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Weather lottery at the Nürburgring deals pole positions to Mercedes-Benz and Audi

- Alon Day in a Mercedes-Benz secures P1 for local outfit Zakspeed
- Nicki Thiim clinches pole position for Sunday's race in Audi R8
- Rain makes for difficult conditions in qualifying at the Nürburgring

Nürburg: Sun and rain, dry surface and wet patches – the weather was in a capricious mood for qualifying in the ADAC GT Masters at the Nürburgring. After a dry start to the qualifying session for the two races on Saturday and Sunday (live coverage on kabel eins commencing at 11.45am CEST), rain complicated the action on the short sprint track at the Nürburgring. Israel's Alon Day (22) got his timing just right in qualifying for Saturday's race, going out on track in his Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG when the surface was still dry and securing his first ever ADAC GT Masters pole. His team, BKK MOBIL OIL Zakspeed, are based in Niederzissen, just a few short kilometres from the Nürburgring. The qualifying session for Sunday's race was even worse affected by the rain as Denmark's Nicki Thiim (25) in a Prosperia C Abt Racing Audi R8 likewise notched up a maiden pole position in the Super Sports Car League.

Key facts, Nürburgring, Nürburg, Rounds 11 und 12

Length of track: 3,629 metres

Weather: 18°C, overcast turning to rain

Pole position for Race 1: Alon Day (BKK MOBIL OIL Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), 1:28.715 mins

Pole position for Race 2: Nicki Thiim (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), 1:39.853 mins

Qualifying 1 for Race 1 (Saturday):

Dark clouds gathering over the Nürburgring triggered a lot of hectic activity and caused busy traffic at the start of the qualifying session. With the threat of rain in the air, all of the drivers were anxious to get in an early fast lap on dry tarmac. Mercedes-Benz driver Day kept his nerve and established himself at the top of the timesheets with two fast laps in succession. When it started to drizzle after ten minutes, the opportunity to overhaul the Israeli was effectively gone. Starting alongside Day will be Christian Engelhart (27, Germany) in a GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport Porsche 911. Booking spots on Row 2 were David Jahn (23, Germany) in an RWT Racing Team Corvette and 18-year-old South African Kelvin van der Linde (currently lying third in the championship) in an Audi entered by Prosperia C Abt Racing.

"We knew it was going to rain, so I went flat out right from the start of qualifying," said Day, who shares the cockpit of the gullwing with local favourite Luca Ludwig (25, Germany). "It's great to be on pole position for our team's home race. The entire crew has done a fantastic job and supplied us with an excellent car. As for the race on Saturday, I'm now hoping for dry conditions."

Qualifying 2 for Race 2 (Sunday):

The wet conditions produced a battle royal for the best place on Sunday's grid. The leader board showed five changes at the top between Mercedes-Benz, Audi and Porsche before Nicki Thiim in an Audi R8 once and for all dislodged Austria's Norbert Siedler (31) in a TONINO Team Herberth Porsche 911. Maximilian Götz (28, Germany), sharing his HTP Motorsport Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3 for the very first time with former DTM driver Renger van der Zande (28, Netherlands), qualified third alongside fourth-placed René Rast (27, Germany) in a Prosperia C Abt Racing

Media information

Audi. Ex-Formula 1 star Jaime Alguersuari (24, Spain) in a ROWE RACING Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG finished the session in fifth place, his best qualifying result in the ADAC GT Masters to date.

“I am just so relieved,” said a jubilant Thiim after qualifying. “We haven’t had an easy season so far, but today our luck was really in. At last we’ve had a problem-free qualifying. I felt OK on the wet track; in fact, I always enjoy driving in the rain. I had expected that these conditions would favour the Porsches, but our Audi’s road holding was outstanding today.”

Current championship leaders Claudia Hürtgen (42, Germany) and Dominik Baumann (21, Austria) in their Pixum Team Schubert BMW Z4 start from P14 and P9 respectively.

Results: Qualifying 1 (Top Five):

1. Alon Day (BKK MOBIL OIL Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), 01:28.715 mins
2. Christian Engelhart (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R), +0.188 sec
3. David Jahn (RWT Racing Team, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +0.231 sec
4. Kelvin van der Linde (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), +0.248 sec
5. Robert Renauer (TONINO Team Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R), +0.296 sec

Results: Qualifying 2 (Top Five):

1. Nicki Thiim (Prosperia C Abt, Audi R8 LMS ultra), 01:39.853 mins
2. Norbert Siedler (TONINO Team Herberth, Porsche 911 GT3 R), 0.443 sec
3. Maximilian Götz (HTP Motorsport, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), +0.580 sec
4. René Rast (Prosperia C Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), +0.595 sec
5. Jaime Alguersuari (ROWE RACING, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), +0.710 sec

Tickets (including access to the paddock) start at €20.00

Fans who prefer to experience the ADAC GT Masters live at the track can obtain tickets in advance starting at 20 euros (includes access to the paddock). Tickets are available online at www.adac.de/motorsport, from all ADAC branch offices, online at www.eventim.de or from one of more than 20,000 Eventim outlets in Europe.

All 16 races of the ADAC GT Masters will again be broadcast live and in full throughout Germany, Austria and Switzerland on kabel eins during 2014.

Calendar for the 2014 ADAC GT Masters

25/04 – 27/04/14	etropolis Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
09/05 – 11/05/14	Circuit Park Zandvoort (NED)
23/05 – 25/05/14	Lausitzring
06/06 – 08/06/14	Red Bull Ring (AUT)
08/08 – 10/08/14	Slovakia Ring (SVK)
29/08 – 31/08/14	Nürburgring
19/09 – 21/09/14	Sachsenring
03/10 – 05/10/14	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

For further information, visit www.adac.de/gt-masters

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