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Sensational fightback at the Salzburgring: Victory for Hirsiger and Zulauf

- **Lamborghini duo wins their fourth race of the season from 13th on the grid**
- **ADAC GT Masters title race comes to a head: Five points separate top pairs**
- **Home podium for Razoon Porsche, with Austrian Pichler and Bönighausen**

Plainfeld. Outstanding fightback in the ADAC GT Masters: Felix Hirsiger (28/CHE) and Finn Zulauf (22/Königstein im Taunus/both Liqui Moly Team Engstler Motorsport) won race two at the Salzburgring. The Lamborghini duo produced a stunning fightback, storming through from 13th on the grid to take victory 1.690 seconds ahead of Austrian Porsche team Razoon - More than Racing, with its drivers Leo Pichler (24) from Weiz and Colin Bönighausen (21/Isernhagen). Third place went to Jamie Day (20/GBR) and Baudouin Detout (25/FRA/both Comtoyou Racing) in an Aston Martin Vantage GT3 Evo. "That is one hell of a load off our minds. The goal was to stay ahead of our rivals in the title race, in order to avoid losing even more points. I dare say that nobody expected us to win that race. It is now 'gloves off' in Hockenheim - there is no holding back anymore!" said Zulauf, in bullish mood after his fourth win of the season. Team-mate Hirsiger was similarly thrilled after what had, to that point, been a difficult weekend: "Finally payoff! Hopefully, we now have all our issues behind us. The car was really unbelievable, even on old tyres. I had to find my rhythm in the closing laps, whilst keeping an eye on my rear-view mirror and driving a clean race. Fortunately, I managed to do that, and now we can celebrate."

Local favourite Kiano Blum (19/AUT/Haupt Racing Team) started the second ADAC GT Masters race of the weekend from pole position in his Ford, and did a great job of defending his place at the head of the field. Porsche driver Bönighausen and Storm Gjerdrum (16/NOR/FK Performance Motorsport) in a BMW followed in second and third place. The eventual winners started from down in 13th place on the grid, having been relegated from pole position for breaching Parc Fermé regulations. The first pit stop phase saw most of the front-runners opt for the long stop with a tyre change. They included Hirsiger, who had already stormed into the top five by this point. In contrast, Razoon only came in for fuel, before sending Pichler back onto the track with a big lead. Kalus, who had taken over from Blum in the Ford Mustang GT3, now on fresh tyres, fell back through the field after a mistake and a spell when his lap times were down on the front-runners. After this, he was no longer able to compete at the front of the field.

This heralded a virtual race against the clock between the leading pair of Pichler and Zulauf, who had taken over in the Lamborghini. Second by second, the driver currently second in the table reeled in the race leader. Once the two cars had made their second stops, Hirsiger returned to the track just half a second ahead of Bönighausen. And so began an eleven-lap battle for victory, with the Lamborghini ultimately coming out on top. "We expected to rejoin the race in second place, but were hoping we could match their pace on the new tyres. However, that was not the case," said Pichler, who finished second at his home event. "Despite that, we are happy with the result, and I am delighted with a

podium in Austria, as we know that we got the maximum out of ourselves personally, and made the most of our opportunities."

Behind the front two, Day and Detout also produced an impressive fightback. The Aston Martin duo had dropped out of the top ten after receiving an early penalty, but employed an alternative strategy - completing their tyre change during the second stop - to battle their way back towards the front. "We definitely did not have the start we wanted. Despite that, we stayed hungry and kept the pressure on right through to the finish. We had warm tyres in the middle stint, which allowed me to open the gap ahead of the pit stop and the final stint. That is a great result for us and the whole team," said a delighted Day after finishing third.

Championship leaders Tim Zimmermann (29/Langenargen) and Leyton Fourie (20/ZAF/both FK Performance Motorsport) took fourth place on the final lap, ahead of their team-mates Storm Gjerdrum (16/NOR) and Fabio Rauer (19/Stolberg). BMW drivers Fourie and Zimmermann now lead their closest rivals Hirsiger and Zulauf by just five points ahead of the grand finale in Hockenheim. This result and victory on Saturday was enough to earn Fourie first place in the "Road to DTM" classification. Fabian Dybionka (17/POL) and Emil Gjerdrum (19/NOR/both Haupt Racing Team) were sixth after multiple penalties in the Ford. They were followed home by Robin Rogalski (26/POL) and Simon Connor Primm (21/Großschirma/both HGL Racing) in an Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo 2, and the second Razoon Porsche of Mark Kastelic (18/SLO) and Pavel Lefterov (28/BGR). John Paul Southern (24/USA) and Jonas Karklys (36/LIT/both Liqui Moly Team Engstler Motorsport) were ninth in another Lamborghini. Twins Sandro and Juliano Holzem (22/Polch/both Schubert Motorsport) completed the top ten in a BMW M4 GT3 Evo.

The grand finale of the ADAC GT Masters takes place from 9th to 11th October as part of the DTM event at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg. Tickets for the thrilling conclusion to the title race start at € 49 and are available at dtm.com.

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