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Electric atmosphere in the north: Curtain-raiser for the 2015 ADAC GT Masters at Oschersleben

- Supercars sporting eight different marques in quest for title
- SPORT1 to show all races live on Saturdays and Sundays starting at 1pm CEST
- Race debut for new ADAC Formula 4 series
- Demo laps by Kurt Ahrens in Steve McQueen's Porsche 908; Fanzone in the infield

Munich: The super sports cars are about to go into action again. The ninth season of the ADAC GT Masters gets underway next weekend (24th - 26th April) at the etropolis Motorsport Arena Oschersleben near Magdeburg. High-powered sports cars – some with engines pumping out 650bhp – bearing no fewer than eight different manufacturers' marques, including Bentley for the first time, will be competing in two races, one on Saturday and the other on Sunday. Live coverage of both by new TV partner SPORT1 commences at 1pm. And it's not just a strong line-up of cars: the drivers include ADAC GT Masters stars such as Daniel Keilwitz (25, Callaway Competition), defending champion Kelvin van der Linde (19, C.Abt Racing) from South Africa, former DTM contestants Uwe Alzen (47, BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert) and Rahel Frey (29, CH, YACO Racing), GT veterans Tomas Enge (38, CZ), Oliver Gavin (42, GB, both Reiter Engineering) and Marc Basseng (36, kfzteile24 MS RACING). There is one unknown factor for everyone at Oschersleben to contend with in the shape of new tyres from Pirelli who have signed as the exclusive supplier to the series. The strong line-up is not the only highlight of the opening weekend. Germany's northernmost track hosts a field of more than 30 aspiring single-seater racers who will be vying for the first ever ADAC Formula 4 title.

Key facts, etropolis Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, Rounds 1 and 2

Length: 3,696 metres

Layout: 11 turns, driven clockwise

Last year's winner of Race 1: Maximilian Buhk & Maximilian Götz (HTP Motorsport, Mercedes Benz SLS AMG GT3)

Last year's winner of Race 2: Kelvin van der Linde & René Rast (Prosperia C.Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra)

ADAC GT Masters Oschersleben on TV: Both races (i.e. Saturday and Sunday) will be broadcast live on SPORT1 commencing at 1pm CES from 1pm onwards. See attachment for full TV broadcasting schedule

Eight marques compete for ADAC GT Masters title

The 2015 ADAC GT Masters 2015 promises thrills galore as Audi, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche and Corvette aspire to repeat the triumphs of earlier campaigns. BMW are still looking for their first title, the muscular Camaro is aiming to set more than just accents, and newcomers Bentley and Nissan want to establish themselves as fixtures in the competition. The man everyone wants to beat is defending champion Van der Linde who, together with new Audi R8 team-mate Stefan Wackerbauer (19), is equally determined to become the first driver in the history of the ADAC GT Masters to successfully retain his title. Last year, he laid the foundation for his successful challenge with a victory at Oschersleben. "Oschersleben is my favourite track," says Van der Linde, hopeful of getting the campaign off to another good start. But the South African can expect tough competition from within his own team. Nicki Thiim (26, DK) and Jordan Lee Pepper (18, ZA) constitute a speedy pairing in the second Audi entered by Christian Abt. kfzteile24 MS Racing are likewise entering two Audi R8s, the first driven by Florian Stoll (33) and Marc Basseng, and the second by Austria's Daniel Dobitsch (30) and Sweden's Edward Sandström (36).

The Audis are up against tough competition from the Corvettes. Andreas Wirth (30) and former champion Daniel Keilwitz of Callaway Competition have maintained the strong form they demonstrated towards the end of the 2014 season, as a best time in one of the official pre-test sessions demonstrated. "Topping the timesheets in testing is a good sign, but doesn't really count for all that much," says Keilwitz. "I'm expecting tough competition from Audi, Mercedes and especially from BMW. Oschersleben will be the first time that we compete on the new Pirelli tyres; that constitutes a new challenge for the entire field in qualifying and in the race itself."

Home race for BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert

BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert will be aiming to exploit home advantage. The Oschersleben-based outfit will be keen to record their first home victory in the ADAC GT Masters. The speedy Schubert squad consists of Dominik Baumann (22) from Austria and Jens Klingmann (24) in one of the two Z4 GT3s and Claudia Hürtgen (43) with rookie partner Uwe Alzen in the other. Reiter Engineering have big plans for their Chevrolet Camaro. Team principal Hans Reiter has recruited two GT stars for the US steam hammer; Tomas Enge and Chevrolet factory driver Oliver Gavin are intent on showing what the Camaro is capable of.

Another duo to be reckoned with are Luca Ludwig (26) and Sebastian Asch (28) in their Team Zakspeed Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG. They are now the most experienced duo in the ADAC GT Masters, having already notched up numerous victories between them and former champion Asch remembering from the 2012 season what it takes to win the title in a Gullwing. Ludwig: "I'm very excited about the season and I'm looking forward to sharing this car with Sebastian Asch. Together, we are a very good team. The competition is once again very strong this year. The Pirelli tyres will be a decisive factor. The teams who manage to get the setup right will be in with the best chance."

The presence of two Bentley Continentals adds a certain spice, and HTP will be announcing their driver squad in the next few days. Another outfit leaving the matter of personnel to the last minute is MRS GT-Racing; they are still to reveal who will be sharing the cockpit of the second Nissan GT-R with new entry Florian Strauss (30).

Varied marques also in Gentlemen class

The Gentlemen championship will also be a highly competitive affair contested by six drivers in a Nissan, a Porsche, a Corvette, a BMW and an Audi. The 2014 runner-up Dominic Jöst (36) and third-placed Florian Scholze (41), both of MRS GT-Racing, will be chasing the title in a Nissan. Remo Lips (33, CH) remains faithful to Corvette but has changed team to RWT Racing. Two newcomers to the competition are Andreas Weishaupt (42) in an Audi and Jakub Knoll (24, CZ) in a Senkyr Motorsport BMW. The sixth name on the leader board is Anton Wossos (49) from Greece driving a Schütz Motorsport Porsche 911.

Pirelli makes debut in ADAC GT Masters and ADAC Formula 4

The season opener for the ADAC GT Masters and ADAC Formula 4 also marks the first weekend for Pirelli as official tyre partner. The premium brand from Italy will be the exclusive supplier of tyres to the Super Sports Car League and the ADAC Formula 4 series. Anna Playford of Pirelli Technical Support Motorsports explains the challenge which the tyres are up against at Oschersleben: "Oschersleben is a smooth circuit, which means that the tyres have quite a low wear rate. Two of the most challenging parts of the lap are turns 1 and 2, with heavy braking and turn-in for turn 1 before the tyres are continuously loaded throughout turn 2. We've seen good grip and consistency here from the tyres, so it's important for the drivers to keep their speed up through the corners and chicanes, which have big kerbs. For the Formula 4 drivers, the key will be to master tyre warm-up quickly and learn as much as possible, so that they can get the most out of the compound during the limited time they have for qualifying. During the hour-

MEDIA INFORMATION

long GT race, consistency will be key. Weather in the local area can be variable at this time of year, so the tyres will have to cope with a wide range of potential conditions.”

Kurt Ahrens drives Porsche 908/2 formerly owned by Steve McQueen

Two thoroughbred racing legends are set to steal the show during the lunch break on Saturday and Sunday. Kurt Ahrens, the Porsche motorsport legend from Braunschweig who last Sunday reached the grand old age of 75, will be performing a sequence of demonstration laps in a Porsche 908/2 which has a prominent former owner: Hollywood legend Steve McQueen Porsche drove the 908/2 in the 1970 motor racing blockbuster ‘Le Mans’ and one year later in the 12 Hours of Sebring (USA) with Peter Revson as his co-driver, finishing the race as runner-up. When not performing its demo laps, the Porsche can be admired in the paddock for the rest of the weekend.

Get-together in infield Fanzone

The Lower Saxony/Sachsen-Anhalt branch of the ADAC is organising a ‘Get Together’ in a marquee inside the circuit itself. The celebrities putting in an appearance on Saturday and Sunday will include presenter Panagiota Petridou, high-speed pro Jean-Pierre Kraemer, presenter and model Rebecca Mir, model Louisa Mazzurana, former Miss Tuning, presenter and Playmate Katharina Kuhlmann and TV star Jan Leyk, plus various professional footballers from regional Bundesliga clubs. A great opportunity for autographs and selfies. Outside the marquee, there will be plenty of activities for children, including the ADAC inflatable race track, the ADAC beetle slide and a bouncy castle.

Debut of the new ADAC Formula 4 series

The highlight of the extensive support programme must surely be the new ADAC Formula 4. This new junior formula series, which starts its debut season at Oschersleben with a full field of contestants, represents a new era in the successful promotion by the ADAC of young talent in open-wheel racing. In addition to the ADAC Formula 4, Oschersleben also hosts the DTC DMSB / ADAC Procar series as well as two single-make cup competitions: the Renault Clio Cup Central Europe and the Volkswagen Golf Cup featuring former Polish international goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek.

Tickets, including access to the paddock, start at 20 euros

Fans who want to experience ADAC GT Masters action live at the track can now apply for tickets for the races at Oschersleben, at the Lausitzring, Nürburgring, Sachsenring and for the finale in Hockenheim. Ticket prices start at 20 euros and include access to the paddock. ADAC members can now purchase tickets for all eight race weekends via the ADAC preferential scheme. Tickets are available online at www.adac.de/gt-masters and at www.eventim.de, from any ADAC branch office and from more than 20,000 Eventim outlets throughout Europe.

The ADAC GT Masters will line up for the 2015 season in Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands, staging eight events and 16 races. ADAC GT Masters races will again be shown live by ADAC new live-TV exclusive partner SPORT1, who will broadcast all 16 ADAC GT Masters races live and in their entirety in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Broadcasts will normally begin at 1 pm on race weekends.

MEDIA INFORMATION

Race schedule and venues for the 2015 ADAC GT Masters:

24/04 – 26/04/2015	etropolis Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
05/06 – 07/06/2015	Red Bull Ring (A)
19/06 – 21/06/2015	Circuit Spa-Francorchamps (B)
03/07 – 05/07/2015	Lausitzring
14/08 – 16/08/2015	Nürburgring
28/08 – 30/08/2015	Sachsenring
18/09 – 20/09/2015	Circuit Park Zandvoort (NL)
02/10 – 04/10/2015	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

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

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