

# Media Information



15.11.2022

## German GT Champion, Raffaele Marciello: “I want to defend my title in the ADAC GT Masters”

- **Champion recharges his batteries on cycling tours with Marco Mapelli**
- **Talks to clear the air with Jules Gounon**
- **Tattoo fan Marciello: “I now have about 20 little works of art”**

Swiss racer Raffaele Marciello crowned a successful season with the title in the German GT Championship. In an interview, the 27-year-old champion from Mann-Filter Team Landgraf discusses the days immediately after the decisive weekend at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg. The Mercedes-AMG works driver also reveals his passion away from the track and looks ahead to 2023.

### **It is now a few days since you won the title in the ADAC GT Masters. How does it feel to be German GT Champion?**

Raffaele Marciello: It was simply fantastic to win the championship in the ADAC GT Masters. The lead we had meant that we did not have to take any big risks on the final weekend of the season at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg. That allowed me to enjoy the moment a bit more. I am very proud to be German GT Champion. I am now looking forward to next year and the challenges ahead.

### **How were the first few days after winning the title?**

I have driven quite a few races without a break, which can be quite tiring. After the season, I first had to take time to relax a little and come back down to earth. For this reason, I focussed on recharging my batteries. I also enjoyed the cycling trips together with Marco Mapelli. He is one of my best friends and we spend a lot of time together. A few days ago, I was in Barcelona for the “Night of the Stars”, where I was able to celebrate my title win again with the other Mercedes-AMG drivers. Furthermore, Jules Gounon and I took the opportunity to clear up what happened in Hockenheim. We talked it through and everything is fine between us.

### **How did you cope with the pressure on the deciding Saturday in Hockenheim?**

Pressure doesn't bother me, I am calm in situations like that. There are certain processes on a race weekend, which I always stick to. As such, even the finale was kind of routine for me. The pole position for the penultimate race of the season put me in a good position and allowed me to wrap up the title.

### **There were two title celebrations on the final weekend: Saturday evening in the team hospitality and a party organised by the ADAC in the paddock on Sunday evening. Which party stood out the most?**

Definitely the ADAC party. The race and the party the previous day meant I was a bit more tired. We partied until 05:00 on Monday morning.



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### **As champion, you must have received a lot of messages: which was the best?**

Yes, I really did receive a lot of messages. However, that had been the case all year. When I won the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps and the GT World Challenge Europe, my mobile phone never stopped ringing. By the way, I am the third Swiss driver to win the ADAC GT Masters in the past three years. As such, Ricardo Feller, who won in 2021, 2019 champion Patric Niederhauser and I had a good chat about it. It took me a few days after Hockenheim to reply to all the messages.

### **At what point, or at which race weekend, did you realise that you had a shot at winning the championship?**

I knew that the Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo is a damned fast car. After the weekend at the Nürburgring, I had a good lead in the championship. From then on, I consciously had an eye on the title. The key to the success was our consistency throughout the entire season. In the ADAC GT Masters, it is vital to score points on a regular basis.

### **You may have won the title alone as a driver, but there is also a strong team behind that success: Mann-Filter Team Landgraf. How does that cooperation work?**

The start of the season was not easy for me, as I am quite a straightforward character and was not always happy with the driver pairing. However, I had the full support of Klaus Landgraf and his team, and they did everything they could to make me happy. Lorenzo Ferrari brought a lot of speed to the table. I was then able to wrap up the title with the help of Maro Engel and Daniel Juncadella. The team and I have a super relationship. They even send me messages in German, but I always use the translator. Unfortunately, I have not learned the language, even though my father comes from the German-speaking part of Switzerland. I only know the rude words (laughs). However, I do speak English, Italian and French, and I also understand a bit of Spanish.

### **ADAC GT Masters champion, winner of the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, and champion in the GT World Challenge Europe – all in one season. What inspires and motivates a successful racing driver?**

I want to leave a lasting impression on the motorsport scene. I would like fans to remember and look back at my titles and successes for a long time. That is what motivates me. Plus, I am definitely different in my appearances to many of my fellow drivers, as I am a very direct person. I always try to be the best.

### **Your helmet is pink and blue, and also has a few fish on it. What is the design all about?**

Those are the colours of my sponsor BWT. However, I did not want to race in an all-pink helmet, so spoke to my designer about it. I wanted to use the unusual design to convey a message and raise awareness of the pollution of our oceans. For example, that is why my helmet features a fish trapped in a plastic bottle and another in chains.



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## Away from the racetrack, you enjoy cycling. What is so special about cycling, and are there parallels to motorsport?

I live in Lugano and can explore the beautiful surroundings in a completely different way on a bike. Bormio, the famous Stelvio Pass and the Dolomites are not far away either. Cycling is a very social sport, as you can chat a lot while you are riding. I like to go cycling with Marco Mapelli. He is definitely the better cyclist and more powerful on the pedals than I am. Cycling keeps me fit for my races. I also find cycling a good way to train my mental fitness. It is all about overcoming obstacles and your inner weaknesses. Just like in a GT3 car, I am always trying to push myself and do my best whenever I am on a bike. I even have a pink and blue helmet, which looks exactly like my motorsport helmet.

## How many kilometres does the German GT Champion do on his bike over the course of a year?

Cycling has been part of my life for three years, and I do about 5,000 kilometres in a good year. For comparison: Marco Mapelli is in the saddle for about 12,000 kilometres each year. If he had not made it as a racing driver, he would probably have been a professional cyclist. We sometimes ride to the racetrack together, such as for the races at the Nürburgring.

## You have the tattoo of a wing on both your forearms. What do they symbolise?

I have had a weakness for tattoos for about three years. I now have about 20 little works of art. However, the two you just mentioned are different: I have the wing of a devil on my right arm, while the left arm symbolises Jesus – the good side.

## How do you spend the long winter break?

I don't really have a break. During the winter months, I take part in endurance races in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. However, I will be sure to take the odd little breather before and after these events. We then kick off next year with such prestigious events as the 24 Hours of Daytona and the 12h race in Bathurst. Tests for the European season start in March, so I am always busy. However, that is what I live for. I love racing.

## Looking ahead briefly to next year: Will you defend your title in the German GT Championship in 2023?

I obviously want to defend my title in the ADAC GT Masters. The competition is very strong, and I would like to prove that my performance was no fluke. I really enjoyed the 2022 season.

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