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ADAC GT Masters alpine spectacular: Supercars vie for points at the Red Bull Ring

- ADAC GT Masters debut for BMW DTM driver António Félix da Costa
- First start of the season for Kévin Estre; series debut for US racer Eric Curran
- Karl Wendlinger to drive Mercedes-Benz gullwing

Munich: Summer, sun, holidays, Red Bull Ring. The ADAC GT Masters ushers in the second half of the 2016 season with the fourth (22nd - 24th July) of seven race weekends. The focus of attention will be on the tight battle at the top and on the presence of so many Austrian teams and drivers competing in their annual home fixture. Two high-profile drivers will be making their Super Sports Car League debut as guest entrants: BMW DTM driver António Félix da Costa (24, P, Schubert Motorsport) will be behind the wheel of a BMW M6 while Eric Curran (41, USA, Callaway Competition), who is currently second in the American IMSA sports car series, will be driving a Corvette C7. Porsche works driver Kévin Estre (27, F, KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard) and ex-Formula 1 and DTM driver Karl Wendlinger (47, A, Car Collection Motorsport) make their first start of the 2016 ADAC GT Masters season driving a Porsche 911 and a Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG respectively.

Key facts, Red Bull Ring, Spielberg, Rounds 7 and 8 of 14

Length: 4,326 metres

Layout: Seven turns (five right-handers, two left-handers), clockwise direction

Last year's winners of Race 1: David Russell / Tomáš Enge (Reiter Engineering, Lamborghini Gallardo R-EX)

Last year's winners of Race 2: Adrian Zaugg/Mirko Bortolotti (Grasser Racing, Lamborghini Huracán GT3)

ADAC GT Masters at the Red Bull Ring on TV: Both races (Saturday and Sunday) will be broadcast live on SPORT1. See attachment for overview of the TV schedules.

Set amid the beautiful mountain scenery of Styria (Austria), the Red Bull Ring circuit extends over 4,326 hilly metres. Because of its varied characteristics and picturesque backdrop, it has been an integral part of the ADAC GT Masters calendar since 2011 and is very popular with all the drivers. And that includes current championship leader Christopher Mies (27, DEU, Montaplast by Land-Motorsport): "The Red Bull Ring is an up-and-down track with a smooth-flowing configuration. They have resurfaced it this year, which means there are now fewer bumps. We went there for testing immediately after the most recent race weekend at the Lausitzring. It was a lot of fun."

Together with his team-mate Connor De Phillippi (23, USA), Mies has been a prime contender for the title since the season opener. The Audi duo's lead has, however, shrunk to just three points. "We are the only driver pairing to have scored points in every race so far – the only missing element is an outright win. Connor and I use our heads. Even when things haven't gone so well in qualifying, we still battle our way through in the races themselves. I hope that we stay top after the Red Bull Ring."

Daniel Keilwitz (26, DEU, Callaway Competition) will fancy his chances of taking over from Mies, based on his record as the most successful ADAC GT Masters driver at the Red Bull Ring. In the 2016 season he and his team-mate Jules Gounon (21, F) have won two out of the last four races. "I think that we are capable of building on our excellent form at the Red Bull Ring and of making a serious challenge for the top of the table," said Keilwitz, who won four successive victories in Austria during the 2013 and 2014 campaigns. "It's a track that always suited the old

Corvette Z06.R, so I'm assuming that it will also suit our new model C7. On the uphill sections, we can benefit from our strong torque."

The event in Austria is a home fixture for two of the ADAC GT Masters teams – HB Racing WDS Bau and GRT Grasser Racing – as well as five of the drivers. They include Karl Wendlinger, Lausitzring winner Martin Ragginger (28, A, Precote Herberth Motorsport), Daniel Dobitsch (31, A, kfzteile24 APR Motorsport) and Gerhard Tweraser (27, A, GRT Grasser Racing Team). The same goes for Lamborghini man Norbert Siedler (33, A, HB Racing WDS Bau), who has special memories of the Red Bull Ring: "My only victory in the ADAC GT Masters to date came in 2011 in front of my home crowd. That was obviously a very nice feeling. This year too, my family and friends will be at the track to support me. We haven't had a very good season so far, having scored only two points. I hope we can put on a good show. A Top Five result would be great."

Fellow Austrian Karl Wendlinger is also relishing the prospect of a home race: "This is a very special event in two ways. Firstly, I'm very pleased to be back in the ADAC GT Masters. This is such a strong series with so many different vehicle designs. Secondly, I'm looking forward to the Red Bull Ring and my fellow countrymen urging me on. Working in my favour is the fact that I know the SLS pretty well after having driven the car in a lot of other race series recently. It is important that we identify a good setup for the Red Bull Ring and that I quickly get used to the Pirelli tyres."

On the basis of their impressive results in the first six races, Connor De Phillippi and Jules Gounon are now running neck and neck in the Junior classification for entrants under 25. In the Trophy (i.e. the class for amateurs), Switzerland's Remo Lips (33, CH, RWT Racing) driving a Corvette currently has the advantage.

Two drivers will be making their ADAC GT Masters debut at the Red Bull Ring: António Félix da Costa is stepping in for the otherwise engaged Louis Delétraz (19, CH) as partner to Jesse Krohn (25, FIN) in the BMW M6 entered by Schubert Motorsport. "I just can't wait to drive this magnificent car in race conditions," says da Costa ahead of his first competitive outing in a GT sports car. "I've pretty much tried everything in my career as a racing driver, but a GT car is something new. I am also looking forward to working with Jesse and the Schubert team. I don't know the team yet, but I have competed against Jesse in the past. This will be the first time we have shared a cockpit. I think I'll have to adjust my style and get used to the BMW M6 as well as to the series. So this ADAC GT Masters race weekend is the perfect opportunity for that."

Constituting an all-American team are Eric Curran and veteran partner Boris Said (53, USA, both Callaway Competition), who will be competing for the first time together in a Corvette C7. Making his first start of the 2016 ADAC GT Masters season, Porsche works driver and adoptive Austrian Kévin Estre shares a Porsche 911 prepared by KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard with David Jahn (25, DEU). Estre: "I look forward to my first race as a member of the KÜS TEAM75 Bernhard squad. The performance and the result at the Lausitzring were promising, so we are in with a real chance of success at Spielberg. The Red Bull Ring is one of my favourite tracks, and so far I have only fond memories of the ADAC GT Masters series."

Varied support programme

In addition to the two ADAC GT Masters races, spectators travelling to the Red Bull Ring can also enjoy the action provided by various other racing series. ADAC Formula 4 and ADAC TCR Germany are about to commence the second half of their own seasons. Exciting wheel-to-wheel racing is guaranteed in the two single-make cups – the Renault Clio Cup Central Europe and Trofeo Abarth Europe. Fans of the ADAC GT Masters will have several opportunities during the weekend to mingle with their idols, e.g. the Pitwalk (Saturday 12:10 and Sunday 11:10) and the

MEDIA INFORMATION

Meet the Drivers session (Saturday 15:45 at the Bull's Lane terrace). Drivers will be signing autographs and posing for selfies.

Fans wishing to experience the ADAC GT Masters live at the racetrack can purchase tickets for all fixtures for the price of 20 euros, which includes access to the paddock, from www.adac.de/motorsport.

2016 ADAC GT Masters schedule

15/04/16 - 17/04/16 Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
29/04/16 - 01/05/16 Sachsenring
03/06/16 - 05/06/16 Lausitzring (with DTM)
22/07/16 - 24/07/16 Red Bull Ring/Austria
05/08/16 - 07/08/16 Nürburgring
19/08/16 - 21/08/16 Circuit Park Zandvoort/Netherlands
30/09/16 - 02/10/16 Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

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

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