

09/11/2020 – No 97 – ADAC GT Masters

Speedy Bavarians: A portrait of ADAC GT Masters champions Michael Ammermüller and Christian Engelhart

- **First Super Sports Car League championship for Porsche duo**
- **Three race wins on the way to the 2020 title**

Munich: Michael Ammermüller (34, GER) and Christian Engelhart (33, GER) got there in the end. A P4 finish in Sunday's race was enough to hand the Porsche duo their first ever ADAC GT Masters championship title. Even more remarkable was the fact that they did so in the debut season of their team, SSR Performance, in the Super Sports Car League. "I have always dreamed of this moment in my fairly lengthy ADAC GT Masters career," enthused Engelhart. "I've been working towards it, and today is the day it finally happened." Michael Ammermüller was likewise in upbeat mood: "In Christian, I have a great team-mate at my side. We made hardly any mistakes over the entire season, and we can be really proud of what we've achieved."

During the podium ceremony after the final race, the Porsche drivers had a very special honour conferred on them: they were admitted to the ADAC GT Masters Club of Champions, an award made by the ADAC GT Masters in association with series partner herrenausstatter.de. The newly crowned champions were also kitted out with blue jackets sporting embroidered club badges and gold lining. These are exclusively tailored by the gentlemen's outfitter for the members of the ADAC GT Masters Club of Champions.

When Ammermüller and Engelhart made the move to SSR Performance in the run-up to the 2020 season, it was something of a leap into the unknown, as the Munich-based outfit's only previous appearance in the ADAC GT Masters was a guest start at Hockenheim in 2019. "Last winter, I was obviously wondering what I should do next," says Engelhart. "We had discussions, and I got to know the project and the people behind it. That impressed me a lot. In addition, Porsche has always been a brand with great appeal for me. As we now know, the decision to head off in this new direction was absolutely the right one."

The switch to SSR Performance for the long-time Lamborghini works driver and his partner Ammermüller was vindicated as early as the season opener at the Lausitzring, when the two of them made their first podium appearance in the opening race. The following weekend at the Nürburgring brought the partnership their first pole position and first victory. Win number two came at the Hockenheimring and with it a brief sojourn at the top of the championship table, albeit for one race only. Thanks to a consistent run of points-scoring results, the two Bavarians remained well placed among the prime championship contenders. The decisive breakthrough then came at the grand finale to the 2020 campaign. Having arrived seven points adrift of the leaders, they booked pole position on Saturday and converted it into a victory that took them to the top of the table, a position they then successfully defended with fourth place in the final race. In sporting terms alone, they are worthy winners of this maiden ADAC GT Masters title: they are the only pairing to have won three races during the course of the season. In fact, no other team has won more than once in the 2020 Super Sports Car League. And on only one occasion did they come away pointless.

Media information



For both drivers, it has taken several years to win an ADAC GT Masters title. Ammermüller from Rotthalmünster in Lower Bavaria made his debut in the Super Sports Car League in 2010. This was followed by only two further complete seasons, namely 2011 and 2017 in each of which he registered one victory. In the meantime, the ex-Formula 1 test driver was making a name for himself in Porsche one-make cups. He finished two Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland seasons as championship runner-up and won three titles in the international Porsche Supercup (2017, 2018 and 2019). “In the Porsche series, I always had the car to myself, and you could say I was master of my own destiny,” says Ammermüller. “With Christian in the team, everything is as it should be. We function well as a duo and are in complete harmony. In fact, I couldn’t imagine a more ideal teammate.” Before Ammermüller got into GT racing, he was on the fringes of Formula 1, but the fracture of a thumb put paid to his ambitions to compete in the top class. In his stead, Toro Rosso signed a certain Sebastian Vettel in 2007.

Christian Engelhart came to the world of GT via kart racing, Formula ADAC BMW and various touring car races in Austria. He also competed successfully in the Porsche Carrera Cup. In 2011, he celebrated a victorious debut in the ADAC GT Masters at the Red Bull Ring. In 2012, the man from Starnberg finished third overall after chalking up more race wins than any other contestant during the campaign. Last year, he narrowly missed out on the title, finishing as overall runner-up. With a total of 15 race wins, Engelhart is the second-most successful driver in the history of the Super Sports Car League. The only thing missing from his CV was a drivers’ title – until now.

“Michael and Christian complement each other very well,” says Stefan Schlund. “It helps that they are the same size and weight and are therefore similar in terms of bone structure, which makes a lot of things easier for the team.” SSR team boss Wolfgang Hatz adds: “One of Christian’s great strengths is that he is highly analytical. He works a lot with data and tries to find out what was good, what wasn’t so good, and what could be done better. Michael on the other hand is the more intuitive driver. He also has nerves of steel. Both operate very well together. They know that in the ADAC GT Masters you can only achieve success as a unit. Each takes the best of the other to get the best result. They constitute a strong team.”

Calendar for the 2021 ADAC GT Masters (subject to confirmation)

14/05/21 - 16/05/21	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
11/06/21 - 13/06/21	Red Bull Ring (AUT)
06/08/21 - 08/08/21	Nürburgring
20/08/21 - 22/08/21	Circuit Zandvoort (NL)
10/09/21 - 12/09/21	DEKRA Lausitzring
01/10/21 - 03/10/21	Sachsenring
15/10/21 - 17/10/21	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

Media Contact

ADAC e.V.

Oliver Runschke, T +49 89 76 76 69 65, E-mail oliver.runschke@adac.de

Kay-Oliver Langendorff, T +49 89 76 76 69 36, E-mail kay.langendorff@adac.de

adac.de/gt-masters

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