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Güven's stroke of genius: Porsche driver snatches victory on last lap

- **From ninth to first: Güven claims his third win of the season at the Sachsenring**
- **New championship leader: third place takes Aitken top**
- **Bitter ending: Preining lets victory slip from his grasps in closing stages**

Hohenstein-Ernstthal. DTM madness at the Sachsenring: Fans at the circuit in Saxony enjoyed a spectacular eleventh race of the season with a remarkable climax on Saturday afternoon. Coming into the final lap in third place, Ayhan Güven (TR/Manthey EMA) took advantage of contact between the two cars ahead of him, with Jordan Pepper (ZA/TGI Team Lamborghini by GRT) and Thomas Preining (A/Manthey EMA) at the wheel, to move into the lead with a smart manoeuvre - and went on to take his third win of the season after 38 laps of racing.

"That was one of the best races of my career! When Thomas Preining and Jordan Pepper went into the corner door to door on slicks in the rain, it was clear to me that neither of them was going to take a step back, and that it may result in a gap opening up for me. I had waited for exactly that kind of moment, and took advantage of the opportunity. I won in similar conditions in Zandvoort. I am more than happy for there to be a few more wet races this season," said the overjoyed Turk. Pepper was second across the finish line. That was enough for the 29-year-old to climb into second place in the overall standings. The new championship leader is Jack Aitken (GB/Emil Frey Racing), who finished third.

Key facts, Sachsenring, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, race 11 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 3,645 metres
- **Weather:** 12 degrees, rainy
- **Pole position:** Jordan Pepper (TGI Team Lamborghini by GRT, Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Evo2 #63), 1:16.826 minutes
- **Winner:** Ayhan Güven (Manthey EMA, Porsche 911 GT3 R #90)
- **Fastest lap:** Thomas Preining (Manthey EMA, Porsche 911 GT3 R #91), 1:19.942 minutes

After heavy rain, all the drivers lined up for Saturday afternoon's eleventh race of the DTM season on Pirelli wet-weather tyres. Pole-sitter Pepper fended off Jules Gounon (F/Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter) to hold onto the lead, with Ferrari driver Ben Green (GB/Emil Frey Racing) slotting into third place. Aitken climbed one position to lie fifth in the Ferrari 296 GT3. While Güven initially found himself stuck in the pack in ninth place, Preining, driving like a man possessed, launched his fightback on a drying track. Having started from eighth on the grid, the Austrian was already into third place behind Pepper and Gounon by shortly before the mandatory pit stop. Güven had also made up a number of positions.

The second half of the race was equally spectacular: with rain falling again, Preining passed Pepper to take the lead after a safety car phase in the closing stages of the race. By this point, Güven had made his way into third place. When Preining made a mistake shortly before the start/finish straight on the penultimate lap, Pepper pulled level with him and the two drivers raced through turn one side by side on a wide line. Güven, lurking behind the front two, kept his cool and passed the leading pair on the inside to snatch a last-minute victory ahead of Pepper and Aitken, who also found a way past Preining. That meant the 2023 DTM champion eventually ended a remarkable race in fourth place. Gounon completed the top five in a Mercedes-AMG GT3.

Ricardo Feller (CH/Land-Motorsport) produced a fantastic display, making up 13 places to finish sixth in the Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2. Marco Wittmann (Fürth/Schubert Motorsport) also showed his fighting qualities, bringing the BMW M4 GT3 home in seventh place having started twelfth. Another driver who enjoyed a strong race was Fabio Scherer (CH/HRT Ford Performance), who raced through from 16th on the grid to finish eighth in his Ford Mustang GT3. Maro Engel (Monaco/Mercedes-AMG Team Winward Racing) crossed the finish line ninth, while Lucas Auer (A/Mercedes-AMG Team Landgraf) had to settle for tenth and consequently lost his grip on top spot in the table. However, the Austrian only trails Aitken and Pepper by two points.

Jordan Pepper: "I was able to control proceedings at the front nicely in the first half of the race. The pit stop was also really good and we were on course for the win. Shortly before the finish, it started to rain again. Unfortunately, I made a mistake on the wet track, which cost me the lead. Battling with Thomas Preining on the final lap, I risked everything for the win. In the end, I had to settle for second place. Despite that, it was a good day with regard to the championship."

Jack Aitken: "Those were challenging conditions. You needed to have a good feel for the car, particularly after switching to slicks. That demands the utmost concentration. However, when you find the right line and feel the grip with cold tyres on a damp track, it is great fun. I kept a close eye on the battles ahead of me in the closing stages, and was actually able to gain another position."

Thomas Preining: "With one lap remaining, I lost control of the car whilst leading the race comfortably. That allowed Jordan Pepper to overtake me shortly afterwards. I have never made a mistake like that before. It is pretty frustrating, because the strategy and the pit stop were really good and the win would have earned me plenty of points in the title race."

Media Information



Result of race 11 of the season at the Sachsenring

1. Ayhan Güven (TR/Manthey EMA)
2. Jordan Pepper (ZA/TGI Team Lamborghini by GRT), +2.574 seconds
3. Jack Aitken (GB/Emil Frey Racing), +2.986 seconds
4. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey EMA), +3.428 seconds
5. Jules Gounon (F/Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter), 5.257 seconds

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

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