

11.10.2026

Thomas Preining – Portrait of the 2026 DTM champion

- **Second title in four years: Preining joins elite group**
- **Porsche works driver becomes first Austrian to win the DTM twice**

Hockenheim. Thomas Preining has done it again: The Austrian has made more DTM history with his second title in four years. In the history of the series, which now stretches back over 40 years, the Porsche works driver is only the eighth driver to be crowned champion at least twice - and also the first Austrian to achieve this feat. "We did not make any mistakes when the pressure was on in the closing stages of the season. That was key to this success. I have been challenging for the DTM title on multiple occasions in Hockenheim, and that experience certainly helped. I am incredibly proud of this fantastic team effort," said the new champion after Sunday's deciding race in Hockenheim.

Preining loves hard wheel-to-wheel racing - and the DTM provides him with the perfect stage for precisely that. "As a racing driver, the DTM allows me to live my passion on the track," says the 28-year-old. "That is the kind of racing I enjoy most, and is exactly why I used to like this series so much as a kid. It goes without saying that it always depends on what the clerk of the course allows. However, I believe we drivers have a great deal of freedom within the rules, and there can be a bit of contact when you're racing door to door. That is what makes the DTM what it is."

Born in Linz, Thomas Preining grew up in a family that was mad about motorsport: his father Andreas rode in the motorcycle world championship from 1989 to 1994, and was known internationally for his sponsorship by former erotic dancer Dolly Buster. As such, it came as little surprise that Thomas was also fascinated by motorsport from a young age. "As a child, I used to follow Valentino Rossi very carefully on television," Preining recalls. "He is an exceptional sportsman, who was riding in a world of his own at the time. I even got to know Rossi personally. He has worked hard for everything he has achieved in his career." Preining first sat in a kart on Mallorca at the age of seven - the start of a career that has gradually led him to the top. Between 2009 and 2013 he won multiple national and international kart championships. However, the career that began with so much promise looked like coming to a sudden halt in 2015, when a main sponsor jumped ship.

Even back then, Preining had the same fighter's mentality that has guided him to his second DTM title this year. Instead of at the racetracks of this world, the youngster spent countless hours in the simulator. He kick started his career in ADAC Formula 4 in 2016. Two years later, Preining dominated the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland, maturing into a top driver and picking up an impressive ten race wins on his way to the title. In 2021 he was promoted to Porsche works driver. At just 22 years of age, Preining had achieved what he had always

dreamed of as a young boy: a place in the world of professional racing. His career path led via the ADAC GT Masters to the DTM, where he claimed his maiden victory at the Norisring in 2022 - presenting Porsche with their first success in the series at the same time. In 2023, he became the first Austrian to be crowned DTM champion. Three years later, he has repeated that feat in impressive fashion.

However, the route to his second title was far from straightforward. Preining began his championship-winning season in brilliant fashion, with a home win at the opening round at the Red Bull Ring in the Austrian region of Styria. However, he constantly finished outside the top five in the next seven races. An unusual situation for the competitive driver, and one that caused him great frustration. That frustration was clear for all to see at the Norisring, when he complained loudly over the radio. However, Preining had the perfect answer to a disappointing first half of the season, which he ended in eighth place in the table. The pursuit of his second DTM trophy appeared to give him new strength, and he proceeded to finish on the podium six times in a row - a feat that nobody had achieved before him in the GT3 era of the DTM. Preining will have particularly fond memories of the Sachsenring weekend: coming into the weekend trailing championship leader Maro Engel by 16 points, he finished second and third to leave Saxony with a 23-point lead at the top of the table. Preining again showed nerves of steel at the showdown in Hockenheim, as he wrapped up his second DTM title.

His second championship win makes Preining, at the wheel of the Porsche 911 GT3 R with the world-famous Grello design, one of the biggest names in the DTM. A racing driver through and through, who loves the thrill of the racetrack. And a glance at Preining's remarkable career makes one thing clear: this was by no means the final chapter of his success story.

Media Contact

ADAC e.V.

Oliver Runschke, T +49 89 76 76 69 65, E-mail oliver.runschke@adac.de

Kay-Oliver Langendorff, T +49 89 76 76 69 36, E-mail kay.langendorff@adac.de

dtm.com/en