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DTM Gravel Challenge: electric power takes DTM stars over rocks and dust

- Maro Engel, Laurin Heinrich, Clemens Schmid and Kelvin van der Linde experienced an off-road adventure in Lusatia
- Duel of the DTM stars in the electric Opel Corsa Rally Electric from the ADAC Opel Electric Rally Cup

Munich. A gravel extravaganza instead of circuit racing: four drivers kicked up some dust on Wednesday, before the second half of the DTM season gets going this weekend (18th to 20th August) at the DEKRA Lausitzring. Maro Engel (Monaco), Laurin Heinrich (Würzburg), Clemens Schmid (A) and Kelvin van der Linde (ZA) competed against one another in the DTM Gravel Challenge. On this excursion, the DTM aces left their company cars behind and tried out the electric Opel Corsa Rally Electric from the ADAC Opel Electric Rally Cup “powered by GSe”, the world’s first electric one-make rally cup.

The DTM drivers had to work together on the loose surface. Heinrich joined forces with Schmid, while Engel raced with van der Linde. Their task was to complete three laps as quickly as possible on the Massen Dirt Track, around 20 minutes from the Lausitzring, followed by a tyre change and then three more laps of the gravel circuit. The drivers got a few tips from the first DTM champion, Volker Strycek, who was involved in the development of the Opel Corsa Rally Electric.

“We are rally rookies but Clemens had some good advice for me as co-driver. I hope that the course will be my only off-road show in the next few days,” said Heinrich with a smile. While all the DTM drivers had their cars under control and produced a sparkling performance on the sandy surface, the performance pit stop and tyre change proved to be a challenge. “I now know what is more strenuous than driving a racing car: changing the tyres,” said Heinrich after he had done so in full kit.

“It was so much fun! As co-driver, Kelvin van der Linde didn't give me too much information but he was good at motivating,” said Engel. His rally team partner van der Linde added: “Maro and I have been rivals on the circuit for many years, and we’ve had plenty of door-to-door duels. That makes it all the more pleasant to be in a car together.”

Before the live broadcast of the DTM race, TV partner ProSieben will show the most spectacular shots from the DTM Gravel Challenge at 13:00 on Sunday, revealing which DTM duo produced the fastest electric drifts.

The Opel Corsa Rally Electric is a pioneering vehicle, the first fully-electric rally car available for mass use. The rally racer, with a series electro motor boasting 136 HP performance and 260 Nm of torque, is



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racing in the ADAC Opel Electric Rally Cup “powered by GSe”. The fly-off handbrake helped the DTM stars get the tyres smoking as they sent the cars pirouetting through the corners at high speed.

Engel, Heinrich, Schmid and van der Linde are also aiming to provide more entertainment at the weekend. That will feature the fifth event of the season at the DEKRA Lausitzring. The two races will start at 13:30 on Saturday and Sunday. TV partner ProSieben will broadcast the two championship races live on German free TV, starting the pre-race programming at 13:00 on both days. The DTM is broadcast live or re-live worldwide to more than 150 countries.

DTM 2023 Calendar

26.05. – 28.05.2023	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
23.06. – 25.06.2023	Circuit Zandvoort / NL
07.07. – 09.07.2023	Norising
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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