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Final three-way battle for the DTM crown in Hockenheim

- **Three drivers in contention for their first DTM title at the Hockenheimring**
- **Four teams could be crowned Team champions at the finale**
- **Five racing series await visitors to the season finale at the iconic circuit**

Munich. The anticipation is rising as motorsport fans look forward to the DTM title decider at the Hockenheimring: in keeping with tradition, the final round of this season's DTM will be held at the circuit in Baden-Württemberg this weekend (20th to 22nd October). A trio of drivers will battle it out for the title. In pole position is championship leader Thomas Preining (A) in a Porsche 911 GT3 R, who comes into the deciding two races with a ten-point lead. Preining and his two closest rivals, Mirko Bortolotti (I) in a Lamborghini and Audi driver Ricardo Feller, have one thing in common: it would be their first title in the series, which enjoys great popularity all over the world. No fewer than four outfits could still win the Team competition. Manthey EMA, Preining's team, tops the table. Porsche leads the Manufacturer competition ahead of the final two races. ProSieben is broadcasting the DTM showdown live on free-to-air German TV, with coverage starting at 13:00 – half an hour before the race start – on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets for the finale are available online at dtm.com, with prices starting at 39 euros. Entry is free for under 16s when accompanied by an adult.

Key facts, Hockenheimring, Hockenheim, races 15 and 16 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 4,574 metres
- **Layout:** 17 corners (eleven right, six left), driven clockwise
- **2022 winner, race one:** Lucas Auer (Mercedes-AMG Team Winward, Mercedes-AMG GT3)
- **2022 winner, race two:** Marco Wittmann (Walkenhorst Motorsport, BMW M4 GT3)

Slender advantage for Thomas Preining

Championship leader Preining comes into the final two races as the slight favourite, with a lead of ten points. However, with a maximum 56 points still up for grabs, that margin will by no means be reassuring. "The title has been the main goal since the opening race of the season," says Preining, setting his stall out for the finale. The Porsche works driver from Manthey EMA has shown all year that he always has an eye on his opposition and can react flexibly to different race situations. "In the DTM, you cannot be perfect in every race – the series is too fiercely-competitive for that. The key is to always make maximum use of your potential and pick up as many points as possible. We have done a superb job of that so far," says Preining. His fiercest rival Bortolotti must go on the offensive from the outset and aim for the podium if he is to increase the pressure on the man at the top of the table. A top-15 finish is of little use, as from fifth place downward there is just one point difference between each position. Qualifying will be particularly important for the 33-year-old and the SSR Performance team: whenever Bortolotti has started from the front row of the grid in his Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2, he has gone on to win or finish second.



Media Information

The third of the title contenders, Ricardo Feller (CH), comes into the final two races as something of an outsider and can thus afford to come out swinging. The 23-year-old, currently third in the table, has scored points in every race so far and produced several highlights this season. Whether driving like a man possessed to clinch last-second pole positions in qualifying, fierce battles with Bortolotti at the DEKRA Lausitzring, or his fightback from 26th to third place at the Red Bull Ring in Austria, the Swiss is the man for special moments. As such, the Audi driver from Abt Sportsline – the most successful active team in the DTM – is still a force to be reckoned with, despite trailing Preining by 31 points.

Reigning champion, Sheldon van der Linde from Schubert Motorsport, comes into the final event of the season in fourth place and with nothing more than a mathematical chance of retaining his title. The 52-point gap to Preining is simply too big. However, the BMW works driver will be doing everything in his power to end the season with a top performance. The same can be said of team-mate and fifth-placed driver René Rast (Bregenz), who claimed his first success for BMW at the Red Bull Ring. The three-time DTM champion has five wins to his name in Hockenheim, and the 36-year-old is more than capable of making it half a dozen this weekend. Marco Wittmann (Fürth) is also one of the favourites in Hockenheim, where the BMW driver climbed onto the top step of the podium for the fourth time in his career last year.

Four title contenders and two local favourites in the Team competition

The Team Championship has a similar look to the top of the Drivers' Championship, with the Hockenheimring set for a four-way battle for the title. Preining's team Manthey EMA (283 points) leads the competition, ahead of Feller's Abt Sportsline (256 points) and the SSR Performance team (255 points) of Bortolotti. In fourth place is the Schubert Motorsport crew (253 points), who are looking to defend the title they won last year. As a maximum 90 points are up for grabs in the Team competition, with each outfit fielding two drivers, the title race is still wide open. And the Manufacturer competition also promises to be exciting: ahead of the final weekend, Porsche leads the way with 384 points. In second and third place are Lamborghini (343 points) and Mercedes-AMG (331 points). A maximum 90 points can still be scored in the battle for the Manufacturer crown.

Iconic circuit with plenty of variety and perfect views

With its varied layout, the Hockenheimring is a highlight for drivers and fans. Fast straights and corners alternate with slow passages and hairpins. While top speeds are achieved in the Parabolika, the DTM cars require optimal grip in the tight Motodrom section. The key is to find the right set-up for these different challenges. Spectators can follow the action perfectly from the grandstands, which offer great views of large stretches of the circuit.

Titles up for grabs in the ADAC GT Masters and ADAC GT4 Germany

This weekend, fans at the circuit near Heidelberg will also see the 2023 champion crowned in the ADAC GT Masters and ADAC GT4 Germany. The 4.574-kilometre track also hosts the finale of this season's Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland, in which Larry ten Voorde (NL) has already been confirmed as this year's champion. The Formula Regional European Championship features on the support programme for the DTM for the first time. The Formula 3 racing series sees talented youngsters go head to head in the F3 T-318 chassis from Tatuus. The Hockenheimring is the tenth and final stop of the season for the junior series, which will determine its champion in the final two races.



Media Information

All races live on ProSieben

TV partner ProSieben is showing all 16 of this season's races live on free-to-air TV. Qualifying can also be seen live at ran.de. Fans in Austria can follow the races on private, Salzburg-based station ServusTV. The DTM is broadcast live or replayed in full in more than 150 territories around the world.

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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