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DTM title race heats up on the Sachsenring rollercoaster

- **Audi makes guest start in the DTM with Seyffarth Motorsport at the Sachsenring**
- **Just one point separates championship leader Maro Engel and Thomas Preining**
- **First race outing for Maximilian Paul since his crash at the Norisring**

Munich. Great tension, and a slender gap at the top: championship leader Maro Engel (Monaco/Mercedes-AMG Team Ravenol) and Thomas Preining (A/Manthey) are virtually neck and neck as they travel to the penultimate round of the DTM season at the Sachsenring. Just one point separates the two drivers, who will be hoping for a successful weekend at the circuit in Hohenstein-Ernstthal, as they look to set themselves up for the championship finale in Hockenheim. However, the leading duo could yet be joined by a number of other contenders for the title: led by Nicki Thiim (DK/Comtoyou Racing), a strong quartet of drivers is still within striking distance in positions three to six. Fans can also look forward to an appearance from Audi. The brand with the four rings will start in the DTM for the first time in 2026: Simon Connor Primm will make his DTM debut in an Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2 run by Seyffarth Motorsport. In doing so, he ensures that fans in Saxony will witness cars from nine different manufacturers in action. Maximilian Paul (Dresden/TGI Team by GRT) will be making his comeback: the 26-year-old is set to contest his first race in the cockpit of the Lamborghini Temerario GT3 since his crash at the Norisring.

Tickets for the DTM at the Sachsenring start at € 49 and are available at [dtm.com](https://www.dtm.com). Admission is free for under 16s when accompanied by an adult. ProSieben is showing the races live on free-to-air TV, with coverage starting at 13:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Both races will also be streamed live and free of charge on [Joyn](https://www.joyn.de), [ran.de](https://www.ran.de), [ServusTV On](https://www.servustv.com), and the [DTM YouTube channel](https://www.dtm.com).

Key facts, Sachsenring, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, races 13 and 14 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 3,645 metres
- **Layout:** 14 corners (four right, ten left), driven anti-clockwise
- **2025 winner, race 1:** Ayhan Güven (Manthey EMA, Porsche 911 GT3 R)
- **2025 winner, race 2:** Ayhan Güven (Manthey EMA, Porsche 911 GT3 R)

Engel under pressure - will the leader keep his nerve?

Engel's impressive run came to an end at the Nürburgring: the Mercedes-AMG driver failed to finish, and consequently went empty-handed for the first time in 18 DTM races. Having been deemed responsible for causing a collision, the experienced racer must live with a three-place grid penalty for Saturday's race at the Sachsenring. However, the championship leader has

already shown that he is able to keep his nerve in tricky situations, and to make his way to the front from the back of the field. His closest rival, Preining, is in top form: the 2023 champion scored 89 of his 159 points at the most recent two race weekends, and was the fastest driver at the official test at the Sachsenring roughly three weeks ago. "The circuit suits us, and I hope we can get top results at the weekend. The track is unique, with different corners and lots of grip. It is all left-handers to start with, then come the fast right turns. That also makes it a challenge for our engineers," the Austrian explains.

Chasing quartet poised to pounce

At the head of the chasing pack, Thiim is hoping for a change in fortune after some disappointing recent performances in the Aston Martin Vantage GT3 – the third-placed Dane currently sits 21 points off the lead. Lucas Auer (A/Mercedes-AMG Team Landgraf) finds himself in a similar situation, as he trails fellow Mercedes-AMG man Engel by 24 points after a DNF at the Nürburgring. In contrast, Marco Wittmann (Fürth/Schubert Motorsport) is a man on the up. The BMW driver cut the deficit to 25 points with his 20th DTM victory in the Eifel Mountains. "We made up a lot of ground at the Nürburgring. The Sachsenring has not been the happiest hunting ground for us in the past. We must stay out of the chaos and see what the weather does," says the man from Fürth. Completing the chasing quartet is Matteo Cairoli (I/Emil Frey Racing). The Italian is the only driver in the field with three wins to his name this season, but needs a strong finish to overcome the 33-point deficit going into the final two rounds.

Ninth manufacturer adds extra spice to the races at the Sachsenring

For the first time this season, spectators will be treated to an appearance by Audi in the DTM. Seyffarth Motorsport will field an Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2. At the wheel will be youngster Primm. "The DTM has always been a huge dream of mine. Five years ago, I was still racing in karts. As such, it feels really special to start in the DTM with Audi this weekend," says the 21-year-old from the Saxon town of Großschirma, who is contesting his third season in the ADAC GT Masters this year.

Paul returns: "Finally back racing"

The unique layout of the Sachsenring makes it one of a kind on the DTM calendar. The undulating 3.645-kilometre track has a maximum drop of 12.8 percent, and uphill sections of around ten percent. The first section is narrow and technically demanding. That is followed by fast corners, before top speed is reached on the 800-metre start/finish straight. One characteristic of the track, which is also a motorcycle track and the venue for the Liqui Moly Motorcycle Grand Prix of Germany, is the grippy asphalt. For Maximilian Paul, the weekend is about more than just points, as he makes his comeback after a crash at the Norisring. "I am thrilled to finally be back racing at the Sachsenring. I made full use of the time after the crash with my physio, with whom I even lived together at times. That allowed me to get back behind the wheel at the test three weeks ago, thanks also to the trust that Lamborghini and Gottfried Grasser put in me," says the man from Dresden.

Support programme features juniors and racing nostalgia from the East

Fans will experience two motorsport words on the support programme: ADAC GT4 Germany and the BMW M2 Cup are two series aimed at young drivers, and will each stage two races. In contrast, ADAC Historic Cup Ost will present vintage racing technology from the East. On show will be Formula racers and touring cars from pre-1990 - an era, in which the Sachsenring Classic was a permanent fixture on the racing calendar. Spectators can look forward to exciting racing and thrilling battles between legendary motorsport icons from the former Eastern bloc.

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