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Assault on top spot in the DTM: Wittmann claims BMW's first victory at the Sachsenring

- **Fürth's Wittmann climbs to third in table on the back of his latest success**
- **Jules Gounon finishes second for his first podium of the season**
- **New championship leader Preining extends his advantage with third place**

Hohenstein-Ernstthal. Marco Wittmann (Fürth/Schubert Motorsport) is right back in the race for the DTM title. The BMW driver won race number 13 of the season at the Sachsenring on Saturday. His second victory in a row was enough to propel him to third in the table and cut the gap to the top to 14 points. "This result means big points in the title race! The DTM win at the Sachsenring is very special for me. It was missing from my bucket list. Jules Gounon was gaining on me all the time in the closing stages of the race. However, I knew that I would get the win if I just avoided making any mistakes," said Wittmann after his 21st DTM victory and the first BMW success at the Sachsenring. There were also celebrations in the camp of Jules Gounon (Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter): the Frenchman finished second to make it onto the podium for the first time this season. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey) was third. The Porsche works driver had moved to the top of the table after qualifying, and extended his lead in the championship to six points.

Key facts, Sachsenring, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, race 13 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 3,645 metres
- **Weather:** 20 degrees, cloudy
- **Pole position:** Marco Wittmann (Schubert Motorsport, BMW M4 GT3 Evo #11), 1:17.627 minutes
- **Winner:** Marco Wittmann (Schubert Motorsport, BMW M4 GT3 Evo #11)
- **Fastest lap:** Thomas Preining (Manthey, Porsche 911 GT3 R #91), 1:19.395 minutes

Having claimed his first pole of the season, Wittmann started Saturday's race at the Sachsenring from the front of the grid - and he held onto the lead, courtesy of a good start. Behind him, Gounon and Kelvin van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport) both gained a position and slotted into second and third place. Preining, on the other hand, dropped back to fourth. Matteo Cairoli (I/Emil Frey Racing) found himself in fifth place in a Ferrari 296 GT3 Evo at this point. By the time they came in for their mandatory pit stop, the leading duo had extended their lead to several seconds.

Wittmann came in for a new set of Pirelli slicks on lap 16, followed one lap later by Gounon. The Frenchman returned to the track in the lead, but was overtaken shortly thereafter by

Wittmann, whose tyres had already had time to get up to the optimal temperature. Behind them, a fast pit stop allowed Preining to gain a position and take third place ahead of van der Linde. Maro Engel (Monaco/Mercedes-AMG Team Ravenol) followed in fifth in a Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo. After 41 laps of racing, the top five ended the 13th of this season's 16 races in this order. Engel, who had started eighth, did a good job of damage limitation with some smart tactics, and now trails Preining by six points in second place in the overall standings.

Sixth place went to Italian Cairoli, followed in seventh by the Lamborghini Temerario GT3 of Mirko Bortolotti (I/TGI Team by GRT). Title contender Nicki Thiim (DK/Comtoyou Racing) came home eighth after what was a mixed race for him in the Aston Martin Vantage GT3. Thierry Vermeulen (NL/Emil Frey Racing) finished ninth in the second Emil Frey Racing Ferrari. Ben Dörr (Butzbach/Dörr Motorsport) rounded out the top ten in a McLaren 720S GT3 Evo. Lucas Auer (Mercedes-AMG Team Landgraf) suffered a setback in the battle for the DTM title. The Austrian started the race from the pit lane following a crash in qualifying, which was in no way his fault, and eventually had to settle for eleventh place. Auer now finds himself 36 points behind championship leader Preining.

Jules Gounon: "We are finally where we have wanted to be all season. After my tyre change, I could see Marco Wittmann approaching in my mirror, and was obviously hoping that I could hang onto the lead. Unfortunately, that was not possible on cold tyres. The season has been far from satisfactory so far, so I am delighted with this podium."

Thomas Preining: "A super result for us! It was incredibly important to pick up plenty of points for the championship, and to defend the lead. Unfortunately, the start was pretty tough. However, I was able to hit back immediately and overtake Matteo Cairoli, then to find a way past Kelvin van der Linde thanks to our strategy."

Result of race 13 of the season at the Sachsenring

1. Marco Wittmann (D/Schubert Motorsport)
2. Jules Gounon (F/Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter), +0.450 seconds
3. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey), +3.684 seconds
4. Kelvin van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport), +14.991 seconds
5. Maro Engel (D/Mercedes-AMG Team Ravenol), +15.265 seconds

The full result is available at dtm.com/en/results.

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