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Triumph for Lamborghini at Red Bull Ring

- Russell and Enge win on ADAC GT Masters debut for new Lamborghini Gallardo
- P3 for Asch and Ludwig in Mercedes-Benz takes them to top of standings
- Corvette driver Lips secures Gentlemen class victory in Austria

Spielberg (Austria): Lamborghini made an impressive comeback to the Super Sports Car League with a victory at the Red Bull Ring in the south-east of Austria for David Russell (33, AUS) and Tomas Enge (38, CZE) in a Gallardo R-EX entered by Reiter Engineering. In conditions of extreme heat, Enge and his new team-mate from Australia claimed a first race win in the ADAC GT Masters for a Lamborghini since the equivalent fixture at the Red Bull Ring in 2011. The victory also ended a four-race winning streak at the track in Austria for Daniel Keilwitz (25, GER) in his Callaway Competition Corvette by a margin of 0.944 seconds. Keilwitz and co-driver Andreas Wirth (30, GER) finished in second place ahead of Luca Ludwig (26, GER) and Sebastian Asch (29, GER) in a Team Zakspeed Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG, for whom a third podium of the season was enough to take them to the top of the championship standings.

“On the final laps, the pressure from the Corvette was intense, but I was able to control the gap,” said Ex-Formula 1 driver Enge with evident delight after his first ADAC GT Masters win. “We took a big risk switching from the Chevrolet Camaro to the Lamborghini. We also brought in a fast driver from Australia, David Russell, who didn’t know anything about the series, the track or the car. But our massive confidence in the car and the driver has been vindicated.”

Key facts, Red Bull Ring, Spielberg, Austria, Race 3/16

Length of track: 4,326 metres

Weather: 31 °C, sunny

Pole position: Philipp Eng (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R), 01:30.358 mins

Winners: David Russell & Tomas Enge (Reiter Engineering, Lamborghini Gallardo R-EX)

Fastest race lap: Tomas Enge (Reiter Engineering, Lamborghini Gallardo R-EX), 01:30.832 mins

Nissan dominates first half of race

The star turn of the first stint contested in extremely high temperatures of over 30 °C was the Nissan GT-R. On the very first corner, Dominic Jöst (36, GER) in his MRS GT Racing Nissan drew past pole-sitter Philipp Eng (24, A) in the GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport Porsche to take a lead which he then held comfortably until the halfway mark. Meanwhile, Eng was forced to concede second place to Russell in the Lamborghini, who then pursued the leading Nissan to the pit stop.

The Lamborghini duo managed to complete their changeover three seconds faster, which brought Enge out ahead of the Nissan. But 20 minutes before the end of the race, there was huge disappointment in the Nissan camp as Florian Scholze (42, GER) limped home to the pits after a recurrence of the electronics problem that had dogged the team all weekend. Corvette man Keilwitz inherited second place and mounted a furious pursuit of race leader Enge. But ultimately, he was forced to concede defeat by less than one second. After a good start and an error-free race, Asch and Ludwig finished third, which was enough to see them take over at the top of the championship table.

“My start was not the best, but it was good enough to immediately get us into the battle for the lead,” said Russell after becoming the first Australian to win an ADAC GT Masters race. “The Nissan was very strong in the first stint, but I was able to stay in touch. Tomas then did a great job for the remainder of the race. My first race in this series and my first win – I couldn’t be happier.”

MEDIA INFORMATION

“The result is far better than expected,” said an exhilarated Enge. “We had a great car, and our hard work of recent months has paid off here. So far, we have not allowed ourselves to make the slightest mistake this weekend. This performance by David is incredible, because he has never been here before. It’s a challenging track anyway and the field is massively competitive with 18 cars within one second of each other. Tomorrow, we aim to be on the podium again.”

Austrians Eng and Bachler fifth in Porsche

Finishing fourth were Italy’s Diego Alessi (43) and Patrick Assenheimer (23, GER) in another Callaway Competition Corvette. The 2013 champion and his talented young co-driver prevailed over the Austrian pairing of Klaus Bachler (23, A) and Philipp Eng in a Porsche 911 GT3. The fifth place was a creditable result in the circumstances, after an enforced tyre change due to a slow puncture. Having led the championship after the first race weekend, Bachler might otherwise have been a contender for the podium.

Lips wins Gentlemen class

There was also a strong debut for the second Lamborghini in the field, the bright green Huracán entered by Grasser Racing based in nearby Knittelfeld and driven by Adrian Zaugg (28) of South Africa and Mirko Bortolotti (25) of Italy. It might have emerged from its maiden ADAC GT Masters outing with an even higher placing than sixth if it had not been hit with a drive-through penalty for exceeding the pit lane speed limit. In seventh place overall and first place in the Gentlemen class was Switzerland’s Remo Lips (32) partnered by Sven Barth (34, GER) in their RWT Racing Team Corvette. Lips claimed his first class victory of the year ahead of Andreas Weishaupt (42, GER) in a C Abt Racing Audi R8.

Claudia Hürtgen (43, GER) and Uwe Alzen (47, GER) in their BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert BMW Z4 finished eighth in one of many exciting battles for position ahead of the kfzteile24 MS RACING Audi R8 driven by Florian Stoll (33, GER) and Marc Basseng (36, GER) and the C Abt Racing Audi R8 of Stefan Wackerbauer (19, GER) and 2014 champion Kelvin van der Linde (18, ZA).

Lamborghini and Corvette share front row on Sunday

The outcome of the first race promises another close-run affair on Sunday (live on SPORT1 commencing at 1pm CEST). The Top Two from today’s race – the Lamborghini and the Corvette – share the front row tomorrow. Starting just behind in third is Florian Strauss (30, GER) in an MRS GT-Racing Nissan GT-R alongside Mirko Bortolotti in the Lamborghini Huracán.

Result: Race 1

1. David Russell / Tomas Enge (Reiter Engineering, Lamborghini Gallardo R-EX), 39 laps
2. Andreas Wirth / Daniel Keilwitz (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +0.944 sec
3. Sebastian Asch / Luca Ludwig (Team Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG), +8.201 sec
4. Patrick Assenheimer / Diego Alessi (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +23.592 sec
5. Philipp Eng / Klaus Bachler (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R), +24.044 sec
6. Adrian Zaugg / Mirko Bortolotti (Grasser Racing, Lamborghini Huracán GT3), +25.933 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 purchase tickets in advance. Prices start at 20 euros and include access to the paddock. ADAC members can take advantage of 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 eight events and 16 races of the 2015 ADAC GT Masters season are to be staged at venues in Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. 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:

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| 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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