**Fast corners, abrasive asphalt, high kerbs: the circuit in the Zandvoort dunes puts race tyres to the ultimate test**

**The DTM and exclusive tyre partner Hankook are in Zandvoort, the Netherlands, for the fifth race weekend of 2016. When the chequered flag falls at the end of race one on Saturday – the ninth race of the year – it will mark the halfway point of the season. One day later, the second half of what is probably the most popular international touring car series kicks off with race two at the circuit nestled in the dunes on the North Sea coast. Rarely have fans been treated to a season as exciting as this one has been so far. Eight races have produced seven different winners, while Marco Wittmann (BMW) is just two and five points respectively ahead of his closest rivals Edoardo Mortara (Audi) and Paul Di Resta (Mercedes-Benz) at the top of the Drivers’ Championship. One reason for the strength of depth in the field is the outstanding overall performance delivered by the race tyre of premium tyre maker Hankook. With a high level of grip and absolute reliability, the Ventus Race has been the constant, on which the drivers have been able to base their individual race strategies.**

***Zandvoort/Netherlands, 13th July 2016 –*** This weekend marks the second foreign outing of the season, and the two races in Zandvoort (Netherlands), on the North Sea coast, pose a real challenge for any race tyre. The sharp and abrasive asphalt in particular, together with the sand blown across the track from the adjacent beach, place heavy demands on the Ventus Race. “The aggressive surface of the track puts greater strain on the race tyre’s tread than at other DTM circuits. On top of this you also have the sand, which impairs grip and can result in the cars skidding. As such, it is important for the drivers to remain on the racing line at all times, as this is soon swept clean by the cars,” explains Hankook DTM race engineer Thomas Baltes.

The layout of the track, which winds its way through the dunes, is extremely varied. Top-speed straights alternate with slow sections, while fast banked corners – some of which are located behind crests – lead into narrow and technical sections. Thomas Baltes: “You need a balanced car set-up in Zandvoort, in order to cope with all the features of the circuit. You have to have the right mix of performance and safety, as you are driving at the very limit here.”

Many drivers prefer their tyres to have low air pressure on the 4.307-kilometre strip of asphalt, in order to increase the contact area, and thus the grip level. As a result, the tyre construction is really put through its paces in the fast, sometimes banked corners. “Furthermore, the *Ventus Race* is subjected to strong downforce due to the high speeds. For this reason, having the air pressure too low can cause the tyre to wear more,” the Hankook DTM race engineer explains.

Another challenge for the race tyre comes in the form of the kerbs. Some of these are very high and often damaged due to their age. Despite this, the drivers regularly take them at speed. Thomas Baltes: “The dune circuit in Zandvoort puts greater strain on the Hankook race tyre than other DTM circuits. That goes for the tread, but even more so for the construction of the *Ventus Race*.”

The Tarzanbocht, a 180-degree corner at the end of the start/finish straight, offers the best overtaking opportunity. However, it is also possible to attack in the hairpin and the following chicane in the final sector. The track in the dunes soon becomes slippery when wet. “At first, the water mixes with the sand and forms a greasy film on the track. It is wise to be cautious then. If it continues to rain, the track is washed completely free of sand. However, whether in wet or dry conditions, the Hankook race tyre has always overcome the challenges in Zandvoort with great aplomb,” says Hankook DTM race engineer Thomas Baltes.

**About Hankook Tire**

Hankook Tire is one of the global top 5 companies in the mass production of tires and manufactures innovative, award winning radial tires of proven superior quality for passenger cars, light trucks, SUVs, RVs, trucks, and buses as well as motorsports (circuit racing/rallies).

Aspiring to bring consumers the utmost excellence in product quality, technological excellence and driving satisfaction, Hankook Tire continuously invests in research and development maintaining five R&D centers and seven production facilities around the world. Bespoke tyre solutions for the European markets as well as European Original Equipment according to the requirements of leading premium car manufacturers, are developed in the company’s regional Technical Centre in Hanover/Germany. Production for the European region is taking place in the state-of-the-art manufacturing site in Rácalmás/Hungary which was inaugurated in June 2007 and is continuously being expanded. Currently more than 3,000 employees produce up to 19 million tyres a year for passenger cars, SUVs and light trucks.

Hankook Tire’s European headquarters are located in Neu-Isenburg near Frankfurt am Main in Germany. The manufacturer operates further branches in Germany, UK, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Hungary, Czech Republic, Russia, Turkey, Sweden and Poland. Hankook products are sold directly through regional distributors in other local markets. Hankook Tire employs more than 22,000 people worldwide and are selling their products in over 180 countries. Internationally leading car manufacturers rely on tyres made by Hankook for their original equipment. Approximately 30 percent of the company's global sales are generated within the European and CIS-Region.

For more information please visit [www.hankooktire-press.com](http://www.hankooktire-press.com) or [www.hankooktire-eu.com](http://www.hankooktire-eu.com)

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| **Contact:**  **Hankook Tire Europe GmbH |** Corporate Communications Europe/CIS **|** Siemensstr. 5a, 63263 Neu-Isenburg **|** Germany | | | |
| **Anna Magdalena Pasternak**  PR Manager  Tel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 173  a.pasternak@hankookreifen.de  **Sven Kaatz**  Media Relations  Tel: +49 (0) 171 8609730  sk@9pm-media.com | **Sabine Spenkuch**  Public Relations  Tel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 174  s.spenkuch@hankookreifen.de |  |  |