

27.4.2024

Rollercoaster ride with a happy ending: Aitken wins in Oschersleben

- **Ferrari driver claims last-gasp win after eventful race**
- **Marco Wittmann rolls out of the lead with just minutes remaining**
- **Five different manufacturers in the top five in first race of the DTM season**

Oschersleben. That was an emotional rollercoaster for the fans and drivers: for half an hour, pole-sitter Jack Aitken, at the wheel of a Ferrari 296 GT3, had controlled Saturday's opening race of the DTM season in Oschersleben. Then BMW driver Marco Wittmann (Fürth) surprised everyone by taking the lead after a clever pit stop. However, he then rolled to a standstill with a technical issue just four minutes from the end of the race. The British driver from the Emil Frey Racing team consequently retook the lead and, after 39 laps of racing, claimed his second DTM victory ahead of Lamborghini works driver Mirko Bortolotti (I) and Ricardo Feller (CH) in an Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2. "I am just happy to have won the race. Marco Wittmann gambled with a late pit stop. At first I could not believe that I had lost the lead. Then the tables turned again in the final few minutes. Despite the bizarre circumstances, I believe that the win was fully deserved," said Aitken after his success.

Key facts, Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, race 1 of 16

- **Circuit length:** 3,667 metres
- **Weather:** 20 degrees, sunny
- **Pole position:** Jack Aitken (Emil Frey Racing, Ferrari 296 GT3 #14), 1:21.465 minutes
- **Winner:** Jack Aitken (Emil Frey Racing, Ferrari 296 GT3 #14)
- **Fastest lap:** Ricardo Feller (Abt Sportsline, Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo2 #7), 1:23.099 minutes

28-year-old Aitken made a great start on Saturday afternoon and soon set about pulling clear of the opposition. Behind him, Bortolotti and Feller settled into second and third place, followed by Arjun Maini (IND) in a Mercedes-AMG GT3 and Sheldon van der Linde (ZA/BMW M4 GT3). The Ferrari driver maintained his lead after the mandatory pit stop, while Feller and Bortolotti swapped places.

The crowds in the packed grandstands at Motorsport Arena Oschersleben then witnessed an unexpected change at the front of the field. With a good 25 minutes remaining, the McLaren of DTM rookie Ben Dörr (Brutzbach) lost a wheel – a quick-thinking Wittmann pulled into the pit lane for his mandatory tyre change before a full course yellow slowed the rest of the field down. This smart move catapulted the BMW driver from 16th place into the lead, ahead of Aitken. However, Wittmann was ultimately denied his 19th DTM victory when his car suffered a technical issue and he was forced to retire shortly before the end of the race. That left the way free for Aitken, while Bortolotti overtook Feller to take second place in front of the Swiss driver. Sheldon van der Linde was fourth after 39 laps of dramatic racing, ahead of Luca Stolz (Brachbach) from Mercedes-AMG Team HRT.

Lucas Auer (A) crossed the finish line a good half a second behind his fellow Mercedes-AMG driver in sixth place, followed by the second Schubert BMW with René Rast (Bregenz) at the wheel. Eighth place went to Maini. Thierry Vermeulen (NL) came home ninth in a Ferrari 296 GT3. Defending champion Thomas Preining gained six positions to finish tenth and cut his losses.

Media Information

The second qualifying of the DTM season-opener in Oschersleben gets underway at 09:55 on Sunday. Fans can follow the session via a livestream at ran.de. ProSieben is showing all 16 of this season's races live on free-to-air TV, with coverage starting half an hour before the race start at 13:00 on both the Saturday and the Sunday. The races are broadcast live or replayed in full in more than 150 territories around the world.

Mirko Bortolotti: "The race showed how quickly things can change in the DTM. I had to come in early for my pit stop, as we had problems with the tyres in the first stint. With this in mind, I think we got the maximum out of the race. Although it helped us, I feel sorry for Marco Wittmann. To retire from the lead shortly before the finish – you wouldn't wish that upon anyone."

Ricardo Feller: "That was a cool race. We were obviously a little bit lucky in the end, but I am pleased with my first points. I was close to Mirko Bortolotti on several occasions, but I felt that a rash manoeuvre shortly before the finish would have been too much of a risk."

Marco Wittmann: "We had decided before the race that we were going to come in late to change the tyres. That strategy really paid off and put us in the lead. To roll to a standstill just before the finish is obviously brutally frustrating. We need to find out whether there was a leak in the fuel line or whether there was generally too little fuel."

Result, race 1, Oschersleben

1. Jack Aitken (GB/Emil Frey Racing)
2. Mirko Bortolotti (I/SSR Performance), +1.159 seconds
3. Ricardo Feller (CH/Abt Sportsline), 1.595 seconds
4. Sheldon van der Linde (ZA/Schubert Motorsport), 1.982 seconds
5. Luca Stolz (D/Mercedes-AMG Team HRT), +3.744 seconds

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

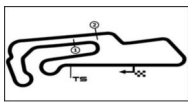
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dtm.com/en

**Result List
Provisional****Stewards / Race Management**

STEWARD	Achim Loth
STEWARD	Harry Stüber
STEWARD	Wolfram Lehmann
RACE DIRECTOR	Sven Stoppe
CLERK OF THE COURSE	Ralph Bohnhorst
TECHNICAL DELEGATE	Wolfgang Dammert
CHIEF TIMEKEEPER	Steffen Ruhl

Weather Start/Finish

AIR	18.9°C
TRACK	20.0°C
CONDITIONS	Dry
PRESSURE	1010 hPa
AIR	20.0°C
TRACK	21.5°C
CONDITIONS	Dry
PRESSURE	1010 hPa

Track Information

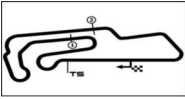
GREEN FLAG	13:32:20
CHEQUERED FLAG	14:33:53
SAFETY CAR PHASE	2
FULL COURSE YELLOW PHASE	1
TRACK NAME	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
TRACK LENGTH	3667m
TURN COUNT	14
TOTAL DISTANCE	143.01km
FASTEST LAP:	#7. FEL - 1:23.099

STARTED: 20 CLASSIFIED: 18 NOT CLASSIFIED: 2 DISQUALIFIED: 0

Nr.	Driver Car	Man.	Nation	Team Competitor	Laps	Total Time	Gap	Lap	Time
1	14 Jack Aitken Ferrari 296 GT3			EMIL FREY RACING EMIL FREY RACING	39	1:01:33.741		22	1:23.164
2	92 Mirko Bortolotti Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO 2			SSR Performance SSR Performance	39	1:01:34.900	1.159	5	1:23.392
3	7 Ricardo Feller Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II			ABT Sportsline ABT Sportsline	39	1:01:35.336	1.595	21	1:23.099
4	31 Sheldon van der Linde BMW M4 GT3			Schubert Motorsport Schubert Motorsport	39	1:01:35.723	1.982	21	1:23.527
5	4 Luca Stolz Mercedes-AMG GT3			Mercedes-AMG Team HRT Mercedes-AMG Team HRT	39	1:01:37.485	3.744	22	1:23.586
6	22 Lucas Auer Mercedes-AMG GT3			Mercedes-AMG Team MANN-FILTER WINWARD RACING	39	1:01:37.969	4.228	6	1:23.874
7	33 Rene Rast BMW M4 GT3			Schubert Motorsport Schubert Motorsport	39	1:01:38.317	4.576	8	1:23.878
8	36 Arjun Maini Mercedes-AMG GT3			Mercedes-AMG Team HRT Mercedes-AMG Team HRT	39	1:01:38.766	5.025	4	1:23.714
9	69 Thierry Vermeulen Ferrari 296 GT3			EMIL FREY RACING EMIL FREY RACING	39	1:01:38.918	5.177	19	1:23.449
10	91 Thomas Preining Porsche 911 GT3 R 992			Manthey EMA Manthey EMA	39	1:01:39.669	5.928	6	1:24.105
11	19 Luca Engstler Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO 2			Lamborghini Team Liqui Moly by GRT GRT Grasser-Racing-Team	39	1:01:40.017	6.276	21	1:23.650
12	3 Kelvin van der Linde Audi R8 LMS GT3 EVO II			ABT Sportsline ABT Sportsline	39	1:01:40.386	6.645	22	1:23.741
13	130 Maro Engel Mercedes-AMG GT3			Mercedes-AMG Team WINWARD WINWARD RACING	39	1:01:40.594	6.853	19	1:23.606
14	90 Ayhan Güven Porsche 911 GT3 R 992			Manthey EMA Manthey EMA	39	1:01:41.448	7.707	9	1:24.331
15	85 Clemens Schmid McLaren 720S GT3 Evo			Dörr Motorsport Dörr Motorsport	39	1:01:42.028	8.287	19	1:23.755
16	63 Christian Engelhart Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO 2			Lamborghini Team TGI by GRT GRT Grasser-Racing-Team	39	1:01:42.730	8.989	22	1:23.559
17	71 Maximilian Paul Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO 2			Paul Motorsport Paul Motorsport	39	1:01:42.833	9.092	33	1:23.429
18	11 Marco Wittmann BMW M4 GT3			Schubert Motorsport Schubert Motorsport	36	56:25.045	3LAPS	34	1:23.372
Not classified									
25	Ben Dörr McLaren 720S GT3 Evo			Dörr Motorsport Dörr Motorsport	20	29:42.372	19LAPS	4	1:24.280
94	Nicki Thiim Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO 2			SSR Performance SSR Performance	10	14:44.338	29LAPS	6	1:24.221

Fastest lap of the race. Car 7 driver Ricardo Feller on lap 21. Time 1:23.099, average speed 158.8 km/h.

Subject to final scrutineering!



Result List Provisional

Nr. Driver Car	Man. Nation	Team Competitor	Laps	Total Time	Gap	Lap	Time
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Publication time:	Clerk of the Course: Ralph Bohnhorst	Timekeeper: Steffen Ruhl
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