**Junior driver Max Hofer, between the classroom and racing**

**The Hungaroring is the penultimate stop of the 2016 season for the Audi Sport TT Cup this weekend. The 16 regular drivers from eleven nations will contest races eleven and twelve as part of the DTM support programme at the 4.381-kilometre circuit outside Budapest. Since the cup's debut in 2015, premium tyre maker Hankook has supported the international Audi one-make cup with the *Ventus Race* racing tyre, ensuring the young drivers stay grounded as they take their first steps in professional motorsport.**

***Budapest/Hungary, 24th September 2016*** – One of the newcomers in the Audi Sport TT Cup this year is Max Hofer. The Austrian was given a second-hand kart by his parents when he was nine years old, and he won the MiniMax Austria just one year later. "As an Austrian, I actually wanted to become a skier or tennis player. But the kart meant that I got bitten by the motorsport bug and I'm still suffering today," explained the 17-year-old from Perchtoldsdorf near Vienna.

He collected junior titles in karting up until 2015, when he applied for the Audi Sport TT Cup. The Austrian: "I always enjoyed the rigorous selection procedures and the scouting training courses and never found them stressful. However, I had to make a huge adjustment and forget everything that I had learnt in the kart and basically start again from scratch."

The 17-year-old's greatest challenge in the junior series was correct tyre management. "The cars are the same for everyone and since you aren't really allowed to change the set-up of the car very much, handling the tyres correctly is what makes the difference. In qualifying in particular, a tenth more or less when it comes to air pressure can determine whether you start from the front or the back of the grid," said the youngster.

Hankook's *Ventus Race* helps him a great deal. "Before this season I didn't really have much experience of tyre management, it doesn't really make much difference in karting. I learned a great deal with the Hankook slick, which is very good and reliable. I know how to handle it and can totally rely on it."

The Austrian is keen to be part of the Audi Sport TT Cup again next season, at the same time as doing his school leaving examinations. "Ideally I would love to just concentrate on racing, but school is also important. However, I would like to stay with Audi and try to get a spot in the academy. My dream would be to get a seat in the DTM, or race at Le Mans – in an LMP1."

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