



**“I scored my second win of the season!”**

Alex Lynn – GP2 Hockenheim preview

*London, July 27, 2016.* After the tough time we've had lately in the GP2 Series, a good result was exactly what was needed to send us into the summer break in high spirits. It turned out even better than that at Hockenheim – I scored my second win of the season!

The guys at DAMS have worked so hard, and as soon as I hit the track at Hockenheim I knew we were carrying on the progress from the previous weekend in Hungary. Right from the word go in free practice I had a good feeling with the car, and we were third fastest on merit, very close to the top. We were just carrying on the theme from Hungary in how we were changing the car, and I felt strong on long runs as well so that was good.

Into qualifying I was positive and looking forward to seeing how the car would react, and it was a big improvement again. In the end I qualified fifth and that's a shame, because traffic hampered us and I really believe I could have been on pole. I was really confident with the car and it was giving me a good feeling for the first time in quite a while.

We went for the prime tyre at the start of the feature race, and I had an early battle with Oliver Rowland and Norman Nato. I'd jumped Ollie off the line when he got held up by Pierre Gasly's bad start, but then I got boxed in at Turn 2 and Ollie got me. After that I passed Norman at the Sachskurve and a few laps later passed Ollie too, so once the leaders had stopped to get off their option tyres and onto primes I was in the lead. That set my race up nicely.

For a while the pace was really strong and I was looking good, but the problem was the prime tyres weren't lasting as long as we'd hoped. I had to come in earlier than planned, but even then I'd been losing time over the previous four or five laps and, once I'd pitted, that dropped us behind some cars I could have done without.

Obviously, there was still a good result in it, with me on the option tyres now, and I was trying to make my way cautiously up the order when I got caught in a dogfight with Norman and Antonio Giovinazzi. The annoying thing is that effectively Antonio wasn't in the same race as us – he'd made an early stop and there's no way he was going to keep us behind the whole race on those tyres. As a result of his defending, I got caught out and ran into the back of Norman and that ruined his race.



I got given a 10-second penalty, which is fair enough, so my fifth on the road was converted to eighth. But what I was quite happy about was that the pace was improved. Even with the penalty I stayed calm and made sure I got something out of the race, so although one mistake led to a penalty I was pleased. I managed to keep my focus and redeem myself.

Once Gasly got excluded, that moved me up to seventh and dropped me from reversed-grid pole down to second – behind Giovinazzi! I don't think my start was particularly good but his was terrible, so I took the lead. It stayed closer than I would have liked for a while, with Ollie and Antonio staying within the one-second DRS range, but as soon as I broke Ollie from DRS I knew my pace was going to be all right, because he'd struggled with tyre degradation on Saturday. And even if Giovinazzi got past him, I was quite happy. Also, I could see on the big screen coming out of the hairpin that they were in a massive scrap.

Eventually I got to the stage where I was just looking after the tyres. The race was 28 laps and we'd managed only 23 on the prime on Saturday, so I was quite conscious that I just had to bring it home.

That's exactly what I did, and it really lifts everyone going into the summer break before Spa. We're much closer to where we want to be and hopefully we can carry on in the same way. I'm back up to ninth in the most open championship I've ever been in, so if we can carry on improving as we have done we should be in good contention.

Qualifying: 5<sup>th</sup>

Race 1: 7<sup>th</sup> (started on medium tyres, switched onto soft)

Race 2: 1<sup>st</sup>

**Ends**

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