**Exciting races and a homely atmosphere in the Supercar Challenge, together with premium tyre maker Hankook**

**The Supercar Challenge powered by Hankook will share the bill with the DTM for the first and only time in the 2018 season in Zandvoort this weekend. The race series, with a field of more than 40 drivers, consists of seven rounds in Belgium and the Netherlands, with each round featuring two races. The cars are split into four classes, depending on model, engine power and weight. In 2017, premium tyre maker Hankook agreed a long-term cooperation with the Supercar Challenge. Since then, Hankook has supplied all the manufacturers with the Ventus Race tyre in the slick (F200) and rain (Z207) versions.**

***Zandvoort/Netherlands, 15th July 2018*** – Ward Sluys, together with his Dutch partner Bas Schouten, is the reigning champion in the GT class and is hungry to defend his title this season at the wheel of a BMW M4 Silhouette. The Belgian only started out in motor racing at the age of 20, since when his greatest success has come in the form of victory at the 24-hour race in Zolder. “As a Belgian, to win this prestigious race was the best for me. That success opened many doors for me in motorsport. Without it, I could not have won the Supercar Challenge,” says the 43-year-old.

The appeal of the series, which features such renowned manufacturers as BMW, Lotus, Mercedes-Benz and Porsche, lies in the fact that amateurs, gentlemen drivers and professionals go head to head in different models of racing cars. A special penalty system ensures that the differences in performance are offset and that spectators are treated to exciting races with unpredictable results. Sluys: “The fastest drivers in one race are given a time penalty, depending on their position, which is taken during the mandatory pit stop in the next race. This gives the slightly weaker drivers the opportunity to mix it with the guys at the front of the field, and perhaps even to claim a spot on the podium.”

Despite the fierce competition, the action out on the track is always fair. All the drivers, from amateur to professional, respect each other and do not begrudge each other’s success. “The Supercar Challenge is one big family. You are always given a warm welcome by every team and all the starters. You eat together and exchange experiences. That is pretty much unique in motorsport,” says Sluys, who spends roughly half his weekends in a year at the wheel of a racing car.

All the teams initially had to adapt when Hankook joined the Supercar Challenge as exclusive tyre partner. However, the engineers and drivers soon learned how to take full advantage of the high levels of grip offered by the
Ventus Race. The 43-year-old Belgian: “We coped very well with the switch to the Hankook tyres and are very happy with them, as they are incredibly consistent. Even when you are on a set of tyres for a very long time, you can still push hard towards the end of a race. Not only do we drivers benefit from that, but so do the spectators, who get to see thrilling action right down to the finish in the Supercar Challenge.”

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