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Red Bull Ring: Corvette and Ford in front at ADAC GT Masters

- Diego Alessi achieves second consecutive pole in Corvette
- First pole position for Dominik Schwager in ADAC GT Masters since 2008
- Good grid positions for championship leader Baumann and local drivers from Grasser Racing

U.S. sports cars dominated qualifying as the second half of the ADAC GT Masters season got under way at Austria's Red Bull Ring. Corvette and Ford secured the top positions on the grid during qualifying sessions for the two ADAC GT Masters races on Saturday and Sunday in Styria. Diego Alessi (41, Italy / Callaway Competition) took pole position for Saturday's race in his Corvette Z06 and is on pole for the second time in a row. Dominik Schwager (36, Germany / Lambda Performance) in his Ford GT was fastest in the second qualifying session for Sunday's race. "The Red Bull Ring is probably the best track on the calendar for our Corvette, so I expected to secure pole position here," said Alessi.

Key facts, Red Bull Ring, Spielberg, Austria

Length: 4.326km

Weather: 27 degrees, cloudy

Pole Position, Race 1: Diego Alessi (Callaway Competition, Corvette GT3 Z06.R), 1:31.370mins

Pole Position, Race 2: Dominik Schwager (Lambda Performance, Ford GT), 1:31.273mins

Corvette dominate front row of grid for Saturday's race

Dark clouds and the threat of rain engulfing the Red Bull Ring produced plenty of track action right at the start of the first qualifying session. Diego Alessi (41, Italy / Callaway Competition) went straight into P1 on his first flying lap, but then Frank Kechele (26, Germany / Lambda Performance) hit back in the Ford GT, beating the Italian's time. However, Alessi was not going to give up and launched a successful counterattack to reclaim pole position. Shortly before the end of the session, Andreas Wirth (28, Germany / Callaway Competition) also overtook Kechele, producing a front-row lock-out for Corvette in Saturday's race. Kechele shares the second row of the grid with ADAC GT Masters defending champion Maximilian Götz (27, Germany / Polarweiss Racing) in the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG. Simon Knap (24, Netherlands / DB Motorsport) achieved P5 on the grid in the fastest BMW Z4 and Mario Farnbacher (21, Germany / Farnbacher Racing) P6 in the Porsche 911.

"Qualifying was tough today, because, although our car is very fast here, it is not easy to keep it in check through some of the turns here and it's difficult to post a perfect lap," said Alessi.

"Second on the grid for my team-mate Daniel Keilwitz and my pole position make us feel very optimistic about both races. I was very impressed today by the fast times posted by the Ford GT. The Ford will be tricky opposition for us in the race."

Third ADAC GT Masters pole position this season for Ford GT

The duel between Corvette and Ford continued in the second qualifying session. This time, it was Dominik Schwager in the Ford GT who won through in a hard-fought scrap against Corvette driver Daniel Keilwitz (24, Germany / Callaway Competition) and who went on to achieve his third pole position in the ADAC GT Masters. "My team-mate Frank Kechele was very fast in the first qualifying session. When I saw that, I knew that pole position was possible," said Dominik Schwager. "We improved the car's performance even more as compared to practice, and I'm pleased with the pole for me and the team. Pole position is nice, but the race is more important, and we have to secure points."

Media information

Jeroen den Boer (25, Netherlands / DB Motorsport) achieved a good grid position for the fastest BMW Z4. The Dutchman is placed third on the grid in Sunday's race; previously, team-mate Knap qualified the Z4 in fifth place for Race One. Maximilian Buhk (20, Germany / Polarweiss Racing) starts from P4, closely followed by the fastest Porsche 911s of Alfred Renauer (28, Germany) and Martin Ragginger (25, Austria, both Tonino by Herberth Motorsport) in fifth and sixth.

Local drivers Dominik Baumann and Grasser Racing very satisfied

ADAC GT Masters championship leaders Claudia Hürtgen (41, Germany) and Dominik Baumann from Rum near Innsbruck (20, PIXUM Team Schubert) start from grid positions ten and twelve in the BMW Z4. "As expected, practice was not easy for us, but I'm very pleased with our grid positions," said Baumann after qualifying. "I wonder how the race will go, but a good haul of points should be possible with a consistent and error-free drive." The two local Grasser Racing drivers from Knittelfeld close to the Red Bull Ring were highly satisfied. Harald Proczyk from Spielberg (37, Austria / Grasser Racing) put his Lamborghini Gallardo in ninth position on the grid for Saturday's race.

Fresh power for Albert von Thurn und Taxis/Peter Kox and the Camaro

Super Sports Car League drivers should keep an eye out for a beefy black sports car in their rear-view mirrors in the two races on Saturday and Sunday. After an engine change for the Chevrolet Camaro, which is making its ADAC GT Masters comeback at the Red Bull Ring, Albert von Thurn und Taxis (28, Germany, Germany) and Peter Kox (41, Netherlands / SaReNi United) had to miss qualifying and will start both races from last place.

The ADAC GT Masters again has eight events and 16 races scheduled for the 2013 season. All 16 races of the ADAC GT Masters are broadcast live in Germany, Austria and Switzerland on free-to-air TV channel kabel eins, Saturdays and Sundays, beginning at 12.00 noon. Super Sports Car League drivers will line up for the first time on the Spa-Francorchamps Formula 1 circuit and at the Slovakia Ring in Slovakia.

Tickets for all ADAC GT Masters races start at €20 and can be purchased online at www.adac.de, from any ADAC branch office, online at www.eventim.de or from one of the more than 20,000 Eventim outlets throughout Europe.

Results, Qualifying 1 (top five):

1. Diego Alessi (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), 1:31.370mins
2. Andreas Wirth (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +0.228secs
3. Frank Kechele (Lambda Performance, Ford GT), +0.355secs
4. Maximilian Götz (Polarweiss Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), +0.438secs
5. Simon Knap (DB Motorsport-BMW Z4 GT3), +0.578secs

Results, Qualifying 2 (top five):

1. Dominik Schwager (Lambda Performance, Ford GT), 1:31.273mins
2. Daniel Keilwitz (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +0.145secs
3. Jeroen den Boer (DB Motorsport, BMW Z4 GT3), +0.148secs
4. Maximilian Buhk (Polarweiss Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG), +0.276secs
5. Alfred Renauer (Tonino by Herberth Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R), +0.364secs

Media information

Dates and venues: 2013 ADAC GT Masters

26th - 28th April:	etropolis Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
10th - 12th May:	Circuit Spa-Francorchamps (Belgium)
7th - 9th June:	Sachsenring
2nd - 4th August:	Nürburgring
9th - 11th August:	Red Bull Ring (Austria)
30th August - 1st September:	Lausitzring
13th - 15th September:	Slovakia Ring (Slovakia)
27th - 29th September:	Hockenheimring, Baden-Württemberg

ADAC GT Masters website: Access to Press Area via 'Press' in the top menu bar at www.adac.de/motorsport.

Media contact

ADAC GT Masters

Oliver Runschke

Mobile: +49 (0) 176 222 18308, E-mail: oliver.runschke@mac.com

ADAC e.V.

Kay-Oliver Langendorff, Head of Motorsport Communication

Tel: +49 (0) 89 7676 6936, Mobile: +49 (0) 171 555 5936, E-mail: kay.langendorff@adac.de

www.adac.de/motorsport



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