

Press Release – 30 May 2012 / No 37

Daniel Keilwitz: “Surprised to be topping the table”

- Keilwitz/Alessi head ADAC GT Masters leader board
- Targeting Top Five finish in Sachsenring race

Maiden victory and championship lead: Following the ADAC GT Masters weekend at the Circuit Park Zandvoort in the Netherlands, Daniel Keilwitz (22, Villingen) and team-mate Diego Alessi (40, Italy) have double cause for celebration. The 2010 FIA GT3 European champion and his Callaway Competition team-mate take their Corvette Z06 to the next race of the season at the Sachsenring (8th - 10th June) as current leaders in the Super Sports Car League. In an interview with www.ADAC.de/motorsport, Keilwitz talks about the strengths of the Corvette and his expectations for the challenging rollercoaster circuit near Chemnitz (Saxony).

After securing your maiden victory in the ADAC GT Masters and going straight to the top of the championship table, you must be very satisfied with the way your season has started?

“It feels good to be at the top. At the same time, though, it’s also quite amazing for us to be up there with the front-runners. We didn’t expect to be quite that fast at Zandvoort, and we were surprised by the result. Zandvoort is actually a track that favours cars with good aerodynamics, whereas the strengths of the Corvette are in its powerful engine and excellent braking. All the same, things went really well for us at Zandvoort, and much better than expected.”

Callaway Competition have overhauled the Corvette for the 2012 season. Where are the modifications especially noticeable?

“The changes to the chassis have given the car a better balance, which allows the driver a little more leeway at the limit. In addition, the engine is very good. I was highly sceptical at first, because it has less capacity and therefore a lower torque. However, I’ve been pleasantly surprised, because we now have a wider rpm range, and at Zandvoort, the new engine proved just how good it is.”

This is now your third year with Callaway – to what extent are you personally involved in developing the car?

“As a matter of principle, the team always asks for input from its drivers, including of course my team-mates Diego Alessi and Heinz-Harald Frentzen. There are some aspects that don’t matter a great deal to me but are important for other drivers. We see ourselves as a team and work these things out together. In the ADAC Zurich 24hr race at the Nürburgring, I shared the Corvette with three works drivers from Corvette Racing; their observations were also incorporated into the ongoing development of the car. But I’m usually the one who first tries out any changes on the track.”

Oschersleben
30/03/12 – 01/04/12

Zandvoort (NL)
04/05/12 – 06/05/12

Sachsenring
08/06/12 – 10/06/12

Nürburgring *
13/07/12 – 15/07/12

Red Bull Ring (A)
10/08/12 – 12/08/12

Lausitzring
24/08/12 – 26/08/12

Nürburgring
14/09/12 – 16/09/12

Hockenheim
28/09/12 – 30/09/12

* same weekend as
ADAC Truck Grand Prix



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Your team-mate Diego Alessi was in top form at Zandvoort, claiming his first ever pole position there. What has made him so strong this season?

“Diego is a very fast driver, and the new car suits him perfectly. The new Corvette requires a slightly different driving style which is very much in keeping with his own.”

What are your expectations for the next race at the Sachsenring?

“Mid-engine sports cars have always performed well on the Sachsenring, so as I see it, Audi, Ferrari, Lamborghini and even the Ford GT have to be the favourites again this year. After our good showing at Zandvoort, I think that we should also do well on the Sachsenring, and I’m hopeful that we can finish in the Top Five. We’ve also learnt a lot from our mistakes last year: instead of trying to barge our way through, we now prefer to hang back and wait for the right moment. This tactic has so far stood us in good stead. In the first race of the season at Oschersleben, our strategy was good enough for a podium; then in the second race at Zandvoort, we came a way with a sizeable points haul and a lead in the championship table to boot. At the Sachsenring, we’ll be avoiding any unnecessary risks and playing it safe.”

All 16 races in the ADAC GT Masters are broadcast live on *kabel eins* free-to-air TV channel. Viewers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland can tune in at 12.15pm on Saturday and Sunday. The specialist channel SPORT1 will be broadcasting highlights of the ADAC GT Masters at the Sachsenring in the ADAC Masters Weekend Magazine on 16th June at 11.45am. For continuous updates on completed laps and times during free practice and races, check out the Live Timing page at www.adac.de/motorsport.

ADAC GT Masters website press section: You can access the new (temporary) press section by clicking on ‘Presse’ in the top menu bar of the ADAC GT Masters website. Then log on using your previous details.

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

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