**Mike Rockenfeller celebrates his first**

**DTM win for two years in Assen**

**The Netherlands are a happy hunting ground for Mike Rockenfeller. The Audi driver won race ten of the 2019 DTM season on Sunday in Assen, ending a long barren spell in the process. The last time the 35-year-old tasted success in arguably the most popular international touring car series was back in 2017, when he triumphed in Zandvoort, the Netherlands. It was at the same venue on the north coast of Holland that Rockenfeller claimed the first victory of his DTM career in 2011. Unlike Saturday’s wet race, the Sunday race in Assen was held in dry conditions. With a track temperature of 30 degrees and some long stints, the running surface of the Hankook race tyre in particular was put under great strain. Despite the high demands placed on the tyre, the Ventus Race still allowed the first three drivers to follow a one-stop strategy on their way to success.**

***Assen/Netherlands, 21st July 2019*** – Mike Rockenfeller started Sunday’s DTM race in Assen from third place on the grid. Following a good start, the Audi driver climbed into second place, while pole-sitter René Rast (Audi) was able to defend his position out front. Rockenfeller came into the pits for his fresh set of Hankook slicks on lap 17, and lapped increasingly quickly on the new set. He ultimately caught and passed the leader and fellow Audi man Rast, before crossing the finish line in first place after 37 laps of racing.

Marco Wittmann produced a stunning performance to finish runner-up. Technical issues in qualifying meant the BMW driver had to start the race from last place. The 29-year-old set the fastest lap times from the word go and launched a furious fightback. He came in for his mandatory pit stop on lap 13 and proceeded to climb into second place on the new set of Hankook race tyres – a position he was able to defend, despite a very long second stint. Third place went to Audi driver Nico Müller, who was followed over the finish line in fourth and fifth place by fellow Audi men Jonathan Aberdein and Rast. Daniel Juncadella, in seventh place, was the best driver for DTM newcomers Aston Martin.

René Rast (Audi) continues to top the overall standings, ahead of Nico Müller (Audi). Marco Wittmann (BMW) climbs into third place. Today’s race winner Mike Rockenfeller now lies fifth. Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe: “The fans were treated to great motorsport on the DTM’s debut in Assen. Saturday produced a thrilling race in the wet, while the crowds here on Sunday also witnessed some exciting and tough battles on a very fast track in dry conditions. Rocky employed clever tactics and produced a flawless display to take a deserved victory, while Marco Wittmann’s great fightback was rewarded with second place. The surface of the Hankook race tyre, in particular, was put under great strain by the acceleration out of the corners. However, the teams were informed in advance by our engineers that this would be the case. Marco Wittmann showed that it is still possible to set fast lap times on tyres that are starting to wear.”

Audi Sport Team Phoenix completed the fastest pit stop of the race weekend at TT Circuit Assen, in a time of 40.855 seconds. The reward for their efforts is 25 points towards the overall standings in the Best Pit Stop Award, Hankook’s unofficial pit crew champion.

**Mike Rockenfeller (Audi):** “The key in today’s dry race was to manage the Hankook tyre well. We changed the tyres after roughly half the race distance and my rear axle was on the limit towards the end. However, we knew beforehand that tyre wear would be high in Assen. Everything went well for us, which allowed me to get to the finish without any issues with just one stop.”

**Marco Wittmann (BMW):** “We had a wet race on Saturday, but today was dry, which meant that it was uncharted territory for us. As such, it was extremely difficult to judge the amount of tyre wear to expect. I pushed from the start and got all I could out of the Hankook tyre, in order to climb through the field from 18th place. I managed to pull that off with our one-stop strategy, although it was quite tough towards the end on deteriorating tyres. When you consider that the strain on the tyres here in Assen is so brutal – greater than at any other DTM circuit – the Hankook race tyres held up well.”

**Nico Müller (Audi):** “Today was a real tyre thriller. We saw that the strain was very great, particularly on the rear axle, and a number of drivers employed a two-stop strategy for that reason. We only changed tyres once, and that paid dividends, although the Hankook tyres really suffered. As such, I am happy to have finished third and scored some valuable points.”

|  |
| --- |
| **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**PR SpecialistTel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 172y.willems@hankookreifen.de  |  |  |