

**Double Podium in GT3 for THILENIUS GROUP in GT Winter Series at Aragón**

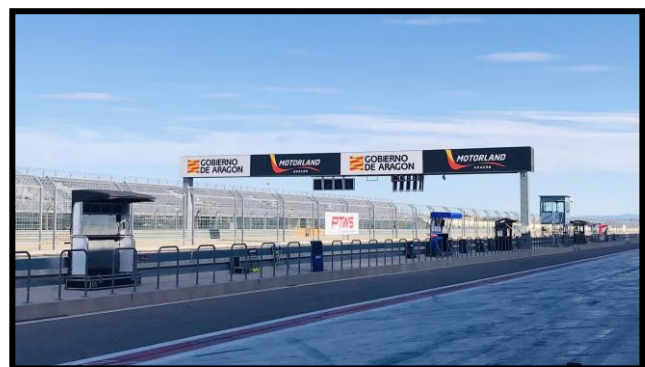


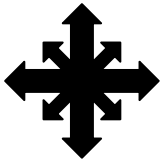
Hey! After watching my friends and teammates have too much fun driving GT3 cars for the past few years, I decided it was time for me to have a go. So, at the beginning of March, I flew to Spain for the fifth round of the **GT Winter Series** at **Motorland Aragón** for my first ever GT3 race in the awesome **SchnitzelAlm Racing AMG GT3**. I was joined this weekend by my co-driver from last year's **ADAC TotalEnergies 24 Hour Nürburgring**, Mortiz Wiskirchen. We put our **AMG GT3** on the podium in both sprint races and in the final endurance race.

For a change of pace, here are my session notes to provide some insight into the thought processes and challenges of learning a seriously quick car at a new track.

**Track Walk – Wednesday PM**

- **Motorland Aragón** has an interesting array of corners and more elevation change than anticipated
- Main challenge will be utilizing the aerodynamic grip of the **AMG GT3** while taking advantage, but not too much advantage, of the curbing and track limits
- Windy!





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## Free Practice 1 – Thursday AM

- **SchnitzelAlm Racing** went above and beyond to make my first GT3 experience as easy as possible by giving me a lead-follow session behind Tim Neuser in their Cup 3 **Porsche Cayman GT4** to learn the track.
- Laps: 13
- Fast lap: 2:14.292
- Brake pedal a little soft, difficult to modulate
- Over slowing the car, need to carry more corner speed
- Difficult to see braking references
- Some ESC activations on corner exits, probably too aggressive with throttle
- Good session to break off rust



## Free Practice 1 – Thursday AM

- The first time in a new racecar is always memorable, but driving the **AMG GT3** is truly special. The level of commitment needed to drive a GT3 car at the limit is huge!
- Laps: 11
- Fast lap: 2:03.81
- Good rotation with trailing brake into Turn 1
- Need to find brake points and use more brake pressure to activate ABS
- Throttle progression is quite aggressive on initial apply, easy to upset balance
- Hit sausage curb in Turn 3 with right front early on, no vibration felt
- Shoulders were sore near the end, seat insert from GT2 is good, need to relax
- Need to transition quicker from throttle to brake
- Lap belt felt good in the pit lane, but definitely need it tighter on track
- Clutch engagement was high
- Try to maintain load on tires on the exit of Turn 1 and Turn 3, make quicker transitions from side to side





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## Free Practice 2 – Thursday PM

- Added rear wing angle
- Laps: 7
- Fast lap: 2:03.00
- Lap belt still too loose
- Did better keeping tires loaded exiting Turn 1 and Turn 3
- Starting to find my braking points:
  - 100 board in Turn 1
  - 100 board into Bus Stop
  - Beginning of curb in Turn 17
- Need to find reference points from Turn 3 to Turn 7, I'm a bit lost and super inconsistent through that section
- Had some more power on oversteer in slow corners, probably due to over slowing and then going too aggressively to throttle, I would sure like a more progressive throttle map
- Could not feel the result of wing change, rear stability was similar in faster corners
- Visibility from low sun in the afternoon was poor, need visor strip before Saturday sprint race which is going to be around this time in the afternoon

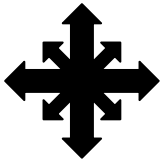


## Free Practice 3 – Friday AM

- First time on new **Pirelli** tires
- ABS 10 from 8
- TCS 10 from 7
- Laps: 6
- Fast lap: 2:00.98
- Much more power on oversteer probably due to TCS setting and not new tires
- Line from Turn 3 to Turn 7 much better
- Used 3rd gear in Turn 12, felt easier to roll corner speed
- Forgot to reset fuel on pit stop
- Getting a better exit out of Turn 1, nearly flat through Turn 2, need to trust the aerodynamics
- Got a track limit warning in Turn 10, turned in too early, later turn in beyond white paint is better
- Lap belt still too loose
- Need to relax







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## Free Practice 4 – Friday PM

- ABS 10
- TCS 10
- Same tires as FP3
- Laps: 12
- Fast lap: 2:02.126
- Sloppy and inconsistent session
- Braking too early for Sacacorchos
- Turning in too early for Turn 15 onto back straight
- Driver change too slow, need to get belts over seat before exiting
- Visor strip worked with low sun



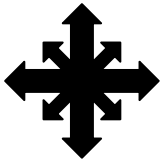
## Free Practice 5 – Saturday AM

- Old tires
- TCS 9 for older tires
- Laps: 11
- Fast lap: 2:01.850
- Much more corner entry understeer to throttle on exit oversteer
- Using less curb in Turn 1 to get back to left slightly for Turn 2, need to work up to flat through Turn 2
- Tried setting front with a more positive input into Turn 10, but rear tires didn't like extra speed/throttle
- Rolled power better in Turn 15
- Need to be more consistent with braking points and brake application rate



## Qualifying 1 – Saturday AM

- New **Pirelli** tires
- ABS 10
- TCS 10
- Laps: 7
- Fast lap: 2:00.413
- Better exit Turn 1, got up to flat through Turn 2 with early shift
- Better exit of Turn 10, still not flat through Turn 11
- Second gear in Turn 12 is better than third
- Fast lap good for P3, 2.6 seconds off pole and 2.3 off teammate Kenneth Heyer



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## Sprint Race – Saturday PM

- Start: P3
- Finish: P3
- Laps: 14
- Fast lap: 2:02.576
- Did not get enough heat into tires on pace lap and had big understeer into Turn 1 at the start, dropped one spot to a Porsche Cup car
- Need to use brakes to get heat into tires and build tire pressure on the warm-up lap and then scrub tires on pace lap to build temperatures on tire surface
- Was a little too conservative on the first restart and dropped another spot to a Porsche Cup car in Turn 2, worked out okay when the two leading Porsche Cup cars took each other out in Turn 7 on the same lap
- Finally got a good run on the second restart, held onto the back of Kenneth Heyer for a bit but was not a real threat
- On the podium in P3 for my first race in the **AMG GT3!**



## Endurance Race – Sunday PM

- Start: P3
- Finish: P2
- Laps: 27
- Fast lap: 2:02.234
- Horrible start, got passed by most of the Porsche Cup cars and fell to P3 in GT3
- Start speed was too fast for first gear and too slow for second gear, I tried first gear, first gear was the wrong choice
- Worked past one of the Porsche Cup cars on lap 2 but lost a lot of time to the leading Porsche Cup cars and the GT3 Porsche in P2
- All the Porsches were very fast in the run down to Turn 15, we had better pace in the first and second sectors
- The wind down the back straight was strong and gusty, judging the braking into Turn 15 was difficult



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- Put my head down and chased down the GT3 Porsche in P2, he spun in Turn 11 on my last lap before turning the car over to Moritz
- Driver change was better, but I still a little slow because I did not get the shoulder belts over the seat before getting out
- The team told me I was purple (fastest overall) in sector 1 when I pitted, nice to hear but it probably meant Kenneth was not trying to hard in the lead
- Mortiz worked past the remaining Porsche Cups cars and brought us home in P2 behind our teammates Kenneth Heyer and Jay Mo Härtling



## **About THILENIUS GROUP**

THILENIUS GROUP, LLC based in California provides vehicle dynamics engineering, motorsports and sports marketing services. With over 30 years experience engineering vehicle dynamics at the OEM level, road racing motorsports and sports marketing, THILENIUS GROUP can help you reach your goals. Information about THILENIUS GROUP services is available at [www.thileniusgroup.com](http://www.thileniusgroup.com) . Latest updates available on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThileniusGroup](https://www.facebook.com/ThileniusGroup) and Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ThileniusGroup>.