

8.6.2023

Lukas Tulovic: “The Sachsenring stands out on the MotoGP calendar”

- German Moto2 rider: Steering response, feel and precision are decisive
- Spectators create an extraordinary atmosphere at the Sachsenring
- Top 10 the goal for the LIQUI MOLY Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany

Hohenstein-Ernstthal. German Moto2 rider Lukas Tulovic starts in the Motorcycle World Championship this year. Ahead of the LIQUI MOLY Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany, the 23-year-old from Eberbach discusses his memories of the largest individual sporting event in Germany, his second year as a regular rider in the middle class, and the challenges facing the riders at the Sachsenring.

The MotoGP event in Germany is taking place at the new Sachsenring for the 25th time in a row. What makes it stand out from the other racetracks?

Tulovic: “I had no idea it was a big anniversary, but that obviously makes this year’s Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany even more special. I am really looking forward to the whole weekend. The atmosphere, the circuit and the fans are unique. There are great racetracks in Germany, but the atmosphere and big crowds make the Sachsenring so special. It is the right place for the Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany.

What makes the Sachsenring so challenging as a circuit? As a rider, what is important?

Tulovic: “You have to ride very accurately, have a good feel and find the right line. It is also important to have good timing when entering the corners and when you lift the bike again in the exit. You spend an awful lot of time leaning. For this reason, good steering response, a good feel for the bike and an accurate choice of line are very important. Many riders describe the Sachsenring as a kart track, but that is precisely what makes it so interesting: it is an extraordinary circuit, which stands out on the calendar and is superb for the spectators. The blind corners are cool as a rider, as are the fast left-handers, coning down the “Waterfall”, and the final two or three turns. That is really a crazy feeling when you head through the fast right-hander at full throttle and then disappear down the hill. I really enjoy the track.”

The atmosphere at the Sachsenring is unique every year. Last year, the Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany set a new crowd record with 232,202 spectators. Can you describe the atmosphere at the circuit, and how does that motivate you as a rider?

Tulovic: “I have experienced the Sachsenring from many perspectives. I raced on the support programme as a rider in the ADAC Junior Cup, celebrated on Ankerberg as a spectator, and lined up in a Grand Prix there in the Moto2 class in 2019. So, I know it from all viewpoints. It is simply great to see how people spend the weekend there. During the day they watch the races, in the evening they sit together and party. The crowds are simply extraordinary. As a German rider, racing at home in front of so many spectators really gives you goosebumps. I am really looking forward to it and hope I can use the support of the fans to give me extra motivation.”

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You mentioned your first World Championship outing at the Sachsenring in 2019. What memories do you have of that race weekend?

Tulovic: "It was a tough year. I struggled with the bike and found it hard to get a feel for the bike all year. As such, I was not really able to enjoy the weekend, because I was not competitive and could not compete at the front of the field. However, everything away from the racing, with the rider presentation in the kart hall, autograph sessions, the track walk, pit lane walk, and all the people who know you and want photos and autographs....there was an unusual amount going on. However, 2019 was rather marred by the performance."

After the 2019 season, you spent a few years racing in MotoE and the Moto2 European Championship. Now you are back on the big World Championship stage. How much have you developed as a rider and a person?

Tulovic: "I have worked on and tinkered with everything. I have changed my whole management and have become more professional, on the track, in my preparations for the race weekend, and in my practice. I have worked a lot on myself, and changed and improved a lot. You can see that in my performances in last year's European Championship. My injury means that 2023 has not started as I had hoped, but things have improved significantly in recent races and the goal is obviously to continue in that vein this season and to close the gap to the front-runners. I have the team, the bike and the environment that I need in order to be able to perform at my best."

Speaking of improvement: You were eleventh in Le Mans and narrowly missed out on the top ten. Do you think the top ten is a realistic goal for you at the Sachsenring?

Tulovic: "Definitely. That is my goal for the Sachsenring and the coming races. We came close in Le Mans. The speed was there, but one little mistake denied me the opportunity to attack Sergio Garcia, Ai Ogura or Fermin Aldeguer. We are not far off, and if we continue to work this way it is only a matter of time until we are finishing in the top ten. My goal for the Sachsenring and all the remaining races is to make it through to Q2 and then to finish the race in the top ten."

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