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Mercedes-AMG versus BMW: ADAC GT Masters title showdown in Hockenheim

- **Four titles to be decided in Hockenheim**
- **Seppänen aims to be first driver in the ADAC GT Masters to successfully defend the title**
- **Emil Frey Racing and GRT pushing for their first win of the season**

Munich. It has all come down to a duel for the title between Mercedes-AMG and BMW: the grand finale of the ADAC GT Masters will take place on the support programme for the DTM weekend at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg from 18th to 20th October. Ahead of the final two races of the season, titles are still up for grabs in four competitions within the iconic series. The main focus will be on the battle for the Drivers' Championship. Maxime Oosten (NL)/Leon Köhler (Erlenbach am Main/both FK Performance) in a BMW M4 GT3 will be striving to reel in and overturn the 29-point lead currently held by championship leaders Elias Seppänen (FIN)/Tom Kalender (Hamm/Sieg). Both pairs are also the key protagonists in the "Road to DTM" competition and the Silver Cup. In the Team championship, the defending champions from Mercedes-AMG outfit Haupt Racing Team hold a 40-point lead over second-placed FK Performance and are on course to clinch the title. Television partner Sport1 is showing both races on free-to-air German TV, with coverage starting at 15:00 on both Saturday and Sunday.

Two pairs of drivers will battle it out for the title at the finale of the 2024 ADAC GT Masters – with a maximum 56 points still on offer. Championship leaders Seppänen and Kalender (both 203 points) have been particularly strong in qualifying and have started from the front row of the grid in no fewer than eight races. However, their rivals Oosten and Köhler (both 174 points) have demonstrated their fighting spirit on multiple occasions, gaining a total of 36 places compared to their grid positions over the course of the season. They will need to show this quality again at the 4.574-kilometre circuit if they are to turn the title race in their favour. Third place will be decided between the Mercedes-AMG drivers in Haupt Racing Team. David Schumacher (Salzburg) and Salman Owega (Cologne) currently lie third with 143 points, but Jannes Fittje (Langenhain) and Finn Wiebelhaus (Obertshausen) have closed to within just nine points on the back of their first win of the season in race nine.

Several drivers are still waiting for their first win of the season. They include Chilean Benjamin Hites from Grasser Racing Team, who won Saturday's race at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg in a Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2 last year. This season, he and his team-mate Tim Zimmermann (Langenargen) have not lived up to their own expectations, but have enjoyed the odd stand-out success, such as pole position for race five of the season at the Nürburgring. The Swiss pair of Jean-Luc D'Auria and Alain Valente in a Ferrari 296 GT3 run by Emil Frey Racing have shown a significant improvement in form of late, and can justifiably set their sights on a first win of the season. They finished runner-up in one race at both Spa-Francorchamps and the Red Bull Ring, so have already come very close to that illusive victory. Furthermore, Valente crossed the finish line first in race two in

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Hockenheim last season – a feat he is striving to repeat this year: “We showed in the pre-season test that we are fast there. Plus, we have been very happy with our performance at the most recent events. We want to end the season by getting the maximum out of our Ferrari and climbing onto the top step of the podium.” The Schnitzelalm Racing team returns to the ADAC GT Masters for the season finale and also has its sights set on the front of the field. Sharing the driving duties in the Mercedes-AMG GT3 will be Jay Mo Härtling (Sprockhövel) and Marcel Marchewicz (Schwetzingen), who made it onto the podium on his guest start at the Nürburgring earlier this season.

Anyone unable to be at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg in person can watch all the key scenes on the ADAC Motorsport YouTube channel. The qualifying sessions and both races will be streamed live and free of charge, with commentary in German and English, at youtube.com/adacmotorsports.

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