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“Two of the best races of the year and a very special atmosphere”: Home favourites looking forward to Austrian meeting

- Austrian drivers and teams have already enjoyed success in the 2018 ADAC GT Masters
- Four drivers and two teams aiming to do really well on home turf

Munich: Four drivers and two teams – the Austrian contingent from the ADAC GT Masters are really looking forward to their meeting at the Red Bull Ring this weekend (8th - 10th June). Their chances of success during the third round of the Super Sports Car League season are excellent; One driver and one team from the republic in the Alps have already tasted victory so far this season – Audi driver Max Hofer (18, A, Phoenix Racing) and Lamborghini outfit ORANGE1 by GRT Grasser. SPORT1 will broadcast the two races from Austria live and in full on Saturday at 12:45 pm and Sunday at 1:00 pm. They can also be watched online as livestream at sport1.de, adac.de/motorsport and youtube.com/adac.

Max Hofer travels to the Red Bull Ring buoyed by the success of his sensational win in the season opener at Oschersleben. He went out and promptly won his very first race in the Super Sports Car League along with Phoenix Racing team-mate Philip Ellis (25/GB). “That was totally amazing and something we never expected,” said the Austrian. However, Hofer will have to set his sights a bit lower for the races at his home circuit: “The Red Bull Ring is not an Audi track. Still, we intend to come away with as many points as possible. I think we will see two of the best races of the year there, because the Red Bull Ring is just great with its very special atmosphere.”

Christopher Zöchling (30, A) drives a BMW M6 GT3 for MRS GT-Racing and is also full of keen anticipation. The Austrian showed his form is improving last time out at Most along with BMW works driver Jens Klingmann (27, DEU) when they were the best-placed BMW team in the two races, finishing in the points both times. Zöchling aims to build on that success at the weekend, especially as he knows the circuit so well. “I’ve raced a couple of times at the Red Bull Ring, and even won the Porsche Supercup race there in 2015. I’m going to really enjoy racing a GT3 sports car for the first time at Spielberg. It’s difficult to say how the track will suit our M6. Being good on the brakes will be a key element, as will getting the right line around the many blind corners.” The team have come up with something special for Zöchling’s home meeting. The BMW now has a fresh, blue-black paint job, harking back to the Porsche 911 GT3 R, with which the outfit won at the Red Bull Ring on their ADAC GT Masters debut in 2011.

Klaus Bachler (26, A) and Clemens Schmid (27, A) also hope to finish up front. Bachler shares the drive in the Porsche 911 GT3 R prepared by KÜS Team75 Bernhard with Adrien de Leener (28, B) and achieved a podium in the ADAC GT Masters at the Red Bull Ring in 2015. “I’m really looking forward to my home race,” said the Austrian. “I grew up just 20 kilometres from the track and often went there as a kid. Porsche have usually had a strong showing at Spielberg in recent years. Our car is very good on the brakes, which is extremely important at this particular track. I hope things go well again this year. We are certainly well placed.”

Clemens Schmid partners Patrick Assenheimer (26, DEU) in the Mercedes-AMG GT3 fielded by AutoArenA Motorsport. “I’ve been in a different series during the last two years, and they never had a race meeting in Austria,” said the Tyrolean. “So it’s going to be great to compete on home turf. This weekend should be very special, as family and friends will be at the track.” Schmid thinks his chances are good: “We should definitely be among the front-runners.”

MEDIA INFORMATION

Two more Austrian teams, HB Racing and GRT Grasser Racing, will line up at the Red Bull Ring. HB Racing are based at Neumarkt in Mühlkreis near Linz and are fielding a Ferrari 488 GT3 for the first time during 2018, driven by Luca Ludwig (29, DEU) and Dominik Schwager (41, DEU). They made their first podium appearance of the year at the Oschersleben season opener. However, this weekend, Alfred Renauer (33, DEU) will stand in for Schwager, who is injured. "We're very pleased to have Alfred join us, a driver, who knows the team really well," said Team Principal Dietmar Hirsch. "Once we realised for certain that Dominik would be unable to race, we looked at our options and have managed to secure the services of one of the fastest drivers around with Alfred. He has already shown what he can do on many occasions, especially at the Red Bull Ring. We really rate Alfred and are very pleased to have him back in the team."

With headquarters at Knittelfeld in the immediate vicinity of the race track, GRT Grasser Racing are the second Austrian team in the series. The outfit has already achieved two wins at Spielberg with its Lamborghini Huracán GT3, once in 2015 and again last year. The team have three of the Italian supercars in this season's line-up and secured a pole position and a one-two win at Oschersleben. The three Huracáns are driven by Ezequiel Perez Companc (23, RA) and Franck Perera (34, F), Rolf Ineichen (40, CH) and Christian Engelhart (31, DEU), plus Mirko Bortolotti (28, ITA) and Andrea Caldarelli (28, ITA), who took a win at the season opener and compete under the banner of ORANGE1 by GRT Grasser.

Calendar for the 2018 ADAC GT Masters

13/04/18 – 15/04/18	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
27/04/18 – 29/04/18	Autodrom Most (CZ)
08/06/18 – 10/06/18	Red Bull Ring (AUT)
03/08/18 – 05/08/18	Nürburgring
17/08/18 – 19/08/18	Circuit Zandvoort (NL)
07/09/18 – 09/09/18	Sachsenring
21/09/18 – 23/09/18	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

Further information can be found at www.adac.de/gt-masters

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