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### Half-time in the DTM: Championship leader Thomas Preining impresses with the full package

- Porsche driver top scores in races and qualifying
- Chasing trio of van der Linde, Bortolotti and Feller separated by just one point
- DTM more evenly matched than ever – consistency the key to success

Munich. The first half of the DTM season came to an end at a rainy Nürburgring last Sunday. A shock victory for Maximilian Paul (Dresden) made it eight different winners from eight races – a DTM record. The high-class field is so evenly matched that no driver has managed two wins. However, one driver has been able to pull clear at the top of the table by consistently producing strong performances: Porsche works driver Thomas Preining (A) leads the championship by 28 points at the halfway point, with eight races remaining.

“It feels great to go into the second half of the season at the top of the table. We have been very consistent since the opening race, and that is what has made the difference,” said Preining, who has been among the front-runners in the DTM since the start of the season. The 25-year-old has made it onto the podium once at each of the four race weekends so far. Preining has yet to finish outside the points in his Porsche 911 GT3 R and, with eleven points to his name, has been the most successful driver in qualifying. He moved to the top of the table at the end of the second race weekend at the Formula 1 circuit in Zandvoort (Netherlands), but briefly surrendered it again to defending champion Sheldon van der Linde (ZA) two weeks later after the Saturday race at the Norisring.

The first win of the season, in Sunday’s race at the street circuit in Nuremberg, saw Preining regain the lead, which he has consistently extended ever since. “The success at the Norisring has been the absolute highlight so far for me – particularly the overtaking manoeuvre, with which I took the lead in the race. We then scored some valuable points with a clever strategy at the Nürburgring,” said the Austrian. Qualifying has played an important role for Preining, who was born in Linz: “It has been important to be strong in qualifying. With the field so evenly matched, it is a big advantage to start the race from as far up the grid as possible. We want to continue this way in the second half of the season.”

Preining will be hunted when the second half of the DTM season gets underway at the DEKRA Lausitzring (18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> August) – and he views the team spirit at Manthey EMA as a fundamental factor in his success: “Our advantage is that we have a strong and experienced team with great spirit. In the DTM, you only have a little time between sessions to change or improve something on the car. Here, it is worth its weight in gold to have a well-oiled team.” Despite sitting at the top of the table, Preining still believes there is room for improvement. “I think we can do even better at the start of the races. Also, the pit stops have not all been perfect. Having said that, they were super last time out at the Nürburgring.”



## Media Information

His closest rivals in the overall standings are Sheldon van der Linde, Mirko Bortolotti (I) and Ricardo Feller (CH) – three drivers who have each won one race and are separated by just one point. South African van der Linde has a similar record to championship leader Preining and has finished on the podium three times. However, the reigning DTM champion has finished outside the points on two occasions in his BMW M4 GT3. Lamborghini works driver Bortolotti and Audi racer Feller have only made it onto the podium once – albeit the top step – but have picked up valuable points in every race. Maro Engel (Monaco) has also impressed with consistent performances in the Mercedes-AMG GT3. As well as winning in Zandvoort, he has also been an ever-present in the points positions.

The first half of the season has shown that the DTM is more evenly matched than ever. As such, the second half of the season is guaranteed to produce some drama. After round five at the DEKRA Lausitzring, fans can look forward to race action at the Sachsenring (8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> September). From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September, the Red Bull Ring (Austria) hosts the second event outside of Germany, before the DTM season concludes at what has become the traditional venue of the season finale: the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg (20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October).

### Drivers' Championship after 8 of 16 races

1. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey EMA), 117 points
2. Sheldon van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport), 89 points
3. Mirko Bortolotti (I/SSR Performance), 88 points
4. Ricardo Feller (CH/Abt Sportsline), 88 points
5. Maro Engel (D/Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter), 78 points

The full championship standings are available online at [dtm.com/en/standings](http://dtm.com/en/standings).

### 2023 DTM calendar

26.05. – 28.05.2023	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
23.06. – 25.06.2023	Circuit Zandvoort / NL
07.07. – 09.07.2023	Norisring
04.08. – 06.08.2023	Nürburgring
18.08. – 20.08.2023	DEKRA Lausitzring
08.09. – 10.09.2023	Sachsenring
22.09. – 24.09.2023	Red Bull Ring / A
20.10. – 22.10.2023	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

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