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ADAC GT Masters at the Nürburgring: Hot pursuit of ‘halftime champion’ Jules Gounon

- Corvette driver Gounon travels to the Eifel as championship leader
- Title rivals intent on making up ground at the Nürburgring
- SPORT1 to show both races live and in full

Munich: After four of the seven race weekends of the 2017 ADAC GT Masters season, Corvette driver Jules Gounon (22, FRA, Callaway Competition) has managed to pull out something of a gap at the top of the table. This coming weekend (4th - 6th August), the battle for the title continues at the Nürburgring. Gounon’s rivals are intent on clawing back the lead built up by the Frenchman. DTM star Lucas Auer (22, AUT, BWT Mücke Motorsport) will be making a second guest appearance of the current Super Sports Car League campaign. The two races will be broadcast live and in full on Saturday and Sunday from 1 pm onwards on SPORT1. They can also be watched as a live stream online via sport1.de, DAZN, adac.de/motorsport and youtube.com/adac.

Key facts, Nürburgring, Nürburg, Rounds 9 and 10 of 14

Length of circuit: 3,629 metres

Layout: 11 corners (seven right-handers, four left-handers), driven clockwise

Winners in 2016, Race 1: David Jahn and Kévin Estre (KÜS Team75 Bernhard, Porsche 911 GT3-R)

Winners in 2016, Race 2: Connor De Phillippi and Christopher Mies (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8 LMS)

ADAC GT Masters at the Nürburgring on TV: Both races (Saturday and Sunday) will be shown live on SPORT1. See attachment for broadcast schedule.

The ADAC GT Masters reaches a minor milestone at the Nürburgring next weekend when the Super Sports Car League stages its 80th race weekend since the series made its debut in the 2007 season. There is no obvious favourite to win the forthcoming event. In the eight races contested so far this year, victories have gone to seven different cars. The only driver to have lifted the winner’s trophy twice is current championship leader Jules Gounon. The Frenchman is currently riding a wave of success: last weekend, he won the 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps, sharing the cockpit of an Audi R8 with fellow ADAC GT Masters contestants Markus Winkelhock (37, DEU) and Christopher Haase (29, DEU). A week earlier, he claimed his second victory of the season on the fourth ADAC GT Masters race weekend at Zandvoort partnered by local favourite Renger van der Zande (31, NL) in a Corvette C7, thereby securing the unofficial title of ‘halftime champion’. As his regular co-driver Daniel Keilwitz (27, DEU) is still recovering from a broken leg, Alberto Costa (27, Spain) debuts in the series and will share the Corvette with Gounon at the Nürburgring round. “The Nürburgring is one of the tougher tracks for us and for the Corvette on the race calendar,” says Gounon. “We want two points-scoring finishes. I’m hoping for dry weather, but as we saw most recently at Zandvoort, our Corvette is also fast in the rain.”

The Mercedes-AMG contingent will be boosted by a celebrity returnee. Shortly after completing a Formula 1 test with Force India, DTM star Lucas Auer (22, AUT) will be teaming up with BWT Mücke Motorsport again at the wheel of their Mercedes-AMG GT3. On his ADAC GT Masters debut at Spielberg, the Austrian partnered by BWT Mücke Motorsport regular Sebastian Asch celebrated a podium appearance. “The Mercedes-AMG GT3 should work well on this track,” says two-time ADAC GT Masters Champion Asch. “I know the Nürburgring well, and I like it very much. We must try to have a problem-free weekend this time round and score a lot of points towards

the championship. The joint venture with Lucas at the Red Bull Ring worked out very well, and I see no reason why it should be any different at the Nürburgring. I'm looking forward to the weekend."

Gounon's closest pursuer in the battle for the title is BMW driver Philipp Eng (27, AUT, BMW Team Schnitzer), who is currently 44 points adrift. As at Zandvoort, the Austrian is sharing the BMW M6 GT3 with Nicky Catsburg (29, NL). Eng lost some ground in the title fight on the Dutch circuit: he came sixth on Saturday but went away from Sunday's race empty-handed after Catsburg was involved in a collision.

By contrast, reigning champions Connor De Phillippi (24, USA) and Christopher Mies (28, DEU, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) arrive at the Nürburgring in buoyant mood after winning Sunday's race at Zandvoort, the first time they have stood on the top rung of the podium during the current campaign and a result that was enough to take them up to fourth in the championship. Their aim now is to further reduce the 50-point deficit on Gounon.

The highest-placed Porsche pairing are Robert Renauer (32, DEU) and Sven Müller (25, DEU, both Precote Herberth Motorsport) in P5. The duo, who temporarily led the championship after their victory at the Lausitzring on the second weekend of the season, then failed to score on the next four outings, but were back in the Top Ten in Sunday's race at Zandvoort after mounting a strong charge through the field. The circuit in the Eifel should suit their car; the 911 GT3 R took two pole positions and one victory in 2016. "It would be nice if we could get back on the podium," says Porsche works driver Müller. "Speaking personally, Robert and I know the track very well. I had some successes there during my time in the Porsche Carrera Cup, which makes me think we should be contenders for the podium. That would be magnificent for the team." The 25-year-old is not averse to the wet weather that is so typical of the Eifel uplands: "At Zandvoort, we saw that the rain very much worked in our favour. With the Porsche, you have good weight distribution as well as good traction. So as far as we're concerned, it can rain as often as it likes for the rest of this year."

Mercedes-AMG are hoping that the Nürburgring will at last bring them a first win of the campaign. Chief flag-bearers for the three-pointed star are Luca Stolz (22, DEU) and Luca Ludwig (28, DEU). For Ludwig and Mercedes-AMG Team ZAKSPEED, the races at the Nürburgring constitute their home fixture. "We have a lot of catching up to do this time, as we haven't performed to our potential over recent race weekends," said the 2015 ADAC GT Masters champion. "Things should go better for us in our home race. It certainly won't be any easier, as the other manufacturers will also be good. But we're aiming for a podium finish, which is a result we haven't had there since 2014."

There is plenty more on the programme in addition to the ADAC GT Masters for fans at the Nürburgring this weekend. Other series sharing the bill will be ADAC Formula 4, ADAC TCR Germany, the Spezial Tourenwagen Trophy (Special Touring Car Trophy – STT) and the Renault Clio Cup Central Europe. Tickets can be ordered from the ADAC GT Masters official ticket shop at adac.de/motorsport and will also be available at the gate on the day.

2017 ADAC GT Masters Calendar

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, Austria
21/07/17 - 23/07/17	Circuit Zandvoort, Netherlands
04/08/17 - 06/08/17	Nürburgring
15/09/17 - 17/09/17	Sachsenring



MEDIA INFORMATION

22/09/17 - 24/09/17

Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

Further information at www.adac.de/gt-masters

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