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Win for Porsche in ADAC GT Masters season opener at Oschersleben

- Porsche duo Engelhart and Bachler claim first victory of new campaign ahead of two Mercedes-Benz
- Top Ten for first race of 2015 includes seven different marques
- Gassner wins Gentlemen trophy in a Nissan on ADAC GT Masters debut

Oschersleben: Porsche got their 2015 ADAC GT Masters campaign off to a flying start. In Race 1 at Oschersleben, Christian Engelhart (28, Germany) and newcomer Klaus Bachler (23, Austria) in their GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport Porsche 911 dominated the proceedings to take the win ahead of two Mercedes-Benz SLS AMGs, one entered by Team Zakspeed and driven by Sebastian Asch (28, Germany) and Luca Ludwig (26, Germany) and the other an HP Racing entry driven by Austria's Hari Proczyk (39) and Sweden's Andreas Simonsen (25). "This win is like a dream," said a delighted Engelhart. "That's the way to start a season." As the rain started to fall during the last few thrilling laps, Austria's Clemens Schmid (24) in one of the Bentley Team HTP Continental GT3s skidded off into the barrier, thereby bringing out the safety car which then led the race to the finish line.

Key facts, etropolis Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, Round 1 of 16

Track length: 3,696 metres

Weather: overcast, 21 °C

Pole position: Luca Stolz (Bentley Team HTP, Bentley Continental GT3), 01:27.563 mins

Winners: Christian Engelhart & Klaus Bachler (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R)

Fastest lap: Dominic Jöst (MRS GT Racing, Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3), 01:28.377 min

Porsche makes perfect start

Engelhart got away to a perfect start to lay the foundations for his sixth race win in the ADAC GT Masters. Starting from second place on the grid, the Porsche man outgunned pole-sitter Luca Stolz (19, Germany) in the Bentley Team HTP Continental, taking the first turn as race leader ahead of Asch in the Mercedes-Benz. Engelhart pulled out a slender lead until the driver changeover in the middle of the race when he vacated the Porsche cockpit for Bachler with a 2.2 seconds advantage. The Austrian then extended this lead to 8.8 seconds over the gullwing Mercedes driven by Ludwig in the second half of the race until light rain began to fall ten minutes before the finish.

In tricky conditions, Schmid skidded off track in the Bentley five minutes before the end of the race which then turned into a procession behind the safety car to the chequered flag. Victory was thus assured for Engelhart and Bachler. Behind them, the contest between two Mercedes-Benz drivers resulted in Ludwig taking second place ahead of Simonsen. "My start was great," said Engelhart. "I was able to pull out a small lead by the time the pit stop came round. Our pit stop was perfect, enabling us to benefit from minor mistakes made by those in pursuit, and we extended our lead. Klaus then drove a great race to the end."

"My first ADAC GT Masters race could hardly have gone better," said a delighted Bachler. "I'm extremely happy with Christian's performance at the start. We did a perfect job, fought hard and didn't give up. Now we need to take as many points as possible from the second race on Sunday."

Corvette prevails over BMW

Andreas Wirth (30, Germany) and Daniel Keilwitz (25, Germany) in their Callaway Competition Corvette finished fourth. In a final stint that had plenty of wheel-to-wheel action, Keilwitz beat off competition from the two BMW Z4s fielded by BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, consigning

MEDIA INFORMATION

Dominik Baumann (22, Germany) / Jens Klingmann (24, Germany) and Claudia Hürtgen (43, Germany) / Jesse Krohn (24, Finland) to fifth and sixth place respectively.

Former DTM driver Rahel Frey (29, Switzerland) and Philip Geipel (28, Germany) of YACO Racing were the fastest Audi pairing in the season opener, finishing seventh ahead of fellow Audi drivers, Jordan Lee Pepper (18, South Africa) and Nicki Thiim (26, Denmark) of C.Abt Racing.

Marc Gassner (24, Germany) made a cracking debut. He was competing at Oschersleben in his first race behind the wheel of a GT3 sports car with partner Florian Strauss (30, Germany) for MRS GT-Racing. The two winners of the Nissan talent-spotting competition drove to ninth place in the Nissan GT-R, and Gassner took the class win in the Gentlemen category. Those two sports car racing veterans Tomas Enge (38, Czechia) and Oliver Gavin (42, Great Britain) placed tenth in the Reiter Engineering Chevrolet Camaro.

Bentley Team HTP finished out of the points on their ADAC GT Masters debut despite a convincing performance in qualifying. After bad luck at the start and a problem during the pit stop, Stolz and Jeroen Bleekemolen (33, Netherlands) will have felt frustrated with P11 which puts them outside the points.

Nissan one-two in Gentlemen class

Nissan secured their maiden victory in the Gentlemen class at Oschersleben. Gassner drove to a class win in his debut race in the ADAC GT Masters at his first attempt, benefiting from the misfortune of MRS GT-Racing team-mates Dominic Jöst (36, Germany) and Florian Scholze (41, Germany). Jöst and Scholze had a clear lead until the middle of the race but finished as runners-up after receiving a drive-through penalty for exceeding the speed limit in the pit lane. Jakub Knoll (24, Czechia) in the BMW Z4 placed joint third in the Gentlemen standings along with fellow Senkyr Motorsport driver Lennart Marioneck (26, Germany).

Second chance for Bentley on Sunday

The Bentley power coupés have a second chance in Sunday's race (starting at 1pm on SPORT1) after finishing out of the points in the first race at Oschersleben. Bleekemolen in the Continental will start on pole in front of Thiim in the Audi. Ludwig in the Mercedes-Benz and Keilwitz in a Corvette share the second row.

Result: Race 1:

1. Christian Engelhart / Klaus Bachler (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R), 38 laps
 2. Sebastian Asch / Luca Ludwig (Team Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), +0.683 sec
 3. Hari Proczyk / Andreas Simonsen (HP Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), +1.416 sec
 4. Andreas Wirth / Daniel Keilwitz (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +2.688 sec
 5. Dominik Baumann / Jens Klingmann (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3), +3.215 sec
 6. Claudia Hürtgen / Jesse Krohn (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3), +4.405 sec
 7. Rahel Frey / Philip Geipel (YACO Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), 5.841 sec
 8. Jordan Lee Pepper / Nicki Thiim (C.Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), 6.460 sec
 9. Marc Gassner / Florian Strauss (MRS GT-Racing, Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3), +7.299 sec
 10. Tomas Enge / Oliver Gavin (Reiter Engineering, Chevrolet Camaro GT), +9.475 sec
- 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.

MEDIA INFORMATION

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.

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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