**Mike Rockenfeller declared winner after Sunday’s DTM race in Zandvoort**

**Mike Rockenfeller was declared the winner of the twelfth race of the 2017 DTM season in a post-race decision at Circuit Zandvoort on Sunday. The Audi driver had finished runner-up after 37 laps of exciting racing. However, the first man across the finish line, Marco Wittmann (BMW), was subsequently disqualified after the race for a breach of the rules. The reigning DTM champion had less than the required 1,000g of fuel in his tank (Art. 29a.1). All the drivers consequently move up one place, giving the Ingolstadt-based manufacturer three drivers in the top three, in the form of Rockenfeller’s fellow Audi drivers Loic Duval and Mattias Ekström. The race tyre provided by exclusive DTM partner Hankook passed the tough test at the sandy circuit in the Zandvoort Dunes with flying colours. An additional challenge came as a result of the many aggressive overtaking manoeuvres, which frequently saw the cars make contact with each other in the front-axle area, resulting in many carbon parts being scattered across the track. Despite this, however, the *Ventus Race* still produced an outstanding all-round performance at the iconic racetrack in the Netherlands.**

***Zandvoort/Netherlands, 21st August 2017* –** Marco Wittmann started Sunday’s race from second on the grid, and immediately moved into the lead at the start. The BMW driver came in for his mandatory pit stop on lap twelve, after which he defended his lead right through to the finish on the new set of Hankook tyres. However, the German’s joy was short lived: the post-race technical inspection determined that there was too little fuel in his tank, which, according to the regulations, is to be penalised with disqualification.

As such, Mike Rockenfeller was subsequently awarded the fifth victory of his DTM career. The Audi driver had started from sixth place and was able to close the gap to Wittmann ahead of him on his new set of *Ventus Race* tyres, which he came in for on lap 13. However, he was unable to overtake the defending DTM champion ahead of him, and ultimately crossed the finish line in second place, 0.807 seconds behind Wittmann. As such, he was delighted to be declared the winner after the race – a result that propels him into third place in the Drivers’ Championship.

Wittmann’s disqualification saw newcomer Loic Duval promoted into second place, as the Frenchman claimed the first podium of his DTM career. The Audi man was consistently quick on his first set of Hankook tyres, and was the last of the drivers to pit for a fresh set of Hankook slicks on lap 26 – a brave strategy, for which he was rewarded. Fellow Audi driver Mattias Ekström was third and returns to the top of the overall standings, ahead of René Rast and Mike Rockenfeller, making it an all-Audi top three in the Drivers’ Championship. The best-placed Mercedes-Benz driver was Gary Paffett in fifth, while Maxime Martin was the fastest of the BMWs in sixth place.

Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe: “Just as it did on Saturday, the *Ventus Race* impressed again today, and showed its full potential. This time, it had more to cope with than the standard challenges faced by a race tyre, such as sand on the track and the new surface in Zandvoort. The fierce battles for position meant that the tyres were put under great strain as the cars collided with each other. Furthermore, carbon parts were deposited on the racing surface, and the cars repeatedly drove over these objects at top speed. The *Ventus Race* overcame all these challenges superbly. The disqualification is more than frustrating for Marco Wittmann, but those are the rules. Respect to DTM rookie Loic Duval, who did 26 laps on his first set of Hankook race tyres, and was rewarded for this tactic with the first podium finish of his fledgling DTM career.”

BMW Team RBM completed the fastest pit stop in Zandvoort, in a time of 27.363 seconds, giving them a further 25 points in the Hankook Best Pit Stop Award. The winning crew will also receive three crates of beer at the next DTM race weekend at the Nürburgring.

**Mike Rockenfeller (Audi):** “The tyres are obviously on the limit in these difficult conditions in Zandvoort, particularly when you are driving on them for a long time, pushing hard and have an aggressive set-up. We did almost the entire race on one set of tyres on Saturday. And in Sunday’s race too, the Hankook tyre felt very good for the whole distance. I did not have any issues, and could push the entire time. It obviously does not feel quite as good to be declared the winner after the race as it does to win out on the track. But, those are the rules in the DTM, and I will obviously gladly take the points.”

**Loic Duval (Audi):** “We drove a very long first stint. That is why I did not push too hard at the start, and tried to look after the Hankook tyre. I managed that, partly because I always had a free track ahead of me. The new set of Hankook tyres performed well again after the pit stop. They were quick and consistent. Tyre management on this difficult track was actually much easier than I thought it would be, and I am very happy with my first podium in the DTM.”

**Gary Paffett (Mercedes-Benz):** “It was an exciting race. I started from 17th on the grid and made up a lot of places in the race. I am very happy about that. Tyre management was obviously the main issue all weekend on this incredibly demanding circuit in Zandvoort. The key was always to be able to drive for as long as possible on one set of the Hankook tyres. That was a big challenge, but we managed it. My team set the car up perfectly, and I put everything into practice out on the track.”

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| **Contact:****Hankook Tire Europe GmbH |** Corporate Communications Europe/CIS **|** Siemensstr. 14, 63263 Neu-Isenburg **|** Germany |
| **Anna Magdalena Pasternak**PR ManagerTel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 173a.pasternak@hankookreifen.de**Sven Kaatz**Media RelationsTel: +49 (0) 171 8609730sk@9pm-media.com | **Yara Willems**Public RelationsTel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 172y.willems@hankookreifen.de |  |  |