



Lamborghini creates history as Bortolotti clinches DTM title in Hockenheim season finale

Pole and second place in the final race of the year enough for SSR Performance driver to be crowned

Sant'Agata Bolognese/Hockenheim, 20 October 2024 - Lamborghini Squadra Corse claimed an historic maiden DTM championship title as SSR Performance's Mirko Bortolotti finished second in the final race of the season at Hockenheim.

Lamborghini Factory Driver Bortolotti, at the wheel of his #92 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO2, came into the weekend with a healthy if not insurmountable 15-point lead in the drivers' standings over Audi rival Kelvin van der Linde, with the Mercedes of Maro Engel 20 points adrift in third.

Fifth place in the opening one-hour encounter on Saturday meant the Italian lost the lead of the championship to van der Linde, who won the race from pole position to take a slender two-point margin heading into Sunday's decider. But a superb performance in qualifying allowed Bortolotti to reclaim the lead by a point after taking pole and duly captured the title with a steady, trouble-free run to second as Lamborghini Team Liqui Moly by GRT's Luca Engstler won his second race of the year.

It is the first time that Lamborghini has won the coveted DTM title, since making its entry into the Germany-based GT3 championship in 2021. For Bortolotti, it is the first championship crown since winning the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup title in 2017 and second major success in two weeks after victory in the IMSA season finale, the Petit Le Mans. Of particular significance to Lamborghini, it is also the first time an Italian brand has won the DTM for 31 years.

Free Practice and Qualifying

Opening practice on Friday morning was rain-affected which, despite forecasts for dry weather across the weekend, turned out to offer representative conditions as the capricious Baden-Württemberg climate proved typically tricky to predict. Bortolotti was quick in both wet and dry conditions during practice, setting the second-quickest time in the morning and going fastest in the afternoon. Come qualifying, however, the pace intensified as Bortolotti could only manage seventh on the grid as main challenger van der Linde took the three points for pole position to reduce the gap to just 12 points before race one. By Sunday morning, the #92 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO2 was on song again and Bortolotti stormed to his third pole position of the year to reclaim the points lead, with SSR Performance team-mate Nicki Thiim alongside him on the front-row of the grid in second.

Race 1

Keen to make up ground from his lower-than-expected grid position, Bortolotti vaulted up to fourth at the start of the race, as van der Linde leapt clear in his Audi. Key to Bortolotti's progress on the opening lap was a series of bold overtakes, on the #91 Porsche of Thomas Preining before turn



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two and then another pass on Engstler on the exit of the turn four hairpin. Unfortunately, that was about as much as Bortolotti could manage as the Audi in the lead appeared to have too much pace. Bortolotti made his mandatory pit-stop and rejoined in front of the Mercedes of Engel but was passed, and briefly pushed off-track, at turn eight by his rival. From there, it was a case of damage limitation as Bortolotti came home fifth at the end of the race and losing the lead of the championship to race winner van der Linde.

Race 2

Trailing van der Linde by just two points before qualifying, Bortolotti then reclaimed the lead of the championship by a solitary point by taking pole and duly made the most of a poor starting position for the Audi driver by romping clear of team-mate Thiim in the early stages. The #92 stretched its margin over the sister #94 Huracán to nearly five seconds before the mandatory pit-stops as van der Linde languished down the order in 10th. The last major hurdle overcome by efficient pit work by the SSR Performance mechanics, Bortolotti returned to the track still firmly in control of the championship, albeit dropping behind the #63 GRT Lamborghini of Engstler who took the lead. Bortolotti, knowing he only needed to maintain position to win the title, followed Engstler home in second place to safely become DTM champion. Engstler therefore claimed his second victory of the season, following his opening weekend success at Oschersleben, while Thiim recovered from contact with Jules Gounon's Mercedes to finish fifth, completing a memorable final day for Lamborghini.

Rouven Mohr, Automobili Lamborghini Chief Technical Officer: "It's an incredible achievement to be honest. In this 40th anniversary season of the DTM, to win the title with Lamborghini and with Mirko is unbelievable. We have made history this weekend and I am so proud of the efforts of the whole team to make this dream come true."

Mirko Bortolotti, Lamborghini Factory Driver and SSR Performance, said: "It's tough to put it into words because it is something really major for us. First of all, I want to thank Lamborghini, they took me out of a hole 10 years ago and believed in me and gave me a chance. We went through thick and thin together, having great success at the same time, and I think today has been the biggest success for us and for myself. It's definitely the biggest title of my career, so I am incredibly proud of everyone. I also need to thank everyone involved at DTM, all of the teams that gave me the chance to race, T3 Motorsport back in the days with my guest start at Assen, GRT of course for the first season where we were also close to the title, but it didn't work out. And then SSR Performance, Stefan Schlund and everyone involved for the last two seasons, you really needed to be part of it every day behind the scenes to understand how this success was possible and to be built and where it comes from. The hours, the dedication, the job that everybody did is something very unique and very special and I will carry this for the rest of my life; it's a really special day for me."

Photos and videos: media.lamborghini.com

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