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Always on equal footing: Hirsiger and Zulauf are the 2026 champions

- **A portrait of Liqui Moly Team Engstler drivers Felix Hirsiger and Finn Zulauf**
- **Spectacular wins, total honesty, and no place for egos**
- **Luxury cars, a Business Studies degree, a willingness to take risks, and quirks**

Hockenheim. Felix Hirsiger and Finn Zulauf are the 2026 ADAC GT Masters champions. There was no stopping the Lamborghini duo in the final race of the season at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg, who took a commanding victory to win the title with a 13-point lead. With five race wins, two podiums and five pole positions, Switzerland's Hirsiger and Zulauf from Königsstein im Taunus presented Liqui Moly Team Engstler Motorsport with its second title in the ADAC GT Masters. "We are the 2026 ADAC GT Masters champions. We wanted to be able to say exactly those words at the end of the year. To be crowned champions at the first attempt is more than we could have dreamed of," says a delighted Hirsiger. Team-mate Zulauf had not one, but two reasons to celebrate, having also won the "Road to DTM". "It is a very cool story, to have now won the ADAC GT Masters after the success in ADAC GT4 Germany, and thus to be the first driver to have won the "Road to DTM" in both championships," says Zulauf. "I am very grateful to the ADAC for allowing me to climb higher and higher up the success ladder. A big thank you also goes to our Liqui Moly Team Engstler Motorsport. They gave it their all over the course of the season, and at the finale – that also goes for all the people who are in the background, but were incredibly important for this success."

Ahead of the season, you would probably not have got great odds on the Lamborghini duo winning the title. 22-year-old Zulauf did have one win to his name from the previous season, but Hirsiger had very little experience of GT3 racing, and their team last tasted victory in the ADAC GT Masters back in 2011. Internally, however, there was never a doubt. "The trust was there from the outset," Zulauf recalls. "I saw his onboard videos and knew that I could relax when Felix was in the car."

That feeling was backed up on the opening weekend at the Red Bull Ring. The duo topped the table after a spectacular win and a further podium finish. More success was to follow in Zandvoort and at the Nürburgring. Hirsiger and Zulauf ensured they were talked about as top favourites after the Salzburgring weekend, when they ploughed through the entire field from the back of the grid to claim their fourth win of the season. "Finn and I were in the zone in that race. We produced the kind of performances that we had never produced before, even though we had already tasted victory in the past. That spoke for itself," recalls 28-year-old Hirsiger. "It was not simply another win, but on a par with the success in the final corner at the Red Bull Ring."

The two drivers feel their greatest strengths are their similar driving styles, as well as the fact that they like each other and get on well. "There is no place for ego with us," Hirsiger explains. Furthermore, they have both been absolutely honest with each other in all situations, and have not been afraid to be critical of each other. At the same time, the focus has always been on never losing the fun factor and never attacking anyone personally, even in difficult moments.

Zulauf is equally self-conscious in his private life. The 22-year-old is studying Business Studies alongside his motorsport career. "Competitive sport is wonderful, but you cannot blindly assume that it will continue that way. This course gives me many options," says Zulauf. He enjoys skiing in his spare time, and often goes jogging. At the same time, he is meticulous about the way he eats, and usually cooks his meals himself, in order to ensure he knows exactly what ingredients and nutritional values they contain. That meticulous care is also reflected in his strict schedules and a slight quirk. "For example, I can only drive with the air con at 20 or 22 degrees. It always has to be even numbers, even when it comes to the TV volume. That is non-negotiable for me," the 22-year-old chuckles.

He took his first steps in motorsport at seven years of age, when his parents gave him a kart. Since then, he has consistently worked his way up the career ladder. He took his place at the wheel of a race car in 2020, and one year later lined up in ADAC GT4 Germany. This was the platform for his first major motorsport success: in 2024, he was crowned champion alongside Josef Knopp, and also won the "Road to DTM". Since 2025, he has been racing in the ADAC GT Masters, in which he has again impressed. Zulauf secured pole position on his debut weekend, and has backed that up with a further four poles, as well as six race wins and three podiums.

Hirsiger was introduced to motorsport by his father, who passed away in 2022. They would head to the kart track every Sunday, and the hard work was soon rewarded with two national titles. Two years in French Formula 4 followed, but the pathway in motorsport then came to a temporary end for financial reasons, and Hirsiger found his new home in cycling. Sponsors and money from friends did at least allow him to make occasional outings in the DTM Trophy and the Porsche Carrera Cup. However, the real focus was on driver coaching, so as not to lose the connection to motorsport. The turning point came in 2024, when he won the Porsche Sports Cup Suisse. One year later, he added the title in the Ferrari Challenge Europe to his collection.

However, motorsport is about far more than just driving for the Swiss. "What I find really fascinating is the mental aspect behind it," the 28-year-old explains. His role models were the likes of Jenson Button and Jim Clark, and, more recently, Lewis Hamilton. "He is phenomenal when it comes to mental strength, and I would happily have some of that." In his private life, Hirsiger is only too happy to admit his love of risk taking. Together with two friends and an investor, he owns a car garage in the Swiss of Zug, and deals in normal cars, as well as luxury and sports cars. Days working hard in the car dealership, coupled with many weekends at the racetrack, as well as the necessary training, leave very little free time. There is just one thing, for which the successful businessman will always make time: hours spent with his family.

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