

10.8.2024

## Hockenheim: First win of the season for BWT Mücke Motorsport in the Prototype Cup Germany

- **Apothéloz/Cirelli win in scorching temperatures and get the Junior victory**
- **Soufi/Kratz extend championship lead with third place**
- **Kratz also drives to trophy victory**

Munich. Julien Apothéloz (23/CHE) and Riccardo Leone Cirelli (16/ITA, both BWT Mücke Motorsport) triumph in Saturday's Prototype Cup Germany race at the Hockenheimring in Baden-Württemberg to celebrate their first win of the 2024 season in the Duqueine D08. In an extremely tactical race, second place went to brand colleague Keanu Al Azhari (16/UAE, Mühlner Motorsport). Danny Soufi (21/USA) and Torsten Kratz (53/Mönchengladbach, both Konrad Motorsport) in the Ligier JS P320 completed the podium and extended their lead at the top of the table.

Apothéloz started the race from pole position. The former ADAC GT4 Germany driver won the start and immediately pulled away at the front of the field. Keanu Al Azhari, who was competing alone, was the only driver able to keep up with the man from Switzerland. A thrilling duel between the two Ligier of Antti Rammo (41/EST, MRS GT-Racing) and championship leader Soufi developed behind him. However, the American was unable to squeeze past the Estonian, who was also a sole competitor – meaning that the first four positions remained unchanged before the mandatory pit stops.

Exactly halfway through the race Apothéloz handed the leading Duqueine over to team-mate Riccardo Leone Cirelli. The young Italian managed the lead with aplomb and ultimately drove to victory, which also saw the duo claim victory in the Junior classification. Keanu Al Azhari tried everything in the second half of the race to reduce Cirelli's lead but ended up crossing the finish line in second place, trailing by almost 5.2 seconds.

In the final phase, an action-packed three-way battle for third place developed between Torsten Kratz, who took over from Soufi, Duqueine driver Maxim Dirickx (20/BEL, Gebhardt Motorsport), and a fast-approaching Felipe Fernández Laser (35/Leipzig, Frikadelli Racing Team) in the Ligier. Around six minutes before the end of the race, Fernández Laser finally overtook the Belgian. However, despite several attempts, he was unable to find a way past Kratz, who went on to win the Trophy classification. Fernández Laser and team-mate Klaus Abbelen (63/Barweiler) finished in fourth place. Dirickx and partner Jacob Erlbacher (23/Böblingen) were fifth. Antti Rammo, who was in third place in the first half of the race, was awarded a drive-through penalty for an offence during a pit stop and ended up in sixth place.

### Julien Apothéloz –BWT Mücke Motorsport winner

“The first victory with BWT Mücke Motorsport and Riccardo is fantastic. Even though it didn't look like it, the race was not easy. The heat meant that everyone was battling with the tyres. In the end, we had



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the best strategy. I had to drive very carefully to protect the tyres as much as possible and not push too hard. That enabled me to keep the pace pretty well.”

### **Riccardo Leone Cirelli – BWT Mücke Motorsport winner**

“I’m over the moon with the win. My stint was great, but the tyres were pretty worn down due to the temperatures. Which made driving difficult. However, I got to grips with it and was able to bring home the victory. We’re starting the race from pole position again tomorrow, but we will then have a longer pit stop. Obviously, we want to win again.”

### **Keanu Al Azhari – second place for Mühlner Motorsport**

“I’m very pleased with second place. After yesterday’s qualifying, we knew that it would be difficult to battle for the win. I got off to a good start, but the tyres lost grip after a few laps. Then I pitted relatively early on and was able to make up ground on the leader towards the end of the race. The team did a fantastic job with the car once again.”

### **Torsten Kratz – third place for Konrad Motorsport**

“The driving conditions today were very difficult. The heat meant that we were all battling with the tyres. I even spun at one point. Overall, we are very pleased with the podium. We extended our lead in the overall standings. But it is far from over, the race for the title is still an exciting one.”

### **Danny Soufi – third place for Konrad Motorsport**

“Those were important points in the race for the title. And this was our focus going into the race weekend. I made a minor mistake at the start and didn’t want to get a penalty, so I lost some time. Torsten is fantastic at defending and brought the podium home in the second stint.”

### **Prototype Cup Germany calendar (subject to change)**

19.04. - 21.04.24	Spa-Francorchamps/BEL (24H Series)
24.05. - 26.05.24	Dekra Lausitzring (DTM)
12.07. - 14.07.24	Circuit Zandvoort/NLD (Summer Trophy)
09.08. - 11.08.24	Hockenheimring (ADAC Racing Weekend)
16.08. - 18.08.24	Nürburgring (DTM)
06.09. - 08.09.24	Sachsenring (DTM)

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