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Kelvin van der Linde: Attack on the top of the table at the Nürburgring

- **Audi driver narrowly trails leader Bortolotti going into the second half of the season**
- **The South African talks about his special relationship with the Nürburgring and explains what makes him and his Abt Sportsline team so strong this season**

Munich. Seven different winners in eight races: The DTM can look back on an exciting and varied first half of the season. The Nürburgring (16th to 18th August) will host the start of the second half, and one driver is especially excited to be heading to the Eifel region: Kelvin van der Linde. "It's finally time to get back in the racing car. I've nearly always performed well at the Nürburgring in the past and have celebrated many successes. I'm looking forward to the weekend," said the South African. So far this year, van der Linde has clocked up one win and a total of three podium finishes. Will the Abt Sportsline Audi driver charge to the top of the table at the Nürburgring? Going into the second half of the season, van der Linde is frontrunner Mirko Bortolotti's (Italy) closest rival. The SSR Performance Lamborghini works driver took the overall lead from van der Linde at the Norisring and sits at the top of the table with a narrow advantage of six points.

The Nürburgring sprint variant is one of the shortest tracks on the DTM calendar. Despite this, the 3.629-kilometre asphalt track offers a varied course with winding sections and long turns. "The passion of the fans at the Nürburgring is really special. I won the DTM race there three years ago, and then there are two wins at the 24-hour race and the joint DTM podium with my brother Sheldon," said van der Linde. The latter experience marking a new phenomenon in 2022. The duo celebrated the first and to date only one-two result for brothers in the DTM – BMW driver Sheldon finished first ahead of Kelvin.

"Our strength this season is that we are consistently finishing in the points and have yet to retire from any races," said van der Linde summing up the season so far. He finished in the top six in five of the eight championship races and finished in the points in every race with his Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2. "We might have only secured one pole position in qualifying, but we have performed well in the races," said van der Linde. The 28-year-old experienced his most successful race of the first half of the DTM season at the Dekra Lausitzring, where he celebrated his only win of the season thus far and bagged 48 of his 98 points. The man who has made Kempten his home and became a German citizen at the beginning of July is eager for his next gala performance to be at the Nürburgring.

Despite all his ambitions to take the overall lead, van der Linde also needs to keep an eye on his rear-view mirror since there are a trio of drivers within striking distance of Bortolotti. Just five points separate van der Linde and BMW driver René Rast (Bregenz/Schubert Motorsport) in third place. He leads Monaco resident Maro Engel (Mercedes-AMG Team Winward) by ten points. This exciting foundation for the DTM title fight means one thing is certain: Fans can look forward to thrilling race

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weekends after the summer break. After the fifth round of the season at the Nürburgring, the DTM stars will head to the Sachsenring (6th to 8th September). The second event of the year outside Germany at the Red Bull Ring (27th to 29th September) in Austria marks the start of the crucial stage of the season, ahead of the traditional showdown at the Hockenheimring in Baden-Württemberg (18th to 20th October).

Tickets for all DTM events are available online at dtm.com, starting from 39 euros. Children and young people under the age of 16 enjoy free admission when accompanied by an adult.

Driver standings after 8 of 16 races

1. Mirko Bortolotti (I/SSR Performance), 104 points
2. Kelvin van der Linde (ZA/Abt Sportsline), 98 points
3. René Rast (D/Schubert Motorsport), 93 points
4. Maro Engel (D/Mercedes-AMG Team Winward), 89 points
5. Sheldon van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport), 78 points

The full championship standings are available online at dtm.com.

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