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Alessi & Keilwitz in Corvette win 100th ADAC GT Masters race

- Corvette duo return to top of championship table with fifth victory of season
- Eleven drivers still in with a chance of taking title at Hockenheim finale in 14 days
- Third win of season gives Nielsen lead in Gentlemen class

Diego Alessi (41) and Daniel Keilwitz (24) driving a Callaway Competition Corvette have won the 100th ADAC GT Masters race at the Slovakia Ring. This was win number five of the season for the Corvette partnership in an exciting race played out in front of 8,200 spectators at the circuit near Bratislava. It restores them to the top of the championship, and they take a lead of 14 points into the last two races of the 2013 campaign at Hockenheim. Christopher Mies (24) and René Rast (26) in a Prosperia C Abt Racing Audi R8 kept their title hopes alive with a P2 finish, as did reigning champion Maximilian Götz (27) and partner Maximilian Buhk (20) in the Polarweiss Racing Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG who came third. “The win was rather unexpected,” said a delighted Keilwitz. “We also went into the last weekend of the 2012 season as championship leaders but then narrowly missed out on the title. This time, I hope we find ourselves still occupying the top spot after the result of the final race is in.”

Key facts: Slovakia Ring (Slovakia), Race 2, (14/16)

Length of track: 5,992 metres

Weather: 23°, sunny

Pole position for Race 2: Markus Winkelhock (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), 2:02.584 mins

Winner of Race 1: Diego Alessi & Daniel Keilwitz (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3)

Fastest race lap: René Rast (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra) 2:05.706 mins

Keilwitz makes fantastic start from mid-grid position to take lead

Keilwitz laid the foundations for victory with a textbook-perfect launch. Starting the race from tenth on the grid and being closely pursued by Buhk in the Mercedes, the Corvette driver catapulted himself into the lead by taking the outside line going into the first corner. Buhk was then able to capitalise on a minor mistake by Keilwitz to snatch the lead for several laps before the Corvette man counterattacked and regained the lead. From that moment on, neither Keilwitz nor Alessi who replaced him at the mandatory pit stop were to be dislodged from the head of the field.

The Corvette pairing also profited from a spot of bad luck for Prosperia C Abt duo Rast and Mies. Shortly before the driver changeover, third-placed Rast had been making up ground on front-runners Keilwitz and Buhk with a sequence of fastest lap times. However, the crew had problems restarting the Audi after the handover to Mies, losing six seconds with the delay and a chance of taking the lead. Mies left the pit lane in second place with Alessi marginally ahead and brought the Audi home 1.747 seconds behind the victorious Corvette. “I seized my chance at the start and also had a bit of luck with those ahead of me not getting away particularly well,” said Keilwitz. “I was really surprised to be in front going into the first corner. It was a lot warmer today than in the two previous days, and the car was much better to drive.”

“My thanks must go to Daniel, since we wouldn’t have won today without his great start,” said Alessi. “We went into the race with an aggressive strategy; I didn’t expect us to do any better than P5 or P6. Our race pace surprised me, because we’ve been having a really hard time here over the past few days.”

Media information

Buhk and Götz crossed the finish line in P3, and with only the closing race weekend in Hockenheim remaining, they are now equal second in the driver's championship with Robert Renauer (28) who finished seventh in his Tonino powered by Herberth Motorsport Porsche 911 which he shares with Martin Ragginger (25). Maximilian Sandritter (24) and Jörg Müller (44) of PIXUM Team Schubert brought their BMW Z4 GT3 home in fourth place ahead of Prosperia C Abt Audi pairing Christer Jöns (25) and Markus Winkelhock (33) who had started from pole.

Eleven drivers still in with a chance of taking title

Driving an array of marques – Corvette, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, BMW and Audi – there will be eleven contenders still in the title chase when the final race weekend in Hockenheim comes around in a fortnight. Claudia Hürtgen (42) and Dominik Baumann (20, Austria) in a BMW Z4 could still mathematically win the championship; the PIXUM Team Schubert pair experienced some bad luck on Sunday after skidding off track and being handed a time penalty for infringing pit stop regulations, ultimately collecting only one point for a tenth-place finish. Still in with the slimmest of chances are Simon Knap (24) and Jeroen den Boer (26) of the Dutch DB Motorsport team who won Saturday's race at the Slovakia Ring in their BMW Z4 and finished Sunday's outing in eighth place.

Nielsen takes over at top of Gentlemen standings

There was also a change of leader in the Gentlemen stakes with two races to go before the end of the season. Christina Nielsen (21) of Denmark in her Farnbacher Racing Porsche 911 celebrated a third win of the campaign, which was enough to take her to the top of the table, displacing fellow Porsche driver René Bourdeaux (38, Tonino powered by Herberth Motorsport) who finished outside the podium placings in fourth place. Partnered by ADAC Sports Foundation protégé Lennart Marionek (24), Remo Lips (31) in a Callaway Competition Corvette took the runner-up trophy. Ahead of the closing race weekend at Hockenheim, only one point separates Nielsen and Bourdeaux at the top of the Gentlemen classification.

Result: Slovakia Ring, Race 2, (14/16)

1. Diego Alessi & Daniel Keilwitz (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), 27 laps
2. Christopher Mies & René Rast (Prosperia C Abt Racing-Audi R8 LMS ultra), +1.747 sec
3. Maximilian Götz & Maximilian Buhk (Polarweiss Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG), +6.431 sec
4. Max Sandritter & Jörg Müller (PIXUM Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3), +9.852 sec
5. Christer Jöns & Markus Winkelhock (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), +11.741 sec
6. Rahel Frey & Christopher Haase (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), +16.723 sec

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 on 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.

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.

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