

Thomas Krebs wins the 9th round of the VLN series on Nürburgring

After a long period since his last race in the GT4 European Series, Thomas was finally back on the racetrack again. In collaboration with his usual team, PROsport Performance, Thomas were going to race in the 9th and 10th round of the VLN series on Nürburgring Nordschleife.

The VLN series takes place on the Nürburgring GP circuit combined with the Nordschleife, giving the distance of 25 km for a single lap. With 137 racecars on the grid for VLN 9, this is one of the biggest and most spectacular races in Germany. The race is a 4 hours endurance race, where multiple drivers can share a car. Thomas was set to drive in the V5 class for production cars, in a Porsche Cayman. His two team mates were the New Zealander Earl Bamber, the 2015 Le Mans winner in LMP1 and Porsche factory driver, as well as South African Kelvin Van Der Linde, the 2014 ADAC GT Masters winner and Audi factory driver. With a strong driver line-up, the team set their expectations high for the race.



The 9th round of the VLN series took place on the 16. – 17. of October. On Friday Thomas made his first laps on the track, collecting valuable experience before the race.

Thomas: *"I made 5 complete laps in the test session Friday afternoon, which was important as preparation for the race. As my last laps on this special circuit was over one year ago, it was nice to refresh my memory. There are over 73 corners to remember, and this track is by far the most challenging racetrack in the world. Some of our competitors have made thousands of laps on the Nordschleife, and I have made around 25. Track knowledge is the key to success here. I also had some time to get to know the V5 Porsche Cayman, which is a different car from the Porsche GT4 I am used to drive in."*



On Saturday morning, the qualifying practice was supposed to run from 8:30 – 10:00, but was delayed due to heavy fog over the circuit. With October temperatures of only 2-4 degrees, the many teams, drivers and spectators were set for an ice-cold day at the Nürburgring. After some waiting time the qualifying session began, and Earl was the first driver in the car. Under difficult conditions, the Porsche driver took provisional pole-position in the V5 class, setting a time of 9:44 min. Next driver in the car was Thomas, who could top the time with a 9:39 min., setting the new fastest time in the V5 class. In the end, Kelvin could go even lower, setting a time of 9:36 min., and a fastest time of all the cars in the V5 class.



Thomas: *"I am really happy with our performance in the qualifying. I did not expect us to be this quick, as we were the fastest car in our class during the complete qualifying session. I am also very satisfied with my own performance, as I felt much more confident with the track and the car compared to yesterday. The conditions were tricky this morning, and a number of factors made the qualifying very difficult. Besides the fact that it is close to 0 degrees and the tires are hard to heat up, some parts of the track were still wet and other parts still covered in fog. At the same time there is a lot of traffic, both with cars which you have to overtake and cars in faster classes which you need to let by without losing time. Every lap something new is happening, which is one of the reasons why this circuit is so special."*



At 12:30 Saturday, the 137 cars were ready on the grid, waiting for the race to begin. Earl took the first stint in the car, and made a great start, maintaining the lead in the V5 class. Within the first lap, he could drive out a solid gap to the second placed car, overtaking competitors in even higher categories. After 6 laps and one hour in the car, it was time for the first pit stop and driver change. With around one minute down to the followers, Earl handed over the car to Kelvin. Kelvin could continue the good performance, making great times lap after lap. After half of his stint, he went into the pits for fuel and tire change, and continued in the car for another couple of laps. It was now Thomas turn to get in the car. After a quick drivers change and some more fuel in the car, Thomas went out on the track, continuing the great performance. With very fast and consistent laps, he could finish the race with a victory for the team, passing the finish line with 2:45 min. to the next car in the V5 class.



Thomas: *"I am so happy to get my first win in the VLN series. It is the first time for Porsche to win the V5 class, which is something we can all be proud of. PROsport Performance did a great job with the car the whole weekend, and all of us three drivers were performing on a high level without making any mistakes. I had great fun racing in the last hour of the race, and I am happy to have shown my potential. I have gained a lot of experience this weekend, and I am already looking forward to race in the VLN 10 in just under two weeks. Hopefully we can continue the great success"*



Thomas is already back on track Tuesday the 20. of October, where he will make an exciting test day on Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium.