

Schmidt and Eng win at the season finale

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18/10/2015 The champion Philipp Eng has scored his ninth win of the season at the Porsche Carrera Cup on Sunday. Jeffrey Schmidt has won on Saturday.

On Sunday, the Philipp Eng planted his Porsche 911 GT3 Cup on first ahead of Jeffrey Schmidt (CH/Lechner Racing Middle East) and Michael Ammermüller (D/The Heart of Racing by Lechner). "What a fantastic Carrera Cup season! I managed to defend my title and also win the team title with my Project 1 squad. It's great to win the final round and if it was up to me it can continue like this," said a delighted Eng. The battle for runner-up honours went to Christian Engelhart (D/TECE MRS-Racing). In the overall rankings, the Porsche specialist earned 199 points over the season and lay just two points ahead of Schmidt.

With 182 points to his credit, Ammermüller finished fourth in the overall classification ahead of Nicki

Thiim (DK/Küs Team75 Bernhard, 168 points). The best rookie of the year was Alexander Toril (E/Market Leader Team by Project 1), with the amateur category clinched by Rolf Ineichen (CH/Konrad Motorsport). As the best team, Deutsche Post by Project 1 managed to beat its toughest rival Lechner Racing. From start to finish, round 17 was packed with gripping action with the 24-strong field treating spectators to spectacular overtaking manoeuvres, exciting door-to-door duels and enthralling fights for positions. In the very first lap, three cars collided and the safety car was deployed.

Unable to shake Eng

When the race went green again, Schmidt, who was leading after taking up the race from pole position, was unable to shake Eng and had to let the champion past in the third lap. The top three positions were then set with Eng, Schmidt and Ammermüller. While jockeying for positions, Nicki Thiim (DK/Küs Team75 Bernhard) found the better line and finished fourth. Engelhart took the flag in fifth ahead of Porsche Junior Connor de Phillippi (USA/Land-Motorsport). “Sixth place at the season finale is okay, but you notice how close together we all are,” explained de Phillippi. His Porsche Junior colleague Sven Müller (D/Lechner Racing Middle East) agreed with him: “The level of competition is incredible and you notice this when you’re fighting for positions.

Unfortunately I flat-spotted my tyre in an overtaking manoeuvre while I was running in fourth. Afterwards I couldn't maintain my pace and wound up on tenth. It's impressive how tough but fair everything went." Porsche Junior Matteo Cairoli (I/Team Deutsche Post by Project 1), who contested his maiden season in the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland, was not happy with his last race. “I nudged the rear of Christopher Zöchling's car slightly and was handed a drive-through penalty. Unfortunately, 17th was the end result," declared the 19-year-old Italian. For some of the teams, the end of the Porsche Carrera Cup race marks the start of a logistical challenge.

The vehicles and equipment are transported directly from Hockenheim to Stuttgart, where they will be flown to Austin/Texas for the season final of the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup. There as well, Eng could possibly pick up the trophy. He currently leads the overall standings with 137 points and will once again go head-to-head with his old rival Christian Engelhart (120 points).

A look back at race 16

Victory at race 16 of the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland on Saturday went to Jeffrey Schmidt (Lechner Racing Middle East) from Switzerland. On the Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg, Schmidt took the flag first in his Porsche 911 GT3 Cup ahead of Christopher Zöchling (A/Konrad Motorsport) and Christian Engelhart (D/TECE MRS-Racing). Schmidt travelled to Hockenheim highly motivated and promptly secured pole position for both Saturday's and Sunday's race, a first for this season. The 21-year-old made a cracking start off the line and managed to put some distance between him and his pursuers. After one lap he had already built a gap of 4.2 seconds.

Behind him, however, a heated incident played out: While fighting for positions, Michael Ammermüller (D/The Heart of Racing by Lechner), Nicki Thiim (DK/Küs Team75 Bernhard), Eng and Porsche Junior Connor de Phillippi (USA/Land-Motorsport) ploughed through the gravel in the first lap and were relegated down the field. Ammermüller, who had taken up the race from second, rejoined the action in 17th place, effectively burying his chances for the vice-championship title. After the dramatic first lap, positions one to three seems certain with Schmidt, Zöchling and Engelhart, however over the remaining 15 laps Zöchling ate away at the gap to Schmidt until only 0.6 seconds separated the two in the final lap.

Season was a bit of a rollercoaster ride

The Austrian-born UK resident made several attempts to attack, but was ultimately beaten to the line by a mere 0.1 seconds. “I knew my car was dynamite today. But I hadn’t counted on coming from tenth on the grid into second place. The podium is balm for my racing soul, because my season was a bit of a rollercoaster ride,” explained Zöchling. Ben Barker (GB/Land-Motorsport) crossed the finish line in fourth ahead of Robert Renauer (D/Herberth Motorsport), with Thiim taking sixth. Porsche Junior Sven Müller (D/Lechner Racing Middle East) occupied position seven. “The first laps were horrible. All the drivers were extremely motivated which was definitely exciting for the spectators. But I have to give away some positions and I’m not at all happy about that,” explains Müller.

Ammermüller finally finished on eighth ahead of Eng and Jaap van Lagen (NL/Aust Motorsport). Porsche Junior Matteo Cairoli (Team Deutsche Post by Project 1) came from sixth on the grid, but found himself relegated to ninth after the first lap to ultimately receive the flag in eleventh. “It was total chaos after the start. I lost several places. But I’m happy that my Project 1 squad has claimed the team title. Philipp and I have earned a lot of points over the season and that shows what a fantastic crew we have,” declared the Italian. Another pilot who could celebrate was Alex Toril (Market Leader Team by Project 1).

The 19-year-old Spaniard won the rookie classification ahead of Richard Charles Goddard (AUS/TECE MRS-Racing). And the B-category as well is decided: Swiss Rolf Ineichen of Konrad Motorsport holds an unassailable lead in the classification for amateur pilots.

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