

Maximilian Buhk heads for title defense

- **Season opener of Blancpain GT Series in Misano**
- **Buhk to compete in Mercedes-AMG GT3 with new team-mate Franck Perera**

Hamburg, 28 March 2017:

The long-awaited Blancpain GT Series will start into the new 2017 season this coming weekend. Following a number of successful tests over the winter months, the Hamburg-based driver and 2016 Blancpain GT Champion Maximilian Buhk is heading for his title defense. The 24-year-old is aiming to set the first milestone together with his new team-mate, 33-year-old Frenchman Franck Perera and the Mercedes-AMG Team HTP Motorsport at the Misano World Circuit Marco Simoncelli.

Buhk already celebrated his race debut for this season last Saturday. At the first round of the VLN championship, he collected important test mileage as preparation for the 24h race at Nürburgring, which will take place in May. The Mercedes-AMG GT3 completed one lap after another without any issues and was running reliably during the four-hour race.

The AMG-driver attacked right from the beginning in last year's season opener of the Blancpain GT Series Sprint Cup at the 4.2-km-long track located close to Rimini, by taking a second place in the Sprint race. Buhk is looking to achieve a similar strong result with the #84 Mercedes-AMG GT3 in the highly competitive PRO-category.

"The gap between all competitors has shrunk during the winter", says Buhk. "You could see the strengths of the others during the test days and whilst it was already a hard fight for the front positions last year, it will be even tougher this year."

"There are 34 competitors in the race and there will be a lot of traffic on track, making it extra important to get a perfect lap in qualifying to secure a strong lap time. I am very excited ahead of the first race and look forward to start with my new team-mate Franck Perera."

The first free practice session will go ahead on Friday. Qualifying will take place Saturday afternoon with the qualification race being held in total darkness just before 9pm on Saturday. The main race will start on Sunday at 12:30pm.

For more information, please visit www.maximilian-buhk.de and www.blancpain-gt-series.com.