

Porsche customer teams contest a full DTM season for the first time

29/04/2022 The Porsche customer teams SSR Performance and Team 75 Bernhard will field three 911 GT3 R in the DTM (German Touring Car Masters). This marks the first time that racing cars from the Stuttgart sports car manufacturer contest all 16 races on eight weekends.

The 2022 season kicks off this coming weekend with a doubleheader event in Portimão. The teams and drivers prepared for the opening round in Portugal with extensive tests at Hockenheim and on the 4.653-kilometre Autódromo Internacional do Algarve. Following tradition, the season wraps up in early October on the Hockenheimring, around 100 kilometres south of Frankfurt.

“The DTM opens up a whole new chapter in customer motorsport for Porsche,” explains Sebastian Golz, Project Manager 911 GT3 R. “The motto in the DTM is: driver against driver. The car setup is specifically tailored to each driver, there are no compromises. The pit stops with fast wheel changes can decide the outcome – so they are a fundamental part of the competition between teams. We’re very much looking forward to taking on this challenge with our customer squads.”

Unlike other series with racing cars that comply with the FIA GT3 regulations, the DTM is about one car, one driver. Porsche supports its partner teams SSR Performance and Team 75 Bernhard by providing a parts service, advice from performance engineers as well as works drivers and racing drivers from the extended Porsche squad.

The customer teams and drivers

The Munich-based SSR Performance outfit joins the DTM for the 2022 season after clinching the title in the ADAC GT Masters. The squad under Stefan Schlund will tackle the series with two Porsche 911 GT3 R. Works driver Laurens Vanthoor from Belgium will helm the No. 92 entry, with Norway's Dennis Olsen in the No. 94 sister car. Last season, SSR Performance made a guest appearance at a DTM race. Team 75 Bernhard also comes from the ADAC GT Masters. The squad owned by the Porsche brand ambassador Timo Bernhard campaigns the No. 24 car with works driver Thomas Preining from Austria. The 23-year-old knows the team from Germany's Rhineland-Palatinate region from his outings in the 2021 GT Masters.

Comments before the start of the season

Timo Bernhard (Owner Team 75 Bernhard): "Our aim is to be competitive, fight among the top five and climb the podium. If we can do that, then I'll be happy. It's difficult but not impossible. We're well-positioned as a team and we have our ideal driver choice in the car. I'm convinced that Thomas Preining has everything it takes to contest the DTM. He knows how to set up the Porsche 911 GT3 R perfectly for his requirements and how to use his elbows in a duel – he's a great driver. Plus, he has the speed and the joie de vivre of youth. There's no doubt he'll surprise many of the spectators and rivals."

Stefan Schlund (Owner SSR Performance): "We're super excited to tackle our first full DTM season. Everything has to come together as quickly as possible in the team. Our squad has grown and we're contesting on the DTM with 22 people. The synergy within the team is getting better and smoother. SSR Performance should be among the frontrunners. That's our intention. We have two experienced and fast drivers in our cars. Both are seasoned professionals and they know the Porsche 911 GT3 R inside out. In contrast to other GT3 and endurance racing series, they don't have to share a cockpit with anyone else. It comes down to their individual performances. With this in mind, Laurens and Dennis are determined to make their mark."

Thomas Preining (Porsche 911 GT3 R #24): "Every driver has his own car in the DTM. I can adapt the setup just for myself and I don't have to make any compromises. The driver stands in the limelight and the attention is on us. This has advantages and disadvantages. In other series, if you have a strong teammate, both drivers motivate each other. That's good, too. In the new DTM season, I'm expecting a competitive pack of drivers that has no equal. It'll possibly be the best GT series in the world. It's hard to make predictions. Obviously, we all want to win and we'll soon see whether we're able to do that."

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 911 GT3 R #92): "Everything is new. The Porsche 911 GT3 R, our SSR Performance team and I are heading into new territory in the DTM. It'll be a huge challenge because some of our rivals have years of experience in this series and that gives them an advantage. Still, I'm feeling confident. During our tests, we've prepared systematically. I'm really looking forward to the first race weekend in Portimão. The racetrack in Portugal is diverse and the Algarve area is beautiful. I hope we manage to kick off the season with a highlight."

Dennis Olsen (Porsche 911 GT3 R #94): "I'll be one of the first Porsche drivers in the DTM and the first Norwegian in the series – so I'm making racing history, which is wonderful. We've prepared as best we can for everything that'll be thrown at us this season: the structures within the team, the processes on and off the track, optimising our pit stops. I think there'll be weekends where we're strong, and weekends that don't go so well. The name of the game is to consistently do our very best and regularly score points. Everything will be new for us in Portimão but we've used the tests to mitigate any surprises. I hope to be at the front on the first weekend."

This is the DTM

The DTM was relaunched in the year 2000 under the name "German Touring Car Masters" and attracted many fans as a follow-up series to the original DTM/ITC (1984 to 1996). Pure prototypes were fielded until 2020, with cars complying with the FIA GT3 regulations introduced to the series last year. This step opened the door to the DTM for the successful Porsche 911 GT3 R. The fully developed racing vehicle from Weissach has underlined its qualities impressively through title wins and victories in the Intercontinental GT Challenge, the North American IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and the ADAC GT Masters as well as the 24-hour races on the Nürburgring, at Spa-Francorchamps and Daytona, among others.

The 2022 DTM calendar includes eight events in five European countries. Each race weekend comprises two free practice sessions (40 to 45 minutes), two qualifying sessions (20 minutes each) and two races each contested over 55 minutes plus one lap. A pit stop with a tyre change is mandatory in all races. The ten top-placed drivers, teams and manufacturers receive points following the proven FIA formula (25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1). Additional points are awarded for the top three qualifiers and the fastest race lap. At the end of the season, the DTM honours its champions in the driver, team and manufacturer categories. A total of 29 drivers in GT3 vehicles from five different manufacturers have registered for the 2022 season. A Balance of Performance (BoP) system aims to achieve a level playing field for the various racing car models to ensure exciting and open competition.

The 2022 DTM calendar

29.04. – 01.05. Portimão (Portugal)
20.05. – 22.05. Lausitzring (Germany)
17.06. – 19.06. Imola (Italy)

01.07. – 03.07. Norisring (Germany)
26.08. – 28.08. Nürburgring (Germany)
09.09. – 11.09. Spa-Francorchamps (Belgium)
23.09. – 25.09. Spielberg (Austria)
07.10. – 09.10. Hockenheim (Germany)

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