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Andrea Kimi Antonelli is the new ADAC Formula 4 champion

- **Antonelli wraps up the title ahead of the final race of the season on Sunday**
- **Nine wins this season form the basis for his success**
- **Prema Racing wins the Team championship**

Nürburg. ADAC Formula 4 has its champion: Andrea Kimi Antonelli (16/Prema Racing) was crowned champion of the 2022 season with races to spare, following victory in race 17 at the Nürburgring. “Absolutely unbelievable! It feels awesome to be ADAC Formula 4 champion. When I crossed the finish line, I screamed in elation down the team radio. That was an emotional moment. I will now enjoy the success and take everything in,” said the Italian. At the same time, the Mercedes Junior also celebrated winning the Team championship with Prema Racing. Behind the nine-time race winner, Taylor Barnard (18/GBR/PHM Racing) and McLaren Junior Ugo Ugochukwu (15/USA/Prema Racing) ended the season in second and third place.

Spectators at the ADAC Racing Weekend in the Eifel were treated to an entertaining opening race on Saturday morning. Under a cloudy sky and with temperatures around 12 degrees Celsius, the drivers lined up with wet tyres on their 180-hp Formula 4 cars. Pole-sitter Camara defended his lead ahead of Antonelli on the wet track. However, a safety car phase neutralised the field on lap eight. Two laps later, Camara continued to set the pace and retained the lead at the restart. Antonelli then launched the decisive manoeuvre on the next lap of the 5.137-kilometre Grand Prix circuit: the Mercedes Junior battled it out with the youngster from the Ferrari Driver Academy for several corners, before eventually taking the lead. In doing so, championship leader took another step towards the title and crossed the finish line ahead of Camara. Australian James Wharton (16/Prema Racing) completed the podium. Fourth place for Barnard was enough to keep the title race alive. Ugochukwu came home fifth.

Camara started the afternoon’s second race from the front of the grid again. However, Antonelli produced a lightning-quick start in rainy conditions and led by the time he reached turn one. Antonelli coped best with the challenging conditions at the iconic circuit in the Eifel Mountains, and extended his lead in the eventful early stages of the race. Even a safety car phase towards the end of the race could not stop the new champion from claiming his second win in a row at the Nürburgring. “The grip on the wet track was not particularly good, but I still managed to make an excellent start. As the race progressed, I did not need to take any big risks and knew that I was on course to win the title. Despite that, I kept my concentration right through to the finish and took the chequered flag as champion,” said Antonelli, describing the race from his perspective. With 303 points to his name, he now holds an unassailable lead in the Drivers’ Championship.

Behind him, an exciting battle for the podium positions was developing. Barnard it was who climbed into second place and went on to finish runner-up. “I felt a contact with the car in the first turn, which caused some slight damage. That was not ideal for my race,” said Barnard, who also finished runner-up

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behind Antonelli in the championship. Ugochukwu finished third to secure his best result so far in only his fifth race in the ADAC's high-speed school. This was also enough to earn him first place in the rookie standings. "The wet track conditions made the race pretty nerve-racking. However, I did not make any mistakes and am delighted with my first trophy in ADAC Formula 4," said Ugochukwu. Finland's Rasmus Joutsimies (Jenzer Motorsport) was fourth and scored valuable points for the Rookie competition. Ahead of the final race on Sunday afternoon, the 19-year-old leads Camara by seven points. Ferrari Driver Academy youngster Wharton completed the top five in the penultimate race of the season.

There were also big celebrations at Prema Racing, who won the Team championship. Ahead of Sunday's final race, the Italian team is sitting pretty at the top of the table with an unassailable 561 points. The most successful team of the 2022 season boasts an impressive record: in total, Prema Racing claimed 12 victories with four different drivers, and also secured pole position on nine occasions. "As a collective, we did a very good job. For us as a team, this title is very important, as it brings us together even more tightly," said Grazia Troncon, team manager at Prema Racing.

The final race of the ADAC Formula 4 season takes place at 11:35 on Sunday. Excitement is guaranteed: the reverse grid rule means that the top eight from the previous race will start in reverse order. Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi (16/Jenzer Motorsport) from Thailand lines up in pole position. The Rookie competition will then be decided in race 18. The livestream is available at motorsport.tv and adac.de/motorsport.

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