

22.10.2023

Preining crowned champion after third pole of the season

- **Porsche driver secures his first DTM title with the fastest time in qualifying at the Hockenheimring**
- **Beaten rival Mirko Bortolotti is first to congratulate the Austrian champion**

Hockenheim. A performance worthy of a champion: leader Thomas Preining (A) refused to be unsettled by his rival Mirko Bortolotti's (I) fastest times in the final qualifying of the season on Sunday morning in Hockenheim. In temperatures around eleven degrees Celsius, the Porsche works driver from the Manthey EMA team kept his cool and produced the fastest lap of the weekend so far (1:36.800 minutes) with time running out at the end of the session. The Austrian picked up three points for his third pole of the season to extend his lead to an unassailable 28 points and secure his first title in the internationally popular racing series with the final race still to come. "I am mega happy. The fantastic job done by the whole team has paid off. It was a great qualifying and, despite the pressure, was really enjoyable. After my fast lap, I initially wanted to do another, just to be certain. However, they then told me over the radio that it was not necessary. This does not mean we will sit back in the race – we want to win," said the 25-year-old.

Bortolotti, who was embroiled in a fantastic battle with Preining throughout the second half of the season, was the first to congratulate the new champion. "Congratulations to Thomas on his title. It was an excellent battle, right down to the final day of the season. My fastest lap was virtually perfect, but unfortunately not quite good enough. Despite that, I am extremely proud that we were still in contention for the title right up to the finale. We now want to put on a great show for the fans in the final race," said the SSR Performance driver, showing great sportsmanship.

The tension at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg was palpable at the start of the final qualifying session on Sunday morning. The two rivals for the title kept a watchful eye on each other, initially taking to the track for a warm-up lap before returning to the garage. Bortolotti, who trailed Preining by 27 points, had nothing to lose and was first to make his move. Shortly before the end of the session, the 33-year-old Italian produced the fastest laps of the final weekend to that point, clocking times of 1:37.016 and 1:36.806 minutes in the Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2. However, Preining responded in a manner worthy of a champion, beating Bortolotti's time by 0.06 seconds to take pole. Behind the two 2023 season's two dominant drivers, Luca Stolz (Brachbach) was again the best Mercedes-AMG driver in third place. Sheldon van der Linde (ZA), last year's DTM champion, was fourth fastest in the BMW M4 GT3. Fifth place went to Laurin Heinrich (Würzburg) in a Porsche 911 GT3 R run by Team75 Motorsport.

Result of qualifying 2 at the Hockenheimring

1. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey EMA), 1:36.800 minutes
2. Mirko Bortolotti (I/SSR Performance), +0.006 seconds
3. Luca Stolz (D/Mercedes-AMG Team HRT), +0.201 seconds
4. Sheldon van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport), +0.228 seconds
5. Laurin Heinrich (D/Team75 Motorsport), +0.248 seconds

Media Information

The full result can be found at dtm.com/en/results.

2023 DTM 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

Media Contact

ADAC e.V.

Oliver Runschke, T +49 89 76 76 69 65, E-mail oliver.runschke@adac.de

Kay-Oliver Langendorff, T +49 89 76 76 69 36, E-mail kay.langendorff@adac.de

dtm.com