

ADAC RAVENOL 24h Nürburgring from 14. To 17. May 2026:

Mercedes-AMG claims its first 24h Nürburgring victory in ten years

- RAVENOL Mercedes-AMG #80, led by Maro Engel, secures the win
- A technical issue ends Formula 1 superstar Max Verstappen's dream debut
- Four-car battle for second and third place
- Record crowd of 352,000 fans in the Eifel

It was a landmark moment in the Eifel as Mercedes-AMG claimed victory in the ADAC RAVENOL 24h Nürburgring for the first time in a decade. Maro Engel, who was also part of the marque's most recent triumph in 2016, celebrated his second overall win in the "Green Hell" aboard the RAVENOL Mercedes-AMG #80, alongside team-mates Luca Stolz, Fabian Schiller and Maxime Martin. Until just under three and a half hours before the chequered flag, Formula 1 superstar Max Verstappen looked set for victory on his first-ever 24h Nürburgring appearance, before a driveshaft failure brought his Verstappen Mercedes-AMG #3 to a premature end. Over the four days, a record-breaking 352,000 spectators attended the event, creating an extraordinary atmosphere both on and off the track.

"Starting from 25th was far from ideal. But at the 24h Nürburgring, it is not always about where you start. Thanks to Maro's strong stints, we were able to move to the front very quickly. When I got into the car, the rain started to fall. It turned out to be the decisive shower of the race - and we made exactly the right tyre choice. Once our sister car retired, the fight for victory was effectively over," said Fabian Schiller. For Stolz, Schiller and Martin - who matched his father Jean-Michel Martin, winner in 1992, in the family record books - it was their first victory at the 24h Nürburgring. Following Engel's accident in Top Qualifying 3 on Friday, the quartet had started the race from 25th on the grid.

The remaining two podium places were decided after a thrilling four-way battle and ultimately went to the pole-setting Abt Lamborghini #84 of Luca Engstler, Mirko Bortolotti and Patric Niederhauser. The crew had to fight all the way to the finish to stay ahead of the Walkenhorst Aston Martin #34 of Christian Krognes, Mattia Drudi, Nicki Thiim and Felipe Fernandez Laser after receiving an 86-second time penalty for speeding in a Code 60 zone, imposed after the race. For both brands, it marked a first

podium finish at the 24h Nürburgring. The Rowe BMW #99 with Dan Harper, Max Hesse, Sheldon van der Linde and Dries Vanthoor, and the Schubert BMW M3 Touring #81 with Jens Klingmann, Ugo de Wilde, Connor De Phillippi and Neil Verhagen, completed the top five in fourth and fifth place respectively.

Mercedes-AMG dominates with a long one-two lead

After a turbulent start, the two Mercedes-AMG cars, #3 and #80, had already pulled away at the front early Saturday evening after timing their pit stop perfectly just before one of the heavier rain showers. From that point on, they controlled the race comfortably as a two-car formation with a lead of several minutes, although they occasionally came a little too close to one another. At one stage, Verstappen and Engel even made contact at top speed on the Döttinger Höhe. Thereafter, the two cars - lapping at almost identical pace - kept a slightly greater "safety distance" between them until Dani Juncadella was forced to bring the Verstappen Mercedes-AMG into the pits for an extended repair stop. Only in the closing stages did Juncadella rejoin in the repaired car, receiving loud ovations from the fans, who had been especially enthusiastic about Verstappen throughout the event.

Alongside the RAVENOL Mercedes-AMG #80, several other crews delivered remarkable recovery drives. In the Abt Lamborghini #84, Mirko Bortolotti initially fell behind his team-mate Marco Mapelli in the Abt Lamborghini #130, who had jumped the start, and was then lightly tapped by the Mercedes-AMG #3 in the second turn. Even before entering the Nordschleife for the first time, he headed straight back to the pits. After a damaged rear tyre had been changed, he began his charge through the field from 49th position in the first starting group.

In the Rowe BMW #99, Dan Harper had been spun around on the Grand Prix track on the opening lap, dropping the car out of the top 30. In the end, it became the team's only remaining contender after the defending champions in the Rowe BMW #1 - Augusto Farfus, Raffaele Marciello, Jordan Pepper and Kelvin van der Linde - who had initially been on course for a podium finish, were forced to retire on Saturday evening with a fuel supply problem.

With weather and track conditions changing repeatedly, the opening hours on Saturday saw numerous accidents. Among those caught out were Kevin Estre in the fan-favourite Manthey Porsche #911, nicknamed "Grello", Thierry Vermeulen in the



Kondo Ferrari #45, which had temporarily held the lead, and Arjun Maini in the HRT Ford #64.

Following the spectacular 54th edition of the ADAC RAVENOL 24h Nürburgring, fans can already save the date for next year: the race will take place from 27 to 30 May 2027.

