

25/09/2013 – No 70

Germany's fastest eleven: ADAC GT Masters title candidates

- Who are the ADAC GT Masters championship contenders in the run-up to the finale at the weekend?
- Eleven drivers with title chances in the finale
- Corvette, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, BMW and Audi can still take title win

The candidates for the ADAC GT Masters championship title are eleven of Germany's quickest drivers. Eleven drivers, fielding a variety of cars Corvette, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, BMW and Audi will go head-to-head for the title in the finale at Hockenheim (September 27th-29th). Who are the main title contenders in the run-up to the final two races in the Super Sports Cars League?

The championship leaders in a Corvette, Diego Alessi (41, Italy) and Daniel Keilwitz (24, Germany), Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06, 161 points

Winners of five races this season Alessi/Keilwitz will be racing together for the third year in a row; the two Corvette drivers were championship leaders back in 2012 when they lined up on the Hockenheim grid, only to be defeated in the finale. Alessi, a lawyer from the area of Perugia in Italy, who has totally dedicated himself to racing for many years, remains calm and collected before the final: "I feel very relaxed now compared to last year. I'm not going to get too wound up about the title fight before the event but intend to concentrate on driving. I've never felt as bad as I did after narrowly losing the title last year, so I'm not really worried about next weekend."

Keilwitz, who works for a chassis manufacturer, has concentrated exclusively on touring cars and GT cars during his racing career. Keilwitz won the FIA GT3 European Championship three years ago with Callaway Competition. Since then, the young German has been intent on winning the ADAC GT Masters title along with Alessi. "We're better placed this year ahead of the finale as compared to the same time last year, as we've got twice the number of points, but that could quickly change. We have a home advantage at Hockenheim, because it's Callaway Competition's home track and we know it really well."

The pursuers in the Mercedes-Benz: Maximilian Buhk (20, Germany) and Maximilian Götz (27, Germany), Polarweiss Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3, 147 points

Buhk/Götz are having a dream season: the two Mercedes drivers won the 24-Hours of Spa together and were recently invited to test a DTM Mercedes-Benz. Moreover, Buhk won the Blancpain Endurance Series title last weekend. They now hope to make the ADAC GT Masters title theirs and put the icing on the cake to finish the season. Buhk moved to the Super Sports Cars League last year after two years in Formel ADAC and the 20-year-old is the youngest driver in the series. He won the FIA GT3 European Championship in his first season racing GT sports cars in 2012.

Buhk/Götz have a good chance of securing the title thanks to their speed and consistency and will again be relying on the sterling qualities of the SLS AMG in the finale. Götz: "We don't actually have to win a race at Hockenheim. It's enough if we secure some decent points in the first race, so that we can be in a more relaxed frame of mind as we tackle the second race, because the title will be decided on Sunday." Götz was one of the most promising juniors in German single-seater racing in his day and once beat Sebastian Vettel in Formel BMW ADAC. The ADAC GT Masters title has given the Bavarian's motor racing career a real boost: "I would never have imagined for one moment last year what winning this title encompasses and would definitely like to do it again this year."

Media information

The lone wolf in the Porsche: Robert Renauer (28, Germany), Tonino powered by Herberth Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R, 147 points

Battling on his own account, Renauer is a 'lone wolf' in the championship fight, since Renauer's team-mate Martin Ragginger is 20 points behind him in the standings as he had to miss the Nürburgring race due to a clash of dates. Renauer is both driver and team manager rolled into one, managing the family racing team along with twin brother Alfred since the fatal accident of Alfred Herberth senior last year.

Renauer has previously fielded Mercedes-Benz and Lamborghinis in the ADAC GT Masters but is considered to be a real Porsche specialist. Being faster, more consistent and driving without error has enabled Renauer to have this crack at the championship for the first time in his career. The Bavarian is battling for the title both as a driver and as team principal; Tonino/Herberth driver René Bourdeaux and Renauer's twin brother Alfred will be fighting for the title in the Gentlemen class at the finale.

The speedy mixed-doubles pair in the BMW, Claudia Hürtgen (42, Germany) and Dominik Baumann (20, Austria), PIXUM Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3, 136 points

Never before in the ADAC GT Masters has a mixed-doubles team been as successful as Hürtgen and Baumann. The experienced German lady driver and the young Austrian have won two races together so far in the BMW Z4. Having learned his motor racing craft in Formel ADAC, Baumann is a title contender for the second year in a row. Last year, Baumann and Maximilian Buhk won the FIA GT3 European Championship and in their third year in the ADAC GT Masters are fighting, separately, for the title for the first time. Last year, Baumann received the accolade of Talent of the Year from FIA President Jean Todt for his outstanding achievements.

Hürtgen is probably Germany's fastest and most successful racing driver. The BMW driver's career is both long and extraordinary. Hürtgen has won many races and titles around the world with a variety of vehicles, fielding Le Mans prototypes and turbo Porsches in the late 1990s and BMWs in more recent years. Among her numerous titles: the Endurance Championship at the Nürburgring and the German Production Car Championship, the predecessor of DTC des DMSB - ADAC PROCAR. Now in her second full season in the ADAC GT Masters, the five-time race winner is having her first shot at the title.

The experienced championship campaigners in the Audi: Christopher Mies (24, Germany) and René Rast (26, Germany), Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra, 128 points

No duo in the running for the ADAC GT Masters championship has as much experience of battling for the title as Mies and Rast. Mies, who has competed for Audi since 2009, previously won the FIA GT3 European Championship and last year's Blancpain Endurance Series. He was ADAC GT Masters runner-up in 2010. Rast made a name for himself in the Porsche Supercup, winning the Porsche Supercup, a support series to Formula 1, three times in succession and has achieved five wins to date in the ADAC GT Masters with Porsche and Audi.

The Audi spearhead is up against it in the ADAC GT Masters at Hockenheim because Mies/Rast have a deficit of 33 points. Mies: "We must take plenty of risks in the first race and secure at least nine points more than our fellow competitors in order to keep our chances of lifting the title alive. We will do everything within our power, as long as we still have a mathematical chance."

Media information

The outsiders in the BMW, Simon Knap (24, Netherlands) and Jeroen den Boer (26, Netherlands), DB Motorsport, BMW Z4 GT3, 118 points

Knap and den Boer are always good for a surprise. Last year, the Dutchmen secured the first win for BMW in the ADAC GT Masters. "In our first season, 2012, we hardly knew any of the tracks but are now in a position to draw on what we've learned," said den Boer, whose father Ewoud was acting DB Motorsport team principal before the start of the season.

So far, BMW duo Knap/den Boer, who previously used to race in touring car one-make cup competitions in the Netherlands before switching to the ADAC GT Masters have put their experience to good use, securing five podiums. The extremely efficient BMW team that operates within a manageable budget in the paddock has gained a toehold in the title fight by achieving consistently good results and their first win of the season last time out at the Slovakia Ring. However, Knap and den Boer only have an outside chance ahead of the two final races.

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.

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, email: 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, email: kay.langendorff@adac.de

www.adac.de/motorsport