



Media Information
BMW Motorsport News
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BMW M6 GT3 triumphs at China GT Championship season-opener – An interview with BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt.

- **AAI Motorsports wins at Sepang with BMW works driver Nick Yelloly.**
- **Look ahead to the Nordschleife season with numerous BMW works drivers and BMW Motorsport Junior Erik Johansson.**
- **Interview with BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt about the ‘BMW M Motorsport Super Weekend’ at Sebring.**

Whether in the DTM, the FIA World Endurance Championship, the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, the ABB FIA Formula E Championship, or countless other championships: Week after week BMW teams and drivers around the world do battle for points, victories and titles. Away from the track too, members of the large BMW Motorsport family around the world are also creating headlines. The “BMW Motorsport News” allows us to regularly summarise all the action for you in a compact and informative manner. This way, you are always up to speed.

Three questions for... BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt.

The heart of international GT racing was beating at Sebring (USA) this weekend. The FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) and the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship paid a visit to the historic circuit in Florida. In action were four BMW M8 GTEs and cars from the BMW Motorsport customer racing product range. The highlight was second place for BMW Team MTEK on Friday. In this interview, BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt talks about the ‘BMW M Motorsport Super Weekend’.

Mr. Marquardt, what conclusions did you draw from the full race schedule at Sebring?

Jens Marquardt: “We experienced a real ‘BMW M Motorsport Super Weekend’ at Sebring. The atmosphere throughout the entire weekend was excellent – and we were able to record some good results to thank the many BMW fans at the circuit for their great support. Second place in the WEC and only just missing out on the



podium in the IMSA Series show that we are very competitive with the BMW M8 GTE, as did our triumph at Daytona. We also secured a podium finish for the BMW M4 GT4 in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge. In sporting terms, I am more than happy with this weekend.”

What made this race weekend so special?

Marquardt: “It was clear to see the significance that motorsport has for BMW in North America. The brand put on a great performance at Sebring – with full event activation from BMW North America and extensive support from Munich. Thanks to the ‘BMW Owners’ Lounge’, we had an even more noticeable presence in the paddock this year and we had ‘full house’ over the whole weekend in our hospitality area. The level of interest in this double-header was enormous. It was fantastic to be able to present the two GT racing programmes side-by-side, in such a compact format. It was definitely a successful premiere for the ‘Super Sebring’ weekend.”

Are you pleased with the start to the 2019 season?

Marquardt: “Definitely. Recording wins at the FIA GT World Cup in Macau and at our very first Formula E race in Ad Diriyah at the end of 2018 had already given us extra motivation. We were able to carry this momentum into the new year and celebrate an emotional IMSA victory at Daytona. The podium finish in the WEC race shows that we can compete for wins in both series with the BMW M8 GTE. The same is true for Formula E and we will be competing in the Sanya E-Prix this coming weekend. The DTM season and the endurance highlights at Le Mans and on the Nordschleife are also drawing closer. We are certainly well-positioned to face the tasks ahead.”

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China GT Championship: Victory for the BMW M6 GT3 at Sepang.

FIST-Team AAI has started the 2019 China GT Championship season with an impressive win at Sepang (MAS). New BMW works driver Nick Yelloly (GBR) and his team-mate Junsan Chen (CHN) began the opening race on Saturday from pole position with their BMW M6 GT3. Starting driver Chen was in second place when he handed over to Yelloly and a breathtaking battle for the win then took shape. Lap after lap, Yelloly was locked into a thrilling wheel-to-wheel struggle with local hero Jazeman Jafaar (MAS). Yelloly prevailed in the end, claiming his debut win in his first race as a BMW works driver. “I have already come up against Jazeman in races in Europe and I knew that it would be tough, but fair,” said Yelloly. “It is great that we



were able to secure pole position and then victory for FIST-Team AAI, and Junsan did a great job.” In Sunday’s race, Yelloly and Chen celebrated on the podium again after crossing the line in third position. The duo leaves Sepang leading the championship standings after the season-opener.

IMPC: Podium for the BMW M4 GT4 at Sebring.

Friday’s two-hour IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge race, the opening act of the Super Sebring weekend, saw the three BMW M4 GT4 race cars entered record second, seventh and tenth place finishes in the Grand Sport class. James Clay and Devin Jones (both USA) took the runner-up finish in the #82 BimmerWorld Racing car to score the first podium and best result for BMW this season. Greg Liefoghe and Henry Schmitt (both USA) finished seventh in the #88 Stephen Cameron Racing BMW M4 GT4, while Bill Auberlen and Robby Foley (both USA), the best BMW qualifier in the field (fourth), finished tenth in the #96 Turner Motorsport car.

BMW Motorsport Junior Programme: Erik Johansson in action on the Nordschleife.

Another race series has been added to new BMW Motorsport Junior Erik Johansson’s (SWE) training programme. The 22-year-old driver will be in action on the Nürburgring Nordschleife, driving a BMW M4 GT4 for the Sorg Rennsport team in the VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring. To prepare for the season, Johansson and the team completed testing and set-up sessions for VLN this Saturday. As part of his first year of training, Johansson will also compete in the entire Italian GT Championship season, driving a BMW M6 GT3 for BMW Team Italia. The first test will take place at Monza (ITA) on Monday. “It is great for me to be driving both in GT races in Italy, and with the BMW M4 GT4 for Sorg Rennsport in VLN,” said Johansson. “It’s going to be an exciting season for me, with plenty of races. Last year, the BMW M4 GT4 already showed how fast it can go on the Nordschleife. I am looking forward to building on these successes and trying to claim another title for BMW M Motorsport.” A former customer racing driver, Johansson made the step up to the BMW Motorsport Junior programme after an intensive selection procedure.

Nürburgring Nordschleife: BMW works drivers at the VLN season-opener.

When the 2019 VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring season starts next weekend (23rd March), the new BMW Motorsport Junior Erik Johansson (SWE) will be joined on the Nordschleife (GER) by several BMW works drivers. Tom Blomqvist (GBR), Connor De Phillippi (USA), Mikkel Jensen (DEN), Marco Wittmann (GER),



Nick Catsburg (NED) and John Edwards (USA) will all be among the competitors for the first VLN race of the year. They will be sharing driving duties in the two ROWE Racing BMW M6 GT3s. Jens Klingmann (GER) will also be in VLN action on the Nordschleife, in the cockpit of the Falken Motorsport BMW M6 GT3.

Media lunch: Marco Wittmann gets into the mood for the Nürburgring season at PR event.

In just a few days, the lights will go green at the Nürburgring and the first race of the VLN Endurance Championship will be underway: Last Wednesday, a media lunch gave press representatives and management the chance to get into the mood for the new season. Taking part was BMW works driver Marco Wittmann (GER), who will be in action at the legendary 24-hour race in 2019, as well as appearing in selected VLN races and competing in the Eifel region on the eighth DTM race weekend. "The winter break went on for long enough and I can't wait for the season to start," said Wittmann. "An event like today's media lunch helps to increase the sense of anticipation as we look forward to the new season. I am competing in the DTM with BMW Team RMG, which has its headquarters near here and that makes the Eifel area something like a second home for me, so of course I am looking forward to driving in so many races here this year." After the discussions, Wittmann was able to take part in some special activities with a BMW M2. More of this will be revealed in due course. Wittmann will be returning to the Eifel region in a few days. The VLN season starts on Saturday 23rd March with the 65th ADAC Westfalenfahrt. Wittmann will be competing there for the ROWE Racing team with Nick Catsburg (NED) and John Edwards (USA) in the BMW M6 GT3.

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