**Nico Müller closes the gap at the top with DTM win number two of the season**

**Nico Müller has made up ground in the DTM title race. The Audi driver, currently second in the table, won Saturday’s race at the Lausitzring to close the gap to fellow Audi racer and championship leader René Rast, who was forced to retire with technical issues. Robin Frijns and Mike Rockenfeller came home second and third to make it a one-two-three for Audi in Lusatia. With track temperatures hitting 36 degrees, the tyres supplied by exclusive DTM partner Hankook once again impressed with a high level of grip on the smooth surface.**

***Klettwitz/Germany, 24th August 2019*** – Everything seemed to be going to plan at first for pole-sitter René Rast in race number 13 of the 2019 DTM season. The Audi driver defended his position at the start and led the field at first. However, the 32-year-old suddenly slowed down and, after a complete loss of power, was eventually forced to retire on lap eight. That opened the door for fellow Audi man Nico Müller, who adopted the lead after Rast’s retirement. The Swiss came in for his tyre change on lap 14 and, after 34 laps on his second set of Hankook race tyres, went on to cross the finish line in first place. Müller’s second win of the season saw him cut the gap to championship leader Rast to 14 points.

Robin Frijns and Mike Rockenfeller came home second and third to make it an all-Audi podium in Saturday’s DTM race at the Lausitzring. Marco Wittmann (BMW) finished fourth and also made up ground on Rast. He still lies third in the Drivers’ Championship, but now trails Rast by 50 points and Müller by 36. Jake Dennis was the best-placed Aston Martin driver in eleventh.

Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe: “The title race is wide open again after that race. Championship leader René Rast dropped a lot of points through his retirement, while Nico Müller took his chance and produced a flawless performance to take his second win of the season and make up a lot of ground. Marco Wittmann is also still within striking distance of the leader, which means we can look forward to an exciting 500th DTM race on Sunday. The tread of the Hankook race tyre was put under particular strain on the smooth surface, but it mastered this challenge perfectly.”

**Nico Müller (Audi):** “You are always a little bit unsure about the Saturday race, as you don’t know how quickly the tyre is going to degrade. Today, we had very little tyre wear. The Hankook race tyres worked flawlessly and we completed the full distance without any issues. I still had a little in reserve in the end, and was able to lap quickly on the Hankook tyres. I am very happy with today.”

**Robin Frijns (Audi):** “The track surface here at the Lausitzring is far smoother than, for example, Brands Hatch. As such, it was not easy to get the full grip level out of the Hankook race tyre. Having said that, the window, in which you could drive fast on the tyre, was far longer than at other DTM circuits. We must improve a little on Sunday, in order to get the maximum out of the Hankook tyres.”

**Mike Rockenfeller (Audi):** “The Hankook race tyres worked very well throughout the full distance on this track, even in the heat. You could do long stints without any kind of issues.”

**Marco Wittmann (BMW):** “Things have gone well so far here in Lusatia on the Hankook race tyre. I managed to do a fast lap in qualifying on it. In the race, the rear axle in particular was put under a lot of strain, but the tyre wear was fairly limited. Over the distance, the Audi was simply the strongest car today.”

**René Rast (Audi):** “I suddenly had no power and the power steering failed in the middle of a corner, which nearly resulted in me crashing out. There was no point in continuing. We must analyse what happened, to make sure we have a competitive car again on Sunday.”

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| **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  |  |  |