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DTM banking on excitement in Zandvoort: First trip abroad of 2023

- **DTM returns to the iconic circuit in the Netherlands after a five-year absence**
- **Crowds drawn to spectacular banked corners with a gradient of 18 degrees**
- **Championship leader and rookie Tim Heinemann is the man to catch**

Munich. Spectacular banked corners, uphill and downhill sections, expansive gravel beds – the DTM returns to Zandvoort this weekend. The last time the series visited the racetrack in the Dutch dunes was back in 2018. Since then, the Formula 1 circuit has been modified. The most striking spot on the track is the final corner, Turn 14, which is now banked at a gradient of 18 degrees. Everything is in place for the DTM racers to make a roaring return to Circuit Zandvoort, of which spectators have a perfect view from the grandstands.

Key facts, Circuit Zandvoort, Zandvoort, races 3 and 4 of 16

Circuit length: 4,259 metres

Layout: 14 corners (ten right, four left), driven clockwise

2018 winner, race 1: Gary Paffett (Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Petronas, Mercedes-AMG)

2018 winner, race 2: René Rast (Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Audi)

Newcomer Tim Heinemann the man to catch in the championship / Fellow Porsche drivers among the favourites

The season-opener in Oschersleben proved emphatically that anything is possible in the DTM. Nobody could have predicted the impressive performance of Tim Heinemann (Essen) in the Porsche 911 GT3 R, who travels to Zandvoort as the championship leader after picking up two second places at the opening race weekend. Toksport WRT driver Heinemann is no longer just any old DTM rookie in the Netherlands, but now has a target on his back, as the man being hunted down by some very strong opposition. “The last time I drove in Zandvoort was in 2019 in GT4. As such, this weekend’s outing in a GT3 car on the new layout is a first for me. I like these old-school circuits, as does the Porsche. The first banked corner is particularly good fun, because you have to cautiously push the limit. However, winning is the most fun. Coming into the season, the goal was to finish in the points and make it onto the podium once. We have already surpassed that. However, when you have made such a good start, you obviously want to continue that way. For this reason, I am torn. On the one hand, you cannot expect too much as a DTM rookie. On the other hand, I am the championship leader and want to consistently be among the front-runners. One important factor is the team, which works brilliantly together. I am benefitting from Christian’s experience, we share all our set-up data, even with the other Porsche teams in the DTM. That spirit really gives you a boost,” says 25-year-old Heinemann.

His team-mate Christian Engelhart from Starnberg claimed the first DTM victory of his career in Oschersleben. The 36-year-old is second in the table and travels to the Netherlands full of confidence and hungry for another top result. The same goes for the man currently third in the Drivers’ Championship, Franck Perera (FR) in a Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2. The Frenchman made history



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with SSR Performance in Oschersleben, presenting the Italian car manufacturer with its first success in the DTM. Thomas Preining (AT) from Team Manthey EMA also impressed in a Porsche 911 GT3 R in Oschersleben, finishing third in the Sunday race. With four cars in the top six, Porsche is the manufacturer to beat in Zandvoort. Ricardo Feller (CH) was and remains one of the drivers able to break the 911 stronghold in his Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2.

Reigning DTM champion Sheldon van der Linde (ZA) already finds himself in a bit of a tight spot. The South African must add significantly to his tally of five points with the Schubert Motorsport BMW M4 GT3 in Zandvoort, if the title defence is to remain a realistic goal. His team-mate René Rast (Minden), who won the last DTM race in the Dutch dunes in 2018, does not start. The three-time DTM champion will be replaced by Belgium's Dries Vanthoor (BE), who tasted success in Zandvoort in the ADAC GT Masters in 2021. Jack Aitken (GB) from Emil Frey Racing is also unable to line up in the Ferrari 296 GT3 due to a clash of schedules. Standing in for him is Spaniard Albert Costa Balboa (ES), who will be making his DTM debut but knows Zandvoort well. He won an ADAC GT Masters race there alongside Britain's Aitken in 2022.

Local favourite

Thierry Vermeulen (NL) is the youngest starter in the DTM field and, as the only Dutchman, is out to put on a show for the fans at his favourite circuit. The 20-year-old Ferrari driver, whose father manages Formula 1 world champion Max Verstappen, is a busy man both on and off the track. His guest list has about 80 names on it, all of whom will be cheering him on. "The atmosphere in Zandvoort is unique. I want to share this experience with my family, friends and partners. Last year, I finished runner-up here together with Mattia Drudi (IT) in the ADAC GT Masters. A place in the top eight would be a great result. As a racing driver, you obviously always want to win. However, there are a lot of good drivers in the DTM, who have an incredible wealth of experience and also know the track well," says the local boy from the Emil Frey Racing, remaining realistic.

A cult circuit in the Dunes

Circuit Zandvoort is located right on the North Sea coast and enjoys cult status as an old-school racetrack. Anyone who comes off the track will hit a wall or land in one of the gravel beds distributed over more than 2,500 metres next to the winding strip of asphalt. The sand from the dunes, which makes its way onto the track, is another characteristic of the circuit on the North Sea coast. The surface can consequently be quite slippery, which really puts the Pirelli tyres to the test. As such, tyre management plays a major role. Large changes in elevation and blind crests also put the drivers and cars through their paces as they race through the dunes. The showpieces in Zandvoort are the two banked corners, "Hugenholtzbocht" behind the paddock and the final turn "Arie Luyendykbocht" before the start/finish, which have a gradient of around 18 degrees. They can be taken at high speed and side by side, and are frequently the scene of spectacular battles.

Strong support programme / F1 Academy makes its debut on the DTM platform

DTM fans can look forward to seeing the F1 Academy in action for the first time at the circuit in the Dutch dunes. The Formula 1 junior category is exclusively for young female drivers, who line up in the Tatuus F4-T421 car. Zandvoort hosts round four of the season for the five teams and 15 drivers, who will contest three races in the Netherlands. The Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland is also set to feature on the DTM support programme for the first time this season. Spectators can look forward to dramatic



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wheel-to-wheel racing in the oldest Porsche one-make cup, as well as in the Porsche Carrera Cup Benelux, which also shares the bill with the DTM for the first time in 2023. As at the opening event in Oschersleben, the 455-hp LMP3 racers in the Prototype Cup Germany are back on the starting grid in Zandvoort. The same goes for ADAC GT4 Germany, which travels to Zandvoort with 58 drivers and 29 cars for the second of this season's six race weekends.

Fans are also treated to a packed motorsport programme off the track in Zandvoort. On Saturday and Sunday, visitors can get up close to the teams and drivers in the pit lane on the free Pit Walk. They can also attempt to emulate their favourite pros on simulators in the Esports Arena. On top of all this, there will also be autograph sessions with drivers from all the series.

All races live on ProSieben

TV partner ProSieben is showing all 16 of this season's races live on free-to-air TV. Qualifying sessions are streamed live at ran.de. The DTM is broadcast live on television in over 70 countries around the world. The official TV partner of the DTM in Austria is ServusTV. The private Salzburg-based station is showing all the DTM races live or repeated in full. ServusTV Deutschland will also broadcast a summary of the best action in the evening after each race.

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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