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## Title showdown in Hockenheim: Ford versus BMW

- **Salman Owega and Finn Wiebelhaus travel to the finale as championship leaders**
- **Leyton Fourie and Tim Zimmermann will fight to the death**

Munich. Two qualifying sessions, two races, one title at stake. The finale of the 2025 ADAC GT Masters at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg (3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> October) will decide who wins the duel for the championship. Leaders Salman Owega (20/Cologne) and Finn Wiebelhaus (19/Obertshausen/both Haupt Racing Team) in a Ford Mustang GT3 currently have a 40-point advantage over Leyton Fourie (20/RSA) and Tim Zimmermann (29/Langenargen/both FK Performance Motorsport). However, there is no question of the chasing duo in the BMW M4 GT3 giving up – especially as there are still 56 points up for grabs (25 per race win, plus three per pole position). Tickets start at € 49 and are available at [dtm.com](https://www.dtm.com). Admission is free for under 16s. There is a bonus for all visitors on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October: a concert featuring Kamrad and H-Blockx, with free admission for all ticket holders.

### Title favourites: Owega and Wiebelhaus

The season began with many unknowns for Salman Owega and Finn Wiebelhaus. Their car was completely new to the ADAC GT Masters: the Ford Mustang GT3. Despite this, the duo showed from the outset that they would be a force to be reckoned with in the title race – until one race ended prematurely on the formation lap in Zandvoort. “That was a setback,” says Wiebelhaus. “We had a good grid position, but never even made it over the start line. Zero points was a bitter pill to swallow, but we refused to bury our heads in the sand.” They consequently slipped down to fifth place in the table.

What followed was an impressive return to form at the Nürburgring: the first victory for the Mustang in the ADAC GT Masters and on European soil in general. Owega and Wiebelhaus took their place at the top of the table for the first time. They backed up that performance with a second race win at the Red Bull Ring, which saw the pair extended their lead to 40 points. “Together with the team, we have grown and improved consistently over the course of the year – even if we have made a few small mistakes, but that goes with the territory. It is about making as few mistakes as possible and scoring points as consistently as possible. We have done a good job of that so far, which is why we find ourselves where we are,” says Owega, who could become the fifth two-time ADAC GT Masters champion this year, having previously won the title in 2023.

The maths is easy for the HRT duo: win, finish runner-up, or concede no more than eleven points to Fourie and Zimmermann, and they will be crowned 2025 champions, no matter what their rivals do. However, Wiebelhaus, who also leads the “Road to DTM” classification coming into the finale, is not one for premature celebrations: “We have a big lead in the championship and could win in Hockenheim. At the same time, we could also have two DNFs and lose everything, so I am not celebrating yet.”

### The chasers: Fourie and Zimmermann

The challengers from FK Performance Motorsport could hardly be more different: despite this, the enthusiastic rookie Leyton Fourie and the cool-headed and experienced Tim Zimmermann are a perfect

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match. Zimmermann came into the season with 56 ADAC GT Masters races under his belt, but not a single one in a BMW – Fourie, on the other hand, had started many races in a BMW, but not a single one in a GT3 car. “We both had an incredible amount to learn. However, we had a very good debriefing after the Lausitzring, maximised what we learned from it, and then put that into practice in Zandvoort. That was the turning point in our season,” says Fourie. And what a turning point: the duo finished second on the Saturday and then claimed their first win of the season on the Sunday. The dream weekend saw Fourie and Zimmermann climb into second place in the table – a position they never gave up.

Consistency is key for the FK Performance Motorsport pair. The BMW M4 GT3 Evo has crossed the finish line in every race, only missing out on the top ten on one occasion. “We saw the potential in the team, the car and ourselves, but did not know how to use it. When we found the right formula in Zandvoort, everything fell into place in the team. Since then, we have been putting it into practice perfectly,” says Fourie. They demonstrated precisely that with their second win of the season at the premiere of the Salzburgring, when they drew to within eight points of the championship leaders.

Despite the cushion at the top having grown again, giving up is not an option for Zimmermann. “WE are still fighting for the title. That has been and remains our goal, and it is not over until it is over,” says the 29-year-old. “I would obviously prefer to be leading with a big advantage, but we don’t have that luxury. We don’t have any pressure on us now, so will try our best and see what happens.” One thing is clear: to be crowned champions, they must win one race, finish at least third in the other, and score the maximum six points for the two pole positions – and hope that their rivals remain pointless in both races.

### Mathematical chance for Birch and Pichler

54 points off the top of the table, Simon Birch (18/DNK) and Leo Pichler (23/AUT) from Razoon – more than Racing still have a mathematical chance of winning the title in their Porsche 911 GT3 R. The duo, who moved to the top of the table with two wins at the season opener, and held onto that lead until the third race weekend at the Nürburgring, will need a huge amount of help from the opposition, as well as perfect weekend themselves in Hockenheim. The Porsche duo’s only hope is to secure pole for both races, then back that up with two race wins. Even then, they would still be reliant upon a complete failure to score any points for the pairings of Owega/Wiebelhaus and Fourie/Zimmermann in both qualifying and the two races.

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