

The Path to Victory Begins Upstairs

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24/02/2017 Sven Müller had to wait six years for his great triumph in Formula racing. To win, he first had to lose his fear of losing.

Wolken ziehen über den Circuit of the Americas in Austin/Texas, 24 Grad im Schatten, im Auto knapp 40. In weniger als einer Stunde starten 27 Fahrer aus 14 Nationen auf der Rennstrecke. Einer von ihnen wird sich den Gesamtsieg des Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup holen: Sven Müller. Nach 31 Minuten und 8,105 Sekunden steht fest, dass er den finalen Lauf der Serie nicht gewonnen hat. Aber Platz acht reicht, um die Saison 2016 mit geballter Siegerfaust zu beenden. Nie zuvor ist Müller so vorsichtig gefahren, noch nie hat er so viele FClouds settle over the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas. It's around 75 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade, 104 in the car. In less than an hour, twenty-seven drivers from fourteen countries will test their mettle on the track. One of them will take home overall victory in the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup: Sven Müller. After 31 minutes and 8.105 seconds, the race is over. Although Müller didn't place first in this race, eighth place was enough to end the 2016 season with his fist raised victoriously in the air. Never before has Müller driven so cautiously or let so many drivers pass

him. Just one point separated him from his dream. And now he's on the top step of the podium.

Before the race, Müller was focused. In the past, he would never step into the car without playing his current favorite song—a ritual of sorts. Now, he's discontinued the practice. He centers himself to prepare for a perfect start. Over the past few months, he has driven the 3.43-mile circuit in Austin time and again: a few times in his Porsche 911 GT3 Cup and countless more on his sofa in Bingen am Rhein, Germany, with a game console controller in his hands. He wasn't nervous before the start, he reports after the race, just very focused on victory.

The next day, Müller is a bit sore, though not nearly as much as three years ago after his first laps on the Nürburgring. “Back then I was so wound up that I sat completely wrong in the car, and after ten laps I was in unbelievable pain.” He chuckles at the words “back then.” On the other hand, if you drive your first go-kart at the age of six, race for a European championship at the age of twelve, join the ADAC Formel Masters before the age of nineteen, and then move on to Formula 3, it's no stretch to talk about “back then.”

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