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DTM title race heating up: Can Auer keep his cool at the Sachsenring?

- **Championship leader Auer has withstood the pressure from his rivals so far**
- **René Rast looking to stay on the attack after his 30th DTM victory**
- **Top six jostle for position ahead of the finishing straight in the title race**

Munich. The DTM is entering the pivotal phase of the championship. The Sachsenring (22nd to 24th August) hosts the sixth race weekend of the season, when the drivers will be looking to establish the best possible position going into the final stages of the title race. Last time out, at the Nürburgring, the battles on the track were definitely heating up. However, Lucas Auer (Mercedes-AMG Team Landgraf) has so far remained unmoved by any of that. The Austrian arrives at the circuit near Chemnitz as the championship leader in his Mercedes-AMG GT3, but with a slender lead over Britain's Jack Aitken (Emil Frey Racing) in a Ferrari 296 GT3. Tickets start at € 49 and are available at dtm.com. Admission is free for under 16s when accompanied by an adult. ProSieben is showing both DTM races live on TV, with coverage from the Sachsenring starting at 13:00 on Saturday and Sunday. The two races can also be watched in a free stream on Joyn, ran.de, ServusTV On and the DTM YouTube channel.

Key facts, Sachsenring, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, races 11 and 12 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 3,645 metres
- **Layout:** 14 corners (four right, ten left), driven anti-clockwise
- **2024 winner, race 1:** Jack Aitken (Emil Frey Racing, Ferrari 296 GT3)
- **2024 winner, race 2:** Luca Stolz (Mercedes-AMG Team HRT, Mercedes-AMG GT3)

Quintet hunting down Mercedes-AMG star Auer

Championship leader Auer has impressed this season with his nerves of steel and technical prowess. The 30-year-old is expecting another lively battle at the Sachsenring: "It is a cool circuit with big changes in elevation and high-speed corners. It will be another aggressive affair on the track, as the tone is a bit rougher in the second half of the season. But that is what makes the DTM so special." Last Sunday's DTM test day, which was attended by all 24 drivers, showed that Mercedes-AMG is a force to be reckoned with at the Sachsenring: Auer's fellow Mercedes-AMG driver Jules Gounon (Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter) from France set the fastest time, ahead of Jordan Pepper (ZA/TGI Team Lamborghini by GRT), who lies third in the table in his Lamborghini, and Porsche works driver Thomas Preining (A/Manthey EMA).

Lurking just eight points behind Auer, and poised to pounce should the leader slip up, is second-placed Aitken. The 29-year-old with Formula 1 experience is among the favourites at the Sachsenring and could wrest top spot in the table from Auer for the second time this season. Aitken was victorious in Saxony last year, and was in fine form again at the official test.

While third-placed Pepper picked up a decent number of points in the Eifel, René Rast (Bregenz), currently fourth in the table, travels to Saxony with an extra boost of confidence. The three-time champion, at the wheel of a BMW M4 GT3 for Schubert Motorsport, produced an impressive display last time out, claiming his second win of the season at the Nürburgring. Rast is now hungry to back up that success at the Sachsenring. "Our biggest problem in the past is that we have almost always started from well down the grid, and have had to painstakingly work our way back to the front. It would be great progress if we could start the coming races from the top ten," said Rast, explaining his grand plan. Preining is also looking to compete at the front of the field: the Austrian set a new lap record in qualifying last year, proving that he is capable of being very quick at the Sachsenring.

Undulating track with fast corners

The winding Sachsenring, to the west of Chemnitz, is a track with dramatic changes in elevation and a maximum gradient of 12.8 percent, making it unique on the DTM calendar. The layout features fast corners and blind crests. As a motorcycle circuit and the venue for the Liqui Moly Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany, the surface offers a relatively large amount of grip. Local favourite Maximilian Paul (Paul Motorsport) knows that this is something, to which the DTM drivers will have to adapt. "Tyre wear is pretty high at my home circuit, and only generally allows one flying lap in qualifying. With this in mind, you have to get everything spot on. I am really looking forward to the weekend with my fans," said the man from Dresden.

Action-packed programme and DTM nostalgia

The support programme for round six of the DTM at the Sachsenring features three series: ADAC GT4 Germany, the Porsche Sixt Carrera Cup Deutschland and the fully-electric NXT Gen Cup. Nostalgic flair on all three days of the event comes courtesy of DTM Classic, which will take to the track for demonstration laps with cult cars from 40 years of the DTM, including an Abt Audi TT-R and a Mercedes-Benz 190E Evo II.

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