

24.6.2023

Commanding victory – Maro Engel festival in Zandvoort

- Mercedes-AMG driver wins Saturday's race from pole and sets the fastest lap time
- DTM champion Sheldon van der Linde gets back on track with second place
- Frenchman Franck Perera takes the championship lead

Munich. Maro Engel (Monaco) is simply unstoppable at round two of the DTM in Zandvoort, Netherlands. The 37-year-old German started Saturday's race from pole position and completed a dominant lights-to-flag victory in his Mercedes-AMG GT3 after 39 laps of racing. "It was a picture-perfect race in a perfect car. I was able to open up a lead after the start, and then to control proceedings. Despite this, you always have to be wide awake at this circuit in Zandvoort, as it does not forgive any mistakes. The sand and dramatic tyre wear, it all demands full concentration right through to the finish. However, it worked out superbly and I am pleased for the whole team about this success," said Engel after his second victory in the DTM. Reigning DTM champion Sheldon van der Linde (ZA) finished runner-up in the BMW M4 GT3 and reaffirmed his title ambitions after a bumpy start in Oschersleben. Franck Perera (F) was third in a Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2 and replaces Porsche driver Tim Heinemann (Fichtenberg) as championship leader.

Key facts, Circuit Zandvoort, Netherlands, race 3 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 4,259 metres
- **Weather:** 28 degrees, sunny
- **Pole position:** Maro Engel (Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter, Mercedes-AMG GT3 #48), 1:32.585 minutes
- **Winner:** Maro Engel (Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter, Mercedes-AMG GT3 #48)
- **Fastest race lap:** Maro Engel (Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter, Mercedes-AMG GT3 #48), 1:34.508 minutes

Pole-sitter Engel made a perfect start in the Dutch dunes and was able to pull clear of the opposition in the opening laps. BMW drivers Sheldon van der Linde and Marco Wittmann (Fürth) followed in second and third place, with Perera (F) and Mirko Bortolotti (I) slotting into fourth and fifth place in their Lamborghinis. Engel retained his lead after a late mandatory pit stop, and had extended his advantage over Sheldon van der Linde to exactly six seconds by the time he took the chequered flag. Perera did his best to overtake the South African, but could not get within striking distance. Team-mate Bortolotti benefitted from an early pit stop: with his Pirelli tyres already up to the optimum temperature, he was able to pass Wittmann, who had opted to come in later and was still on cold tyres, and take fifth place.

Lucas Auer (A) had a strong race in the Mercedes-AMG GT3, coming through from twelfth on the grid to finish sixth. His compatriot Thomas Preining (A) in a Porsche 911 GT3 R improved on his qualifying

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result by three places and finished seventh. Albert Costa Balboa (E/Ferrari 296 GT3) and Dries Vanthoor (B/BMW M4 GT3), who are standing in for Jack Aitken (GB) and René Rast (Minden) respectively, impressed in eighth and ninth place on their DTM debuts. Jusuf Owega (Cologne) showed a great deal of fighting spirit to bring his Mercedes-AMG GT3 home tenth despite having suffered damage in a collision.

The second race of the weekend gets underway at 13:30 on Sunday. Free-to-air German TV station ProSieben starts its coverage from Zandvoort at 13:00. The DTM is broadcast live in over 70 countries around the world. The grid positions for Sunday's race will be decided in qualifying, which begins at 09:15 and, like the race, will be streamed live at ran.de and on the DTM YouTube channel.

Maro Engel: "We will obviously try to back up this success on Sunday. The key is qualifying. When you start from the front and are able to keep out of the battles for position on this narrow track, that makes a big difference. However, you start from scratch every day in the DTM."

Sheldon van der Linde: "I am very happy with this second place, as my race pace was not that good. However, it is very difficult to overtake in Zandvoort. It was important to get in front of Marco Wittmann at the start. After that, I set very consistent lap times throughout the entire race, which proved to be decisive."

Franck Perera: "I scored some valuable points for third place, but the lead does not mean very much yet at this early point in the season. The atmosphere in the team is very good. Mirko and I are pushing each other. That is very important in such a strong series as the DTM."

Result of race one, Zandvoort

1. Maro Engel (D/Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter)
2. Sheldon van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport, +6.000 seconds)
3. Franck Perera (F/SSR Performance), +6.528 seconds
4. Mirko Bortolotti (I/SSR Performance), +7.694 seconds
5. Marco Wittmann (D/Project 1), +8.074 seconds

The full race result is available at dtm.com/de/ergebnisse.

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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