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Local driver Thomas Preining: Looking forward to Red Bull Ring

- Son of ex-motorcycling ace Andy Preining aiming to secure points on home turf in Spielberg
- Lechner Racing driver is the only Austrian in the ADAC Formula 4

Munich: Thomas Preining (17, Austria, Lechner Racing) has big plans for the highlight of his season. At the Red Bull Ring, the only Austrian driver in the field intends to repeat his good performance from the first four race weekends of the ADAC Formula 4 when he tackles the first three races of the second half of the season on home turf in Spielberg, Austria. The son of former world-class motorcycle rider, Andy Preining, has already finished on the winners' podium three times this season, slotting into the Top Ten with P6 in the overall standings. He now has his first win in his sights after previously finishing once in the Top Three during his maiden year in the ADAC Formula 4.

Thomas, how do you feel about your home race?

Preining: "I'm looking forward to the races at the Red Bull Ring. We've invited lots of people along and will erect a large hospitality tent for sponsors and partners. But I must not let that distract me and will focus on the races like I normally would and just try to concentrate on doing what I do and make sure that I do it well."

What's so special about the Red Bull Ring?

Preining: "As regards track layout, I particularly like the penultimate turn, for sure. This is a real white-knuckle corner, of which there are very few around nowadays. You take this turn blind at around 170 kilometres per hour. At any rate, racing surrounded by Mother Nature is really great. When you get up in the morning and see that mountain vista, well, it's something quite unique that you won't find at any other circuit in the world. I'm sure the other drivers like it too."

Would you say that Spielberg is your favourite track?

Preining: "The Spielberg track is certainly one of my favourites, but I just love the circuit at Spa where I was for testing in the spring of 2015. That is definitely my favourite."

How do you rate your results so far this season, and what do you hope to achieve in the course of the rest of the season?

Preining: "After the difficulties we experienced at the start of the season, we have reached a point where we can finish on the podium at any time by dint of our own efforts. We must try to maintain this form at the Red Bull Ring and do even better. We've just reached the season mid-point, and there's still a long way to go. I will try to take my maiden win at some time or other and achieve as many podiums as possible otherwise."

What are your goals in motor racing after the season?

Preining: "My goal – and it's probably the same for all of us – is to race in Formula 1. But everyone knows that it doesn't just depend on the driver but on countless other factors. You have to be in the right place at the right time, all the time. A more realistic goal would be if, some day, I could make it my job and earn money for myself and simply do what I've always wanted to do."



What are your goals outside of motor racing? You have just passed your school-leaving exam, haven't you?

Preining: "For the moment, the focus is entirely on motor racing. Another thing to consider, though, is the army. We have conscription here in Austria, and I have to take my medical quite soon. We'll see whether they want me or not ... or whether at least we can come to some arrangement whereby I can still race."

You drove for ADAC Berlin-Brandenburg eV in your first season in the ADAC Formula 4 but are now with Lechner Racing. How's it going in your new team?

Preining: "Our decision to line up with Lechner Racing this year depended on several factors. For me, the fact that my new team comes from Austria plays an important role. You feel that bit more at ease as an Austrian in an Austrian team where you speak the same language, where behaviour patterns and the way of thinking are all the same, where everything is simply more familiar."

Let's consider for a moment the battle for the championship. Who do you think will finish in front at the end of the season? How do you rate your chances of being a front-runner?

Preining: "The top two or three drivers are already a little way out in front, but my goal for this season is definitely to finish in the Top Five and be a contender in the upper echelons of the championship. The aim from now on has to be, as at the Lausitzring and most recently in Oschersleben, to consistently produce top performances and finish in the Top Five every time, to achieve podiums as often as possible and rack up as many points as I can. Our first two races were not the best, because we perhaps lacked experience, so from that point of view, it would be really great if we can compete up front."

Lechner Racing have just opened new headquarters in Thalgau. Have you been there much?

Preining: "Conditions will be even better in future since Lechner have opened their new headquarters. The team has a new racing simulator. The Lechner brothers now have offices and workshop in one place so that we no longer have to commute between the two. The workshop on its own is around 1,000 square metres. It's incredible really what they have achieved from their own resources as a private team in just one year. Of course, I try to stop by as often as possible and keep in contact, speaking with my mechanics and engineers and obviously with the two bosses as well. Unfortunately, I've not had a lot of time to do that in recent months because of races and school, but now they've got the new simulator, I'll try to see them more often!"

What role do the people around you in your private life play?

Preining: "The combination of people around me makes a huge difference. My father supports me, of course, comes to every race and helps me where he can. My mother is always there too, and I now have a new manager. I feel very well placed for the future with these people around me, so I can definitely continue to work well."

MEDIA INFORMATION

The 2016 ADAC Formula 4 schedule

15/04 - 17/04/2016	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
29/04 - 01/05/2016	Sachsenring
03/06 - 05/06/2016	Lausitzring (with DTM)
17/06 - 19/06/2016	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
22/07 - 24/07/2016	Red Bull Ring/Austria
05/08 - 07/08/2016	Nürburgring
19/08 - 21/08/2016	Circuit Park Zandvoort/Netherlands
30/09 - 02/10/2016	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg



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