**Newcomer on course for success with Hankook race tyres**

**The Nürburgring hosted the Audi Sport TT Cup for the first time this season back in May. This weekend, the 24 pilots from 11 countries – 16 regular drivers and eight guest starters – return to the iconic circuit in the Eifel region of Germany to share the bill with the DTM. Exclusive DTM tyre partner Hankook has provided the junior series with the *Ventus Race* tyre since the inaugural race in 2015. The tyre boasts excellent performance and a high degree of consistency, thus offering the young drivers the security they need as they start out in professional motorsport.**

***Nürburgring/Germany, 10th September 2016*** – At 25 years of age, Christoph Hofbauer is one of the older drivers in the field. Unlike many of his colleagues, who first took their place at the wheel of a racing car at a very young age, he started racing karts just six years ago. Prior to that, he had only followed motorsport on TV.

As an engineering student, Christoph Hofbauer gained more racing experience in Formula Student Germany, before he heard of the new one-make cup – the Audi Sport TT Cup – at the 2014 DTM finale in Hockenheim. “I was chatting to a few people in Hockenheim and found out that you could apply to take part in the new junior series. I did precisely that, and was actually given a seat for the inaugural season in 2015,” says the man from Lippertshofen in Bavaria.

The Bavarian has proven to be a quick learner. “At first, I thought I would just be lapping at the back of the field. However, I benefitted an incredible amount from the professional environment at Audi and always received expert support, whether finding the right tyre pressure or the car set-up. As a result, I was developing all the time. My engineering studies also helped me to understand the technical details.”

Christoph Hofbauer finished ninth in his rookie year. This season, he has already made two appearances on the podium and has set his sights on the top of the overall standings. The Hankook race tyre is instrumental in the 25-year-old’s success. “Before I joined the Audi Sport TT Cup, a lot of people told me that conventional race tyres peak quickly and then degrade relatively dramatically. That is far from the case with the Hankook slick. It is fast and consistent for the entire race distance. You do not need to adapt to it every lap. It is the ideal tyre for newcomers,” says Christoph Hofbauer, who learned to push himself to the limit as an amateur climber.

The 25-year-old is looking forward to racing in the junior series again next year, and is looking to force his way into the top three. His dream is to compete as a professional racing driver at his favourite circuit in the Nürburgring 24 Hours. He also wants to specialise in vehicle development once he has finished his studies. Christoph Hofbauer: “If I am not in the driving seat, I would ideally work in motorsport.”

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