



DTM

An interview with Martin Tomczyk: “It is always exciting.”

Munich (DE), 15th April 2016. When the new DTM season gets underway in Hockenheim (DE) on 7th May, Bruno Spengler (CA), Marco Wittmann (DE), António Félix da Costa (PT), Timo Glock (DE), Augusto Farfus (BR), Tom Blomqvist (GB), Maxime Martin (BE) and Martin Tomczyk (DE) will take their seats in the eight BMW M4 DTMs for BMW Motorsport. In the run-up to the opening round of the season, we are taking the opportunity to introduce you to each of our BMW DTM drivers in a series of interviews.

Martin Tomczyk, BMW Team Schnitzer, Number 100 BMW M Performance Parts M4 DTM.

Martin, preparations for the 2016 season are now complete. How happy are you with the way the tests panned out?

Martin Tomczyk: “I am really happy, although testing ahead of the season is very limited. That is not an ideal situation for a racing driver in the winter, but we worked our way through a lot of different points and tried to get the most out of the time as a team. I am definitely motivated and looking forward to the new season, which will be my 16th in the DTM. After the disappointing season last year, I can confidently say that the only way is up for me.”

How did you prepare over the winter?

Tomczyk: “When you don’t get to do a lot of driving, you obviously try to compensate by doing a lot of exercise. Therefore, I was very active in the winter and could not wait for the first tests. I also had the opportunity to do a few tests in the BMW M6 GT3, which obviously helped pass the time a bit.”

You are one of the more experienced drivers in the DTM. Are there still new things out there that even you are yet to discover?

Tomczyk: “There is always something new in the DTM when the regulations change – as is the case again this year. We have a few innovations, which mean you must adapt again and reorient yourself – even if you have been around for a long time. It is always exciting and tense when the first race weekend comes around.”

What are you most looking forward to in the 2016 DTM season?

Tomczyk: “The races. We showed last year that we put on exciting races for the spectators. We had a lot of different winners. The entire season was exciting, and the action was great. When you bear in mind that our cars feature the very latest

Motorsport

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technology and are all within one second of each other in qualifying, it is not a given that there are also a lot of overtaking manoeuvres out on the track.”

What are your goals? What would make 2016 a successful season for you?

Tomczyk: “If I get back to the level I actually want to be driving at. I don’t set myself any definite goals, but it is clear to me that I don’t belong where I was last year – and I don’t want to be back there again. I want to score points in every race and to bridge the gap, particularly when it comes to qualifying.”

Another topic on your agenda is the Nürburgring-Nordschleife and the 24-hour race. Does it make a nice change to be involved in that?

Tomczyk: “Definitely. For me, it is one of the best races on my schedule this year. It is also fun to be involved in the preparations, to share a car with team-mates, and to work together on developing the set-up and strategy. Furthermore, conquering the challenging Nordschleife with all the drivers and the team is tense and exciting.”

What makes the Nordschleife so special?

Tomczyk: “There is simply no other racetrack like it in the world. No other circuit comes close. It is actually quite crazy, even for a racing driver. However, it is incredible fun when you get it right. At many racetracks, you can aim to complete the perfect lap. On the Nordschleife, however, it is just a wild and crazy ride. You have to think differently every lap. The traffic and conditions change constantly. Every corner is a new challenge.”

The 24-hour race is a completely different animal anyway. As a driver, are you able to take in much of what is going on round the circuit?

Tomczyk: “We pick up on it, as we usually arrive on Tuesday for all the activities surrounding the race. Also, BMW is very well-known for putting on a good show for fans away from the track. We drivers are obviously involved in all that. I always think back fondly on one of the best moments of my time in motorsport, when I pulled onto the Nordschleife as the leader on lap one, knowing that there were over 200 cars behind me who would love to overtake me. When you are the first through the Nordschleife and see the first flares being shot into the sky, it is just an awesome feeling. I would like to repeat that again this year, but then to hang onto that position for a bit longer. Our goal is to win the 24-hour race. Obviously you always need a bit of luck on the Nordschleife, but our overall package is good enough. We must now make sure that this package is the first across the finish line.”

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Before the Nordschleife you have another outing as part of the BMW Motorsport Junior programme. How much do you enjoy passing on your experience and know-how to the young drivers?

Tomczyk: "Sixteen years ago I was the youngest driver at the time to race in the DTM, and it goes without saying that I benefitted from the more experienced drivers. Back then I soaked up all the information they gave me. That helped a lot, so I am pleased, 16 years down the line, to be able to give something back to the new crop of youngsters. I have already met both Juniors, Louis Delétraz and Jesse Krohn, and have tested with Louis. It is great fun, as you can see the desire and hunger they both have."

You have become a father for the second time. Has that changed your life?

Tomczyk: "Having children does change your life. It is difficult to explain this to anyone who does not have children. But anyone who does have kids knows how important they are in your life. It is really incredible, and I enjoy every moment with my children. From a sporting point of view, it has obviously changed nothing. That is my job, and one that I am still incredibly passionate about. However, when I am finished working, I try to get home as quickly as possible. That may not have been the case before, when I might have stuck around for a night. Now, though, I thoroughly enjoy my time at home with the kids."

Your wife is a fast racing driver, and you are quick too. Are your children showing any signs of racing talent?

Tomczyk: "They are certainly very enthusiastic. You can't really avoid it. Wherever you look in our house, you will find motor racing – whether it be helmets lying around or the nice BMW in the garage. You pass on that affinity with motorsport to your children. My garage is less full than the one with all my daughter's pedal cars."

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