France) in his BMW ALPINA B6 and co-driver Maxime Martin (26, Belgium / ALPINA). Lunardi could become the first ever reigning champion to successfully defend his title.

### Key facts, Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg, Races 15 and 16 of season

Length of track: 4,574 metres

Layout: 17 corners, driven in a clockwise direction

Winners of Race 1 in 2011: Dino Lunardi/Alexandros Margaritis (LIQUI MOLY Team Engstler-BMW ALPINA B6)

Winners of Race 2 in 2011: Stefan Landmann/René Rast (Phoenix Racing Pole Promotion-Audi R8)

### Septet of title challengers separated by just 18 points

Seven drivers, 18 points – these are the key statistics in the title chase. The gap between the remaining contenders is a highly bridgeable 18 points, and with 50 points still to be conferred on the winners of the two races at Hockenheim, the tension is building. Current leaders Alessi and Keilwitz have a seven-point cushion over their nearest rival Engelhart. “We want the title, and being top of the table, we have the best platform,” says Daniel Keilwitz confidently. “A seven-point lead is a seven-point lead in anyone’s book. That’s the gap the others have to close.”

Christian Engelhart has a new partner for the Hockenheim weekend. Sean Edwards (25, GB) is stepping in for Nick Tandy (27, GB) who is unable to compete owing to a clash of engagements. Engelhart can already look back on one podium with Edwards as co-driver – that was at the Nürburgring in July. The Porsche 911 man has great confidence in his British team-mate: “I don’t regard the change of co-driver as unsettling at this stage of the season. Sean and I are fully familiar with Hockenheim, and recent years have shown that the Porsche performs very well in the ADAC GT Masters at this venue.”

Sebastian Asch and Maximilian Götz have established a rather unusual record: they are the first driver pairing to be in with a chance of taking the title on the final weekend without having won a single race all season. Yet the

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30/03/12 – 01/04/12

Zandvoort (NL)  
04/05/12 – 06/05/12

Sachsenring  
08/06/12 – 10/06/12

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  
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Audi  
Official-Car Partner



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Mercedes-Benz team have been consistent and reliable throughout 2012, displaying tremendous racing intelligence to finish on the podium in half of all the races and to have scored points in all but two. Götz doubts that they will be picking up one or the other of the two winners' trophies at Hockenheim either, but nevertheless sees the title as highly achievable: "It will be a hotly contested and tight race weekend at Hockenheim. It's unlikely that we can win either of the two races through our own endeavours, but you can be sure that we will be competitive there. I'm expecting that, just like at the Nürburgring, the title contenders will be tightly bunched. The key to winning the championship is to make sure that you get through both races in one piece and that you have secured a good position on the grid in qualifying."

The driver with the biggest hurdle to overcome is reigning champion Dino Lunardi. Together with Maxime Martin, the Frenchman is 18 points adrift; no wonder then that he is hoping for bad weather: "Our BMW ALPINA is extremely strong in the rain. If the track is wet for the final two races, I think our chances are good. But if the track stays dry, it could be difficult to close the gap."

### Frentzen aiming to help Callaway lift team title

Also still to be decided is the team championship. Callaway Competition from Leingarten near Heilbronn (for whom the Hockenheim grand finale is effectively a home race) have established a 16-point lead over the Mercedes-Benz team of kfzteile24 MS RACING Team from the Black Forest. A key player in the destiny of the team trophy will be Heinz-Harald Frentzen (45, Neuss). The ex-Formula 1 and DTM driver will be sharing one of the Callaway Corvettes with local favourite Andreas Wirth (27, Heidelberg); if they can post a half-decent result, this could be enough to wrap up the team title for Callaway Competition.

### Dolenc and Poulsen slug it out for amateur honours

The title chase in the amateur classification now comes down to a two-horse race between Swen Dolenc (44, Maulbronn / FACH AUTO TECH) in his Porsche 911 and Kristian Poulsen (36, Denmark / Young Driver AMR) in the Aston Martin V12 Vantage. Only the man from Pforzheim in Swabia and the Dane can mathematically claim this year's championship. Going into the last two races of the season, Dolenc has a 24-point lead over Poulsen. But as the 2012 ADAC GT Masters series has already shown, nothing is impossible and the excitement will continue right through to the last lap.

**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 Hockenheimring in the ADAC Masters Weekend Magazine on 6th October at 13,00am. 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 '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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