**Hankook enters its eighth season with the DTM and steps up its international involvement in motorsport**

**Hankook and the DTM kick off their eighth season together in Hockenheim from 4th to 6th May. Since 2011, the premium tyre maker has been exclusive tyre partner to what is probably the most popular international touring car series, which Hankook has supplied with the fourth generation of the *Ventus Race* slick since the start of last year. The reduction of the amount of aerodynamic downforce generated by the DTM cars makes the Hankook race tyre, which must consequently provide more mechanical grip, even more important this season.**

***Germany, Neu-Isenburg, 26.04.2018*** – The evolution of the technical regulations is intended to make the 2018 DTM even more exciting and unpredictable. Aerodynamic add-ons on the exterior of the car have been reduced and mechanical elements under the chassis have been done away with. This has reduced aerodynamic downforce by roughly a third, resulting in less drag and, depending on the racetrack, a higher top speed. This, in turn, puts the emphasis back on the ability of the drivers, who must take full advantage of the high grip level generated by the Hankook race tyre.

Hankook’s Chief DTM Engineer, Thomas Baltes: “The teams used the tests in Hockenheim to explore every option – from the camber and air pressure to the suspension settings on the car – in order to find the ideal set-up for the car and the Hankook race tyre. The reduced downforce means that the forces that affect the tyre construction are lower than last season, when the old technical regulations were still in force. The reduction in the amount of aerodynamic downforce generated means that drivers and teams can, and actually must, push themselves even closer to the limit in order to get the *Ventus Race* working and to compensate for the lack of vehicle performance. As a result, one of the things they will be trying is to drive with less air pressure in the tyres than last year. On the whole, the range of set-up options is greater this year. Furthermore, the DTM drivers will not be able to use 100 percent of what they learned about the Hankook tyres in 2017. This will make the 2018 season even more fascinating. It is wide open, and that is precisely what the fans want to see.”

As well as the DTM, this year also sees the FIA Formula 3 European Championship, the Audi Sport Seyffarth R8 LMS Cup and the Supercar Challenge powered by Hankook, which are held as support series on DTM race weekends, race on Hankook tyres. Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe: “We very much welcome the number of different racing series on the DTM programme, as well as the international circuits in Misano (Italy) and Brands Hatch (England), which are either new or returning to the race calendar this season. This allows us to reach even more fans and spectators around Europe, who are passionate about motorsport. The fact that practically all the series on the DTM support programme will be racing on our tyres speaks volumes for the quality and versatility of the high-performance products supplied by Hankook. It also shows that our work and the investment in research and development is continuing to pay dividends.”

As well as the important commitment to the DTM, Hankook also supplied many international series with its *Ventus Race* line of motorsport tyres and is continuously expanding its cooperation with car manufacturers and organisers around the world. In January, the premium tyre maker opened the international endurance season with the 24H Dubai 2018, the first round of the 24H Series powered by Hankook, which comprises eight rounds on three continents. Hankook also supplied the *Ventus Race* to the VLN Endurance Championship and the 24H Nürburgring.

The same goes for the junior series – the FIA Formula 3 European Championship, FIA F4 Spain, SMP Formula 4, and the F4 British Championships certified by FIA – whose young drivers benefit from the high performance and consistency of the Hankook race tyres. Hankook also supplied the ADAC TCR Germany, Groupo Peroni Italy and the Supercup Challenge powered by Hankook in the Netherlands with its high-performance products. This year, the premium tyre maker has agreed an exclusive cooperation with automobile manufacturer Radical. Hankook will supply the new partner with the successful *Ventus Race* for international series including the North American Masters, European Masters, and the cup series in the Middle East, Canada, Australia and Scandinavia.

**Ulrich Fritz (Mercedes-AMG DTM Team Principal):** “We are delighted to be going into the new DTM season with Hankook as the tyre partner again. Over the years, Hankook has been a reliable partner, which always strives to help make the racing in the DTM both exciting and safe.”

**Dieter Gass (Head of** **Audi Motorsport):** “Since last season, the tyres have played an even bigger role in the DTM than in previous years. Whoever makes optimal use of them can gain a crucial advantage. We value Hankook as a reliable partner of the DTM.”

**Jens Marquardt (BMW Motorsport Director):** “The DTM race tyres are highly-complex products, which must perform perfectly under extreme strain and in all conditions – from cool temperatures to intense heat. As tyre supplier to the DTM, Hankook has been providing us with very good material for years. Changes to the regulations and the resulting decrease in downforce mean that we once again have different parameters to the data from last season. However, even given the changes, we are sure to be very well-positioned with Hankook again this year.”

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact:****Hankook Tire Europe GmbH |** Corporate Communications Europe/CIS **|** Siemensstr. 14, 63263 Neu-Isenburg **|** Germany |
| **Anna Pasternak**PR ManagerTel.: +49 (0) 61 02 8149 – 173a.pasternak@hankookreifen.de | **Yara Willems**Public RelationsTel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 172y.willems@hankookreifen.de  |  |  |