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Pommer and van der Linde claim victory for Audi at the Nürburgring

- Maiden ADAC GT Masters win for Aust Motorsport
- BMW duo Nick Catsburg and Philipp Eng in runner-up spot
- Former champion Christopher Haase und best rookie Jeffrey Schmidt finish third

Nürburg: The Audi pairing of Markus Pommer (26, DEU) and Kelvin van der Linde (21, ZA) took the win in Sunday's ADAC GT Masters race at the Nürburgring and thereby also secured a maiden victory in the Super Sports Car League for Aust Motorsport. Nick Catsburg (29, NL) and Philipp Eng (27, AUT, both BMW Team Schnitzer) in the BMW M6 took second place ahead of Jeffrey Schmidt (23, CH) and Christopher Haase (29, DEU, both Montaplast by Land Motorsport) in another of the Audi R8s. "What a great race!" said a jubilant van der Linde. "I've had to wait two years for my latest win in the ADAC GT Masters, but we've got the right package and a great driver line-up this year."

Key facts, Nürburgring, Round 10 of 14

Length of track: 3,629 metres

Weather: 19 °C, slightly overcast

Pole position: Philipp Eng (BMW Team Schnitzer, BMW M6 GT3), 1:26.413 mins

Winners: Markus Pommer and Kelvin van der Linde (Aust Motorsport, Audi R8 LMS)

Fastest race lap: Christopher Haase (Montaplast by Land-Motorsport, Audi R8 LMS), 1:28.075 mins

Pole-sitter retains lead throughout stint

Pole-sitter Philipp Eng dominated the first stint of the race at the Nürburgring. The BMW driver defended his lead at the start and stayed out ahead until he handed the car over to his partner, Nick Catsburg. The race was decided during and after the round of pit stops. Catsburg exited the pit lane side by side with Pommer and initially retained the lead, but the race stewards thought that the BMW driver's move constituted 'unsafe release' and directed that positions should be exchanged. So Pommer went into P1 and began to draw away until the safety car came out yet again. After the restart, the BMW man was unable to match Pommer's lap times. The Audi driver eventually took his maiden victory in the ADAC GT Masters by a margin of 4.5 seconds. It was also a maiden win in the Super Sports Car League for Frank Aust's team. This success in the ADAC GT Masters marked the end of a long fallow stretch for Pommer's team-mate, Kelvin van der Linde. The last win for the 2014 champion came at the Sachsenring two years ago.

Catsburg and Eng were runners-up. This third podium finish of the season for Eng has now moved him up to second place in the 2017 championship and also reduced the deficit on current leader Jules Gounon (22, FRA, Callaway Competition) to 38 points, with four races to go. The Frenchman finished eighth in the Corvette C7 he now shares with Albert Costa (27, ESP). The Audi pairing of Jeffrey Schmidt (23, CH) and Christopher Haase (29, DEU, both Montaplast by Land-Motorsport) claimed the remaining spot on the podium. Schmidt also picked up his second winner's trophy of the weekend in the Junior class for drivers aged under 25.

Rolf Ineichen (39, CH) and Christian Engelhart (30, DEU, both GRT Grasser Racing Team) fought their way up from ninth on the grid to fourth place. Ineichen again won the Trophy class for amateur drivers, as he had done on Saturday. Dennis Marschall (20, DEU) and Patric Niederhauser (25, CH) were fifth in the second Audi R8 entered by Aust Motorsport, finishing ahead of last year's title winners Connor De Phillippi (24, USA) and Christopher Mies (28, DEU, both Montaplast by Land Motorsport).

MEDIA INFORMATION

Indy Dontje (24, NL) and Maximilian Buhk (24, DEU, both Mercedes-AMG Team HTP Motorsport) were the best-placed of the Mercedes-AMG contingent in P7. The final points-scoring positions went to championship leader Gounon and co-driver Costa in eighth, the Lamborghini Huracán pairing of Ezequiel Perez Companc (23, RA) and Mirko Bortolotti (27, ITA, both GRT Grasser Racing Team) in ninth and Saturday's runners-up in a Porsche, Mathieu Jaminet (22, FRA) and Michael Ammermüller (31, DEU, both KÜS Team75 Bernhard), in tenth.

Comments from the winners

Kelvin van der Linde (Aust Motorsport, Audi R8 GT3): "I had a tough fight at first with the Porsche driven by Sven Müller. I was a bit faster than him but couldn't get past. Our strategy was therefore the key to victory in the end. The team executed a really great pit stop, and we were able to draw level with the BMW. That's what decided the outcome of the race."

Markus Pommer (Aust Motorsport, Audi R8 GT3): "What a great feeling – a maiden victory both for me and for Aust Motorsport! We knew that the Audi would be strong at the Nürburgring, and Kelvin too with him having won the 24-hour race here in May. Even though it may have looked straightforward in the end, it wasn't. On the final few laps, the flags were out in the first and last turns to warn that the track was slippery. On the restart, I was the first driver to get there, and it wasn't easy to find the right braking point, but our car was really great today."

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
22/09/17 - 24/09/17	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

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

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