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Schneider sets record lap time to take ADAC GT Masters pole at Spa

- Pole position in both races for Mercedes-Benz at Spa-Francorchamps
- Bernd Schneider claims pole position with record lap time on ADAC GT Masters debut
- Sebastian Asch books P1 slot on the grid for Saturday's race

Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium: Bernd Schneider (50, Bottighofen/CH, HP Racing) has made an impressive ADAC GT Masters debut. On his first outing in the Super Sports Car League, he steered his HP Racing Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG to pole position at Spa-Francorchamps, setting a record for the series in the process. His qualifying lap averaged out at a speed of 182kph, the fastest ever clocked on an ADAC GT Masters weekend. "I even amazed myself by taking pole," said a delighted Schneider after qualifying. "I had been counting on a Top Five grid position, so the pole and a lap time as good as this certainly exceeded expectations." Schneider made it two pole positions out of two for Mercedes-Benz in Belgium after Sebastian Asch (29, GER) placed his Team Zakspeed Gullwing ahead of the field for Race 1 on Saturday. SPORT1 will be showing both ADAC GT Masters races (Saturday and Sunday) from Spa-Francorchamps commencing at 11.45am CEST.

Key facts: Circuit Spa-Francorchamps, Francorchamps; Qualifying for Rounds 5 and 6 of the 2015 season

Track length: 7,004 metres

Weather: 13°C, heavily overcast

Pole position for Race 1: Sebastian Asch (Team Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), 02:19.093 mins

Pole position for Race 2: Bernd Schneider (HP Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), 02:18.504 mins

Qualifying 1 for the race on Saturday:

Under an overcast sky, Sebastian Asch timed his run to perfection. The current championship leader went out on track as soon as qualifying commenced. On the seven-kilometre 'Ardennes rollercoaster', he put the first lap time on the leader board before improving on it twice in the subsequent laps. It was a time that no-one else was able to match for the remainder of the session. The second-fastest time by a margin of 0.159 seconds was posted by Jens Klingmann (24, GER) in a BMW Z4 entered by BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert. Austria's Martin Ragginger (27) in a GW IT Racing Schütz Motorsport Porsche 911 starts from third alongside Stefan Wackerbauer (19, GER) in a C.Abt Racing Audi R8.

"With the weather being so changeable and rain on the way, I went out right at beginning and put in three laps at full throttle," said Asch commenting on his fourth pole position in the ADAC GT Masters. "I had a clear track ahead of me and our Mercedes-Benz ran perfectly. We have good starting positions for both races, so now we need to convert them into good results."

Fresh from a maiden win at the Red Bull Ring, David Russell (33) qualified fifth in his Reiter Engineering Lamborghini Gallardo. Unfortunately, the Australian will derive no benefit from this after subsequently smashing into the barrier. Since the Gallardo is too badly damaged to be repaired on site, the weekend came to a premature end for Russell and his Aussie team-mate Steve Owen (40).

Qualifying 2 for the race on Sunday:

Schneider, Alzen and Ludwig – these three established names from the German motor racing scene set the pace in the second qualifying session. Schneider posted a record lap to claim pole and start ahead of two BMWs on Sunday: "Our car was already excellent in free practice, but the lap time in qualifying was much faster than I had expected. We've come here to enjoy ourselves, and the further forward we are, the more fun we'll have."

The record DTM championship winner is joined on the front row by a good friend from former DTM days, Uwe Alzen (47, GER) in a BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert BMW Z4. In third place is Dominik Baumann (22, A) in a second BMW entered by Schubert. Luca Ludwig (26, GER) in a Team Zakspeed Mercedes-Benz qualified fourth ahead of his closest rival in the championship, Klaus Bachler (23, A) in a GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport Porsche 911.

SPORT1 will be broadcasting both races (Saturday and Sunday) from Spa-Francorchamps, with live coverage commencing at 11.45am. The races can also be watched live online at www.adac.de/gt-masters.

Result: Qualifying 1 for the race on Saturday (Top 6)

1. Sebastian Asch (Team Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), 02:19.093 mins
2. Jens Klingmann (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3), +0.159 sec
3. Martin Ragginger (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R) +0.437 sec
4. Stefan Wackerbauer (C.Abt Racing, Audi R8 LMS ultra), +0.638 sec
5. David Russell (Reiter Engineering, Lamborghini Gallardo R-EX), +0.644 sec
6. Luca Stolz (Bentley Team HTP, Bentley Continental GT3), +0.789 sec

Result: Qualifying 2 for the race on Sunday (Top 6)

1. Bernd Schneider (HP Racing, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), 02:18.504 mins
2. Uwe Alzen (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3), +0.192 sec
3. Dominik Baumann (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, BMW Z4 GT3), +0.619 sec
4. Luca Ludwig (Team Zakspeed, Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3), +0.747 sec
5. Klaus Bachler (GW IT Racing Team Schütz Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R), +0.888 sec
6. Daniel Keilwitz (Callaway Competition, Corvette Z06.R GT3), +0.944 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.

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 1pm 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

MEDIA INFORMATION

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