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Preining lays down marker ahead of DTM showdown in Hockenheim

- **Championship leader fastest in both practice sessions on Friday**
- **Closest rivals Engel and Wittmann impress with strong lap times**
- **Teams test their car set-up in dry and wet conditions**

Hockenheim. Thomas Preining (A/Manthey) is setting the pace in his Porsche 911 GT3 R ahead of the final two races of the DTM season at the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg: the championship leader was the fastest driver in both free practice sessions on Friday. Preining produced the best time of the day in FP1 in the morning, stopping the clock at 1:36.974. That made the 28-year-old the only man to dip below the 1:37-minute mark. "A good result, but you don't know exactly how strong the opposition is. I have always felt at home at the Hockenheimring. Even travelling here, many fond memories came flooding back - winning the title in 2023, and my victory in the rain last year. We are really well prepared for the two races," said the Porsche works driver from the Manthey team.

Jules Gounon (F/Mercedes-AMG Team Mann-Filter) was the second-fastest driver in his Mercedes-AMG GT3, 0.050 seconds slower than Preining. Marco Wittmann (Fürth), who currently lies third in the table, ended the day in third place for Schubert Motorsport, underlining the fact that his BMW M4 GT3 Evo is still a force to be reckoned with in the title race. Finn Wiebelhaus (Obertshausen/HRT Ford Performance) was fourth in a Ford Mustang GT3, ahead of Italian Mirko Bortolotti (TGI Team by GRT) in a Lamborghini Temerario GT3. The man currently second in the championship, Maro Engel (Monaco) from Mercedes-AMG Team Ravenol, set the sixth-fastest practice time at the 4.574-kilometre track. The experienced competitor is also looking good ahead of the title showdown at the weekend.

When practice started around midday on Friday, in twelve degrees Celsius and dry conditions, Preining was one of the busiest drivers. The man from Linz was first to set the top time, which was then beaten several times over the course of the session. Wittmann and Engel also briefly topped the timings sheet. With quarter of an hour remaining, Gounon moved into top spot with the fastest lap up to that point. However, with three minutes left on the clock, Preining hit back with what proved to be the ultimate best time.

FP2 in the afternoon took place on a wet track after persistent rainfall. As a result, it was impossible to match the times from the earlier session. Instead, the teams focussed on optimising the wet-weather set-up of their cars. The fastest driver, with a lap time of 1:47.823 minutes, was again Preining.

Media Information



The first qualifying session at the Hockenheimring begins at 09:35 on Saturday. Fans can follow the race against the clock via a livestream at ran.de. ProSieben is showing all 16 of the season's races live on free-to-air TV, with coverage beginning at 13:00 on Saturday and the later time of 16:00 on Sunday. The two races will also be streamed live and free of charge on [Joyn](#), [ServusTV On](#), and the [YouTube channel @DTM](#).

All results from the Hockenheimring can be found at dtm.com/en/results.

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