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Schumacher in hot pursuit of Mawson: Title battle to be decided in ADAC Formula 4 finale at Hockenheim

- Schumacher: “I’ll do everything I can to convert this chance into success”
- Australia’s Mawson holds the aces
- ADAC Formula 4 title as perfect career springboard

Munich: When the result is announced of the 24th and final race of the 2016 ADAC Formula 4 on 2nd October and the second season of the ADAC High Speed Academy draws to a close, one of two contenders for the title will be crowned champion. Going into the grand finale at Hockenheim (30th September - 2nd October), the only drivers still within mathematical distance of lifting the trophy are Joey Mawson (20, Australia, Van Amersfoort Racing) and Mick Schumacher (17, Germany, Prema Powerteam). Although Mawson has an apparently comfortable 39-point lead ahead of the final three races, Schumacher has not given up on the title.

The tactics for the forthcoming contest will essentially be the same. “I’m top of the standings, which is a strong position to be in,” says Mawson, “but I’m focusing on my performance rather than on what might happen.” Schumacher is taking a similar approach: “There is no specific plan – I’ll treat this weekend just like all the others before, in other words, step by step, and then make the best of it.” However, the German also knows that the only way he can win the title is by attacking Mawson. “I will certainly be doing everything I can to convert this chance into success. As long as I have a chance, I will fight to exploit it.”

Schumacher is considered one of the most promising young talents in German motorsport. The son of record Formula 1 championship winner Michael Schumacher first came to public attention when he secured his maiden ADAC Formula 4 victory in 2015. In his second season, the youngster carried on where he left off in 2015. He immediately triumphed on the first race weekend at Oschersleben, and three more race wins were to follow in the course of the season.

However, the driver who has dominated the season is Mawson. The Australian has eight victories to his account and – perhaps even more significant in championship terms – the 20-year-old has scored double-digit points more consistently than any other driver. It is experience that sets apart the young man from Down Under: driving skills, clever tactics and striking the right balance between risk tolerance and aversion.

Friends off the track, opponents on the track, both aiming for Formula 1

In private, the relationship between last year’s team-mates at Van Amersfoort Racing is anything other than bitter rivalry. Before and after the races, they can often be seen in each other’s company. However, Schumacher has no difficulty in keeping the professional separate from the private: “On the track we are opponents, but off the track we are friends.” Mawson takes the same view. “Yes, we are definitely friends,” says the 20-year-old but also makes it clear: “Once we put on our helmets, we are fighting for our team and for ourselves.”

What unites the two is their common goal of one day competing in Formula 1. So for both of them, the final race on the Formula 1 track at Hockenheim will provide special inspiration. Mawson emerged from the last race of the previous campaign as winner and is returning with fond memories. "I like the track, especially the fast corners. The Hockenheimring offers good overtaking opportunities, and there will certainly be some great scraps out there."



For the two main contenders, taking the ADAC Formula 4 title would be the perfect springboard to the highest echelon of motor racing. All four Germans in the current crop of Formula 1 drivers – ADAC Formula 4 patron Sebastian Vettel, Nico Rosberg, Nico Hülkenberg and Pascal Wehrlein – won a junior formula series ADAC title before eventually graduating to Formula 1.

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