

Press Release – 08/11/12 No 87

Amateur champion Dolenc: “I hope to stay in the ADAC GT Masters”

- Interview with amateur champion Swen Dolenc
- Dolenc wins amateur category in half of races in 2012
- Porsche driver began career in motorcycle road racing

He is officially Germany's fastest Porsche salesman: Full-time Porsche salesman Swen Dolenc (45, Maulbronn / FACH AUTO TECH) has won the amateur class of the Super Sports Car League at the wheel of a Porsche 911 GT3 in only his second season in the ADAC GT Masters. The former motorcycle racer talks about his motor racing career and the recent ADAC GT Masters season.

It has now been a little while since the finale, so you have doubtless had plenty of opportunity to celebrate winning the amateur title in style?

Swen Dolenc: “It was my 45th birthday on the Monday after winning the title, so we had a double celebration, but apart from that, nothing has changed. Being just an amateur, I still need to combine the two jobs, selling cars and motor racing, and work is not about to go away because I've won the amateur championship.”

You inadvertently played a big role in the title fight during the final race at Hockenheim. What are your thoughts on the finale?

“Of course, it was too bad that I got caught in the crossfire in the title fight during the last race, but it was just like any other race as far as I was concerned, and our team was on course for a podium. You see, I'm not just racing in the amateur class, but also aiming to achieve good results in the overall standings. I was in fact third when I was put into a spin, losing out on a possible podium finish.”

Your racing career has evolved through various stages. You first began in motor cycle racing and then took a long break.

“I was quite successful as a motorcycle racer in my early 20s and all set to take the plunge and contest the World Championship but could not find a sponsor at that time, and it all looked a bit hopeless. Feeling a bit cheated off, I hung up my helmet in 1992 and withdrew completely from racing.”

What led to your comeback on four wheels?

“Well, some fifteen years later, I decided to go to a couple of motor racing fixtures, and also, don't forget, I have a lot to do with racetracks through my job as a Porsche salesman. And then in 2005, a friend talked me into entering a contest organised by a tyre manufacturer to find the world's best driver. I won the first heat and made it through to the finals in the United States against more than 25,000 other competitors, gaining my race licence at the same time. Shortly after that, the chance came up to buy a crash-damaged Porsche GT3 at a reasonable price. I subsequently used that car to contest the Porsche Sports Cup in 2006 on a shoestring budget. We had three jerry cans and a tool box, and that was it. We took the Porsche to circuits on a trailer hired from the local petrol station, towed by a VW van. We all have a

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* to be confirmed
by the race organisers



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good laugh about it even today, but I managed to win the series, nevertheless. I kept the team going until 2010.”

So, Porsche Club racing was your route into the ADAC GT Masters?

“Yes. In 2009, I won the Porsche Cup Challenge, the second division of the Porsche Carrera Cup, and the following year, current team boss Alex Fach spoke to me about contesting the 2011 ADAC GT Masters season.”

You claimed victory in the amateur class in half of the 16 ADAC GT Masters races to win the amateur class, but are you totally satisfied with your season?

“Our goal for the season was to finish consistently in the Top Ten and, if at all possible, to be on the podium and win the amateur title. We only partly achieved that. We were certainly in the frame to take podiums on several occasions, and, had we not lost out at the Lausitzring and in Hockenheim, we would not have missed the Top Ten by all that much. Basically, I’m not unhappy with the season. I’m really sorry, however, that my team-mate Martin Ragginger and the crew missed a podium in the end.”

Your team-mate Martin Ragginger was also impressive last season and turned in a solid performance with two pole positions.

“Martin Ragginger has helped me greatly this year. He is the perfect team-mate and very fair. I have learned a lot from him this year and have honed my driving skills quite a bit.”

Do you intend defending your amateur title next season?

“I’ll have to look at the possibilities for 2013 and try and put together a budget for the coming season that will enable me to race again with a fast co-driver back in Alex Fach’s team, where I feel I’m in safe hands; throughout the previous two years, Alex Fach and his team always made a brilliant job of ensuring that our Porsche ran perfectly. At any rate, I myself would be very happy to be in the ADAC GT Masters next season.”

Note for press: ADAC GT Masters website: access to Press Area via ‘Press’ in the top menu bar at www.adac.de/motorsport.

Further information available at www.adac.de/motorsport and www.adac-gt-masters.de

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