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Title chase intensifies as second half of season gets underway

- **Juri Vips leads championship standings ahead of Felipe Drugovich and Marcus Armstrong**
- **Newcomer with a familiar name: Enzo Fittipaldi joins ADAC Formula 4 line-up**
- **US Racing looking for podium finishes in home race**

Munich: The second half of the 2017 ADAC Formula 4 season gets underway next weekend (4th - 6th August) at the Nürburgring, the famous circuit in the Eifel forest. The quest for honours in the ADAC High Speed Academy is more open than in any previous campaign. The leading trio of Juri Vips (16, Estonia, Prema Powerteam), Felipe Drugovich (17, Brazil, Van Amersfoort Racing) and Marcus Armstrong (17, New Zealand, Prema Powerteam) are separated by a mere nine points. Rounds 13, 14 and 15 will be shown live on TV by SPORT1 and can also be watched as a live stream on www.adac.de/motorsport, www.sport1.de and www.youtube.com/adac.

The Nürburgring weekend is a home fixture for the Kerpen-based US Racing team. Joint owners and team bosses Ralf Schumacher and Gerhard Ungar have high expectations for the event. Schumacher himself drove countless laps of the historic Nürburgring circuit during his time as a Formula 1 regular and describes it as one of his favourite tracks. In fact, it was where he made his own motor racing debut 25 years ago as a contestant in the then ADAC Junior Formula series. He is now into his second year as team principal in the successor ADAC junior competition.

Last year, US Racing failed to secure a victory in any of the three races at the Nürburgring: their best-placed driver was Jannes Fittje (18) who finished fourth in the third race. This weekend, however, they are determined to make it onto the podium for the first time. The hopes of US Racing rest especially on the shoulders of the 2016 rookie champion Nicklas Nielsen (20, Denmark) who is currently fourth in the championship. US Racing have a four-driver squad in the field.

The ADAC Formula 4 also welcomes a newcomer with a familiar name to the Nürburgring. Enzo Fittipaldi (16, Brazil) will be competing for the first time in the ADAC High-Speed Academy. The grandson of the two-time Formula 1 world champion Emerson Fittipaldi will be in the cockpit of a car prepared by Prema Powerteam, the outfit he drives for in the Italian Formula 4 series. "The Nürburgring is a great track," says the Brazilian. "I am looking forward to the challenge and aim to achieve some good results. There are many strong drivers in the ADAC Formula 4 starter field, and I feel sure that I'm going to learn a lot here."

Artem Petrov (17, Russia), who made his ADAC Formula 4 debut at the Red Bull Ring for Lechner Racing, is now driving for the Portuguese team DR Formula Racing, which is about to make its entry into the series.

The main focus, however, is on the exceptionally tight title chase led by Juri Vips. The Estonian has 150 championship points, seven more than Felipe Drugovich (143) and nine more than Marcus Armstrong (141). In seven of the twelve races so far, one or other of these three has lifted the winner's trophy. They have matched each other in terms of consistency as the campaign has progressed.

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“Mistakes are very, very costly,” says Juri Vips. “The opposition are simply too strong. We have to make sure that we do our job as well as possible and minimise the number of errors we make.”

Vips has good memories of the Nürburgring, having made two podium appearances in the equivalent fixture last year. Drugovich scored only once there in his rookie year, while Marcus Armstrong has never driven a Formula 4 racing car on the Nürburgring before. Armstrong has had a great start to his first year in ADAC Formula 4, having notched up two race victories so far. He is making up for a deficit in experience by fast and courageous driving.

Nicklas Nielsen is fourth on 93 points, leading a US racing trio occupying P4 to P6. Kim-Luis Schramm (20, Germany) is fifth on 86 points ahead of Switzerland’s Fabio Scherer (18) on 83. The fourth member of the US Racing squad, Julian Hanses, is ninth on 67 points.

The rookie stakes are also looking close, with the championship lead having changed hands yet again at Oschersleben. Mick Wishofer (17, Austria, Lechner Racing) currently tops the class after winning this particular category in all three races at the Motorsport Arena. The teenager from Vienna on 201 points is followed by Charles Weerts (16, Belgium, Motopark) on 187 points and Laurin Heinrich (15, Germany, Rennsport Rössler) on 167. Richard Wagner (17, Germany, Lechner Racing) on 160 points is also a contender for the rookie title.

ADAC Formula 4 on TV

SPORT1	05/08/17	14:30	Race 1	LIVE
SPORT1.de	05/08/17	14:40	Race 1	LIVE
SPORT1+	05/08/17	21:00	Race 1	First showing
SPORT1+	06/08/17	02:20	Race 1	Recording
SPORT1	06/08/17	11:00	Race 2	LIVE
SPORT1+	06/08/17	11:05	Race 2	LIVE
SPORT1.de	06/08/17	11:05	Race 2	LIVE
SPORT1.de	06/08/17	14:40	Race 3	LIVE
SPORT1+	07/08/17	01:40	Race 2	Recording
SPORT1+	07/08/17	02:20	Race 3	Recording
SPORT1+	10/08/17	08:25	Race 1	Recording
SPORT1+	10/08/17	09:10	Race 2	Recording
SPORT1+	10/08/17	11:40	Race 3	Recording
SPORT1+	12/08/17	04:50	Race 1	Recording
SPORT1+	12/08/17	05:35	Race 2	Recording
SPORT1+	12/08/17	08:05	Race 3	Recording

ADAC Formula 4 calendar 2017

28/04/17 – 30/04/17	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
19/05/17 – 21/05/17	Lausitzring (with DTM)
09/06/17 – 11/06/17	Red Bull Ring Spielberg/AUT
07/07/17 – 09/07/17	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
04/08/17 – 06/08/17	Nürburgring
15/09/17 – 17/09/17	Sachsenring
22/09/17 – 24/09/17	Hockenheimring



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