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Unstoppable Preining wins in Oschersleben for the first time

- **Austrian Porsche driver claims commanding lights-to-flag victory in the Börde region**
- **Luca Engstler finishes second to claim his first podium of the season**
- **Third place sees Maro Engel climb back to the top of the table**

Oschersleben. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey) is cleaning up in Oschersleben. After setting the fastest time in free practice and securing pole position in qualifying, the 28-year-old crowned what has so far been a dominant display with his first DTM victory at the circuit in the Börde region on Saturday. Preining, at the wheel of a Porsche 911 GT3 R, set the pace from the opening lap of race nine of the season, and produced a commanding performance to wrap up a fine win. "We want to challenge for the title, so this victory was super important for us. Our strategy came off perfectly. Getting the timing of your pit stop right is vital in Oschersleben, because you soon find yourself amongst cars being lapped on this narrow track. Luca Engstler was closing in on me all the time in the closing stages, so I had to remain totally focussed," said the Austrian after his ninth success in the DTM. Luca Engstler (Kempten/Red Bull Team Abt) came home second, 1.601 seconds behind the winner. That earned the Lamborghini driver his first appearance of the season on the DTM podium. Maro Engel (Monaco/Mercedes-AMG Team Ravenol) was third and consequently moved to the top of the DTM table.

Key facts, Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, race 9 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 3,667 metres
- **Weather:** 28 degrees, sunny
- **Pole position:** Thomas Preining (Manthey, Porsche 911 GT3 #91), 1:21.862 minutes
- **Winner:** Thomas Preining (Manthey, Porsche 911 GT3 #91)
- **Fastest lap:** Bastian Buus (Land-Motorsport, Porsche 911 GT3 R #29), 1:23.643 minutes

Pole-sitter Preining controlled proceedings from the start at the 3.667-kilometre circuit near Magdeburg. Behind the Porsche works driver, Engel benefitted from a good start to pass Engstler and slot into second place. Lucas Auer (A/Mercedes-AMG Team Landgraf) and Ben Dörr (Butzbach/Dörr Motorsport) followed in fourth and fifth. However, the McLaren driver's race came to an end following a collision shortly after. Mirko Bortolotti (I/TGI Team by GRT) inherited his position in a Lamborghini Temerario GT3.

By the time he came in for his mandatory pit stop on lap 21, Preining had opened a gap of around two seconds and returned to the track as the race leader after a flawless tyre change.

Engel stopped at the same time, but lost valuable seconds in the pits. Engstler, who had come in a lap earlier for his fresh Pirelli slicks, took full advantage: the 26-year-old used his new tyres, which he had already got up to temperature, to overtake the Mercedes-AMG racer. After that, the driver from Kempten made up ground on Preining, but was unable to put the leader under any real pressure. Bortolotti was also catching fourth-placed Auer in the final third of the race, but could not get within striking distance and launch a decisive attack. After 40 laps, Preining took the chequered flag as the winner, making him the third DTM driver with two victories to his name already this season. Behind Engstler and Engel, Auer and Bortolotti came home fourth and fifth.

Arjun Maini (HRT Ford Racing) produced an impressive fightback. The Indian climbed six positions to finish sixth in a Ford Mustang GT3. Kelvin van der Linde (ZA) actually made up eight places in a BMW M4 GT3 Evo and crossed the line seventh at the home event for his team Schubert Motorsport. Timo Glock (Kreuzlingen/Dörr Motorsport), who has so often been unlucky this season, returned to the top ten with an eighth-place finish in the McLaren 720S GT3 Evo. The best-placed Ferrari driver was Thierry Vermeulen (NL/Emil Frey Racing) in ninth. Ricardo Feller (CH) guided the second Manthey Porsche 911 GT3 R to tenth place.

Luca Engstler: “We had a difficult start to the season, which was to be expected in our first year with a totally new car. As a team, we have made progress with every race and finally shown that we can compete at the very front. I have known Oschersleben since I was a child: I used to watch my father's races here, and claimed my first DTM victory here, so I have a special association with the circuit.”

Maro Engel: “A podium in the DTM is always a super result. Plus, we are back at the top of the table after a strong season so far. Despite that, I am naturally frustrated that we were not able to take second place. However, mistakes like the one in the pit stop can happen. For us, it is important to move on from that and go again on Sunday.”

Result of race nine of the season, Oschersleben

1. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey)
2. Luca Engstler (D/Red Bull Team Abt), +1.601 seconds
3. Maro Engel (D/Mercedes-AMG Team Ravenol), +5.040 seconds
4. Lucas Auer (A/Mercedes-AMG Team Landgraf), +5.744 seconds
5. Mirko Bortolotti (I/TGI Team by GRT), +6.180 seconds

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