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Surprise in Zandvoort: Paul secures first pole in the DTM

- **Driver from Dresden starts Sunday's DTM race from pole position for the first time**
- **Local favourite Thierry Vermeulen qualifies third in Zandvoort**
- **Entire field separated by just 0.9 seconds in qualifying on Friday afternoon**

Zandvoort. Maximilian Paul (Dresden) enjoyed a successful drive through the Zandvoort dunes, setting the fastest time of Friday afternoon's early qualifying session to secure the first pole position of his DTM career for the Sunday race. The Lamborghini driver from the Paul Motorsport team stopped the clock at 1:32.780 minutes after his flying lap of the 4.259-kilometre Formula 1 circuit. "As a new team, to start from pole in our third weekend in the DTM is really impressive and the reward for our hard work. However, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels now, as the field is very strong and includes many works drivers. The key to the race is to stay cool and put our foot down," said the delighted pole-sitter. Lining up alongside Paul in second place in the sixth race of this season's DTM will be fellow Lamborghini racer Mirko Bortolotti (I) from SSR Performance. "Up until the final corner, that was actually a perfect lap. Unfortunately, I then made a slight mistake, which probably cost me pole position. Given that, qualifying went superbly," said the Italian, also happy with his day's work.

Taking their place behind the two Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2 on the second row of the grid will be the Ferraris of Emil Frey Racing. Local favourite Thierry Vermeulen (NL) was third, to the delight of the home fans. Together with the top two, Vermeulen was one of only three drivers to dip below the 1:33.000-minute mark. "I am very happy with the result," said the Dutchman. "It would be a dream to win my first DTM race at my home event in Zandvoort. I will do my very best to make that happen. The track is just really enjoyable. It is rather special to drive a GT3 car round the banked corners." His teammate Jack Aitken (NL) ended qualifying in fourth place. Arjun Maini (IND/Mercedes-AMG Team HRT) also produced an impressive display and guided his Mercedes-AMG GT3 to fifth place.

Three drivers set their fastest times on a clear track in the first ten minutes of qualifying at the rollercoaster in the Dutch dunes in Zandvoort. However, that tactic did not pay off for the two BMW drivers Sheldon van der Linde (ZA) and René Rast (Bregenz) from Schubert Motorsport. Championship leader Kelvin van der Linde (ZA), in the Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2, was able to stay in touch with the top five and eventually took seventh place. The rest of the field waited until the final stages of the 20-minute qualifying to launch their pursuit of the fastest lap. With four minutes remaining, Bortolotti became the first driver to go below 1:33.000 minutes and took his place at the top of the timings sheet. Paul hit back to take the lead soon thereafter. Just 20 seconds later, Vermeulen recorded his fastest time. As in free practice, the time differences were minimal. First and last place were separated by just 0.845 seconds.

Race six of the season, with Paul on pole, gets underway at 16:30 on Sunday. The reason for this change to the usual schedule is the test ahead of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, which several DTM drivers will attend. Moving qualifying to Friday and changing the start time for Sunday's race (16:30) means



Media Information

the drivers will be able to complete their mandatory laps in Le Mans. Saturday's DTM race starts at the usual time of 13:30. The DTM stars take to the track at 09:50 for qualifying. That session can be seen live at ran.de. ProSieben is showing all 16 of this season's races live on free-to-air TV, with coverage beginning half an hour before the start of each race. The DTM races are broadcast live or replayed in full in more than 150 territories around the world.

Result of qualifying for race six of the season at Circuit Zandvoort

1. Maximilian Paul (D/Paul Motorsport), 1:32.780 minutes
2. Mirko Bortolotti (I/SSR Performance), +0.109 seconds
3. Thierry Vermeulen (NL/Emil Frey Racing), +0.198 seconds
4. Jack Aitken (GB/Emil Frey Racing), +0.266 seconds
5. Arjun Maini (IND/Mercedes-AMG Team HRT), +0.273 seconds

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

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