**New Hankook slick makes successful debut at DTM opener in Hockenheim**

**The newly-developed slick from premium tyre maker Hankook enjoyed a successful debut in the opening race of the DTM season in Hockenheim on Saturday. The soft race tyre delivered the strong performance expected, and behaved exactly as desired by the manufacturers in the DTM and the organiser, ITR e.V. The new *Ventus Race,* now in its fourth generation, offered the drivers a lot of grip early on, before degrading more dramatically, as was the intention. This drop-off produced an exciting race with plenty of overtaking manoeuvres. Pole-sitter Lucas Auer (Mercedes-Benz) withstood a strong challenge from Timo Glock in the closing stages to win the first race of the season, coming home just ahead of the BMW driver. Mike Rockenfeller (Audi), who started from 16th on the grid, crossed the finish line third after 36 laps of racing.**

**Hockenheim/Germany, 6th May 2017** – Fans at the Hockenheimring for Saturday’s opening race of the DTM season were treated to a spectacular race with a dramatic finish. For long periods, pole-sitter Lucas Auer (Mercedes-Benz) looked like the sure winner. However, Timo Glock (BMW) caught the 22-year-old in the closing laps and proceeded to put him under pressure in a spectacular battle for the win. However, Auer was able to fend off all of Glock’s overtaking attempts and went on to claim the second win of his DTM career.

Mike Rockenfeller produced a tactical masterstroke. The Audi driver, who started the race from 16th on the grid, came in early on lap nine for his mandatory pit stop. He then fought his way through the field on fresh tyres and was ultimately rewarded with third place and a spot on the podium. Fellow Audi driver Mattias Ekström enjoyed success with the reverse strategy. The Swede drove a long first stint and only came into the pits for a tyre change on lap 26. This move allowed Ekström, who was 17th in qualifying, to make up twelve places and finish the opening race of the season in fifth place, just behind Edoardo Mortara (Mercedes-Benz) in fourth.

“The changes to the sporting regulations paid off, as that fantastic race showed. The newly-developed *Ventus Race* from Hankook delivered a great performance and behaved exactly as stipulated in the specifications. This made a host of different race strategies possible, which made it all the more exciting. It is also important that the drivers are now the decisive factor again,” said Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe.

**Lucas Auer (Mercedes-Benz):** “The most important change is obviously the new Hankook race tyre. With the new tyre, you have a crazy peak and an incredible amount of grip at the start. Over the distance, tyre management is incredibly important. You cannot drive too aggressively, otherwise you will find it very difficult towards the end. I had to give it everything at the end, in order to stay in front. I am really happy with this success.”

**Timo Glock (BMW):** “I was a second faster than Lucas at the end, but could not overtake him. I tried everything, but he was very clever and had more traction than me. The Hankook race tyre did exactly what we want. The only thing that was a little off-putting was the amount of rubber on the track.”

**Mike Rockenfeller (Audi):** “I am delighted with my podium finish. We did not know whether our strategy of an early tyre change would work out. However, everything worked beautifully. The Hankook race tyre behaved exactly as planned.”

**Rene Rast (Audi):** “The new Hankook race tyre was very good. It is far softer than last year’s slick, and you have more speed as a result. However, it also degrades faster. For this reason, it is very important to manage your tyres well. That all produces even more race action. I am very happy with the new Hankook slick.”

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