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Media Information

BMW Motorrad Motorsport

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Historic victory at home race: BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team wins the 24H SPA EWC Motos.

- **Markus Reiterberger, Ilya Mikhalechik and Jérémy Guarnoni prove unbeatable in difficult conditions at the Spa-Francorchamps 24-hour race.**
- **First win for the BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team in a 24-hour race.**
- **Marc Bongers: "It is just wonderful to be rewarded with a win on an absolutely faultless weekend".**

Spa-Francorchamps. It is a dream that has come true. The BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team has won the 24H SPA EWC Motos. After 24 sometimes dramatic hours on the Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps (BEL), the #37 BMW M 1000 RR crossed the finish line with a big lead to claim victory. The key to success was faultless performance from riders Markus Reiterberger (GER), Ilya Mikhalechik (UKR) and Jérémy Guarnoni (FRA) and the perfectly functioning team led by manager Werner Daemen (BEL). Victory at the home race was also the first win for the BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team in a FIM Endurance World Championship (FIM EWC) 24-hour race. In addition, it is the first 24-hour race victory for a European manufacturer since 1971.

In the qualifying sessions on Thursday and Friday, the team with Reiterberger, Mikhalechik, Guarnoni and Kenny Foray (FRA) as the fourth rider secured second place on the grid, a good start position for the Ardennes Rollercoaster. As the race got going, it was clear that the #37 BMW M 1000 RR was one of the favourites.

Reiterberger, Mikhalechik and Guarnoni were battling at the front, claiming first place several times, and never dropped out of the top three before making a final move into the top spot during the night. The race took place in dry, summery conditions up to the morning when events took a turn. The rain arrived around eight o'clock and track conditions became more than treacherous. While some of their competitors took a tumble the riders for the BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team did not take any unnecessary risks.

They had built up a large lead by the time the race was interrupted due to a massive oil slick on the track after around 21 hours. After a break of two and a half hours, the race

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restarted for just 15 minutes – in heavy rain. The BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team never looked likely to surrender the victory, and tension gave way to boundless celebrations in the pits at 13:00 local time.

The privateer BMW team LRP Poland secured ninth place in the EWC class with the #90 BMW S 1000 RR, and tenth position overall. Riding that bike were Dominik Vincon (GER), Pepijn Bijsterbosch (NED) and Bartłomiej Lewandowski (POL).

Reactions to the win at the 24H SPA EWC Motos.

Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director: "I am extremely happy. It was simply a fantastic weekend. I am so delighted for the team and the partners. It really was a deserved win, especially after the bad luck at the season-opener at Le Mans. We have worked very hard on the project over the last few years and solved a lot of details. It is just wonderful to be rewarded with a win on an absolutely faultless weekend. We made a very good start and it was like a sprint race early on. Our rivals struggled with technical problems or rider errors during the night. We did not make one single mistake. All the pit stops went perfectly and we stayed out the longest on one tank, while our riders also remained consistent, reliable and safe under the most challenging conditions. That all paid off in the end. Of course, those last two hours after the red flag were so tense, before the decision was made to restart the race. We had a lead of several laps so we just had to get the bike home. The tension levels were very high anyway, making it all the sweeter when we crossed the finish line to secure the first 24-hour win for a European manufacturer since 1971 and the first for BMW Motorrad."

Werner Daemen, Team Manager BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team: "The race was incredible. The first hour was like a Superbike sprint and really exciting for the nerves. And the rest of the race, the guys did a very good job. I think we are the only team that did not make any mistakes. We were maybe not the fastest but we made no mistakes and in endurance that pays off in the end. We went with a gap of eight laps into the final minutes. It is a dream that has come true. As a Belgian guy who said 20 years ago 'once I will come back to win' that is a dream. This is something that nobody can take away from us. A big thank you to the team, to BMW and all our partners and sponsors who made this possible. Without them, you cannot race. And also especially to the riders who did an incredible job."

Markus Reiterberger: "I am unbelievably happy. Preparations for the race were great, with really good testing. We knew how strong we are. I was able to battle away really well

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at the front in my stints, as our bike has proper straight-line power but is still very economical. We just tried to maintain a consistent pace and avoid making any errors, hoping that nothing would break. We achieved all of that, while everyone else fell, made mistakes or suffered technical problems. Our team managed it all superbly and the riders did a good job. I think that the entire team, BMW and everyone else involved have earned this victory. It is our first 24-hour race win, with a Belgian team manager, in Belgium, on such a fantastic circuit. And it was thrilling right to the finish, with some breathtaking final minutes. But we did it, and I would like to thank BMW and the team for ensuring that everything went as well as it did."

Ilya Mikhalchik: "It is an amazing feeling. It is a very special win. Apart from the fact that it is my first win in a 24-hour race, it is also the first one for the team – and this in the home race. All the hard work of the team has paid off and it was an unbelievable job. We did all this together. I hope that we can continue this way in the next races."

Jérémy Guarnoni: "I am really happy, especially for the team and for BMW because I think after Le Mans everyone was hoping to win at Spa. I am new in this team and to win the second race with them at Spa is unbelievable. The teams deserves it so much. They work really hard and now have the reward for all that work in winter. Also Ilya and Reiti have been absolutely unbelievable on the track. They are always fast, in the night, in the wet, in dry conditions. I am really proud for them and very happy for me. I have now won all three 24-hour races in the calendar; that's fantastic. I hope that we can fight well in the championship because in endurance, you can win until the last minute of the last race."

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