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The 2015 champions: Ludwig and Asch talk about their dream season

- ADAC GT Masters champions Luca Ludwig and Sebastian Asch in interview
- Asch: Second title confirms success from 2012
- Ludwig: ADAC GT Masters won in first half of season

Munich. Strong start and exciting conclusion: The longest-serving pairing in the ADAC GT Masters, Luca Ludwig (26, DEU) and Sebastian Asch (29, DEU) put their stamp on the Super Sports Car League en route to winning the championship title at the wheel of the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG fielded by well-established Team Zakspeed. In interview, the two new champions talk about their reactions in the weeks following the title win, the end of a long fallow period, and how their respective fathers reacted.

What was the response in the weeks that followed the title win?

Sebastian Asch: “We were obviously highly delighted and celebrated in style. It’s only when you win the championship that you realise from the number of well-wishers just how many people follow the series. The response from the area where I live was fantastic and it felt great to read that I’ve made history by securing this second title. My first title was perhaps more emotional, but the second one really confirms my standing.”

Luca Ludwig: “The response has been overwhelming, but things turned out more exciting than planned. We had expected to sweep all before us, aiming to win the title on Saturday. Some of the team got a bit anxious after our first time retirement of the season on Saturday. We had to give each other mutual support. We mastered the situation ultimately and then really pushed the boat out when we celebrated. Media interest was very strong after the title win.”

What sporting goals did you set yourselves before the start of the season?

Asch: “You have title aspirations every year. We had a good package with Zakspeed, the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG and my team-mate, Luca. You obviously need a lot of luck too.”

Ludwig: “Our goal was to win the title, obviously. For a racing driver, there can only be one goal, to win races and fight for the championship. Clearly, Sebastian is a consistently fast team-mate who does not make mistakes, plus, we were strong as people.”

The title and your first win of the season at Spa-Francorchamps marked the end of a long fallow period for you. What were your feelings on that score?

Asch: “The two years after my title win in 2012 were not easy from a sporting point of view, and the win at Spa-Francorchamps was very important from my perspective, as it proved that we were still a force to be reckoned with.”

Ludwig: “The win at Spa-Francorchamps was one of the most emotional so far for me. It was not only the end of a long lean period but was also my first race weekend in Spa where conditions were very tough. Things weren’t easy at the Lausitzring either with temperatures nudging 40 degrees. Both victories were wonderful and brought us a good haul of points. The title was won with these wins in the first half of the season.”

At what stage did you realise that you might win the title?

Asch: “We got really carried away with ourselves, especially during our extremely successful first half of the season. We were so used to winning that we had to keep bringing ourselves back down to earth.”

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But then things got tougher for you once again in the second half of the season. Did that make you feel anxious?

Asch: "There was the problem with weight at the Nürburgring, which was annoying, because we dropped a lot of points that weekend. We were not too concerned, since we had the potential to achieve good results at every track. Actually, the second half of the season took its normal course, and things simply went better than average in the first eight races."

Ludwig: "The first half of the season was well above average, but we then failed to meet expectations at the Nürburgring and were just too slow in Saxony. All the other weekends were fine. We kept a watchful eye on the standings, but things never really got tough for us, not really."

How did your respective fathers respond following the title win?

Asch: "My father was very relieved. He'd been in hospital with a bad fracture for a long time over the summer and wasn't discharged until the Monday before the finale. It was important for him and gave him a big boost."

Ludwig: "Well, you saw our dads on TV, avidly following our every move from the pits the entire season. My father was very proud of my title win."

What happens now in 2016 after securing the title?

Asch: "We were a good fit this year. I'd love to carry on, but it's still much too early at this stage to make any concrete pronouncements. Next year's ADAC GT Masters will definitely be very exciting again, as things are set to change with so many new models joining the series."

Ludwig: "We are still at the planning stage, but defending the title together in 2016 with the same outfit is certainly one of several options."

Further information available at www.adac.de/gt-masters

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