



Media Information
BMW Motorsport News
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BMW M6 GT3 victorious at the VLN Eifel opener – BMW Motorsport family congratulates Jochen Neerpasch.

- **Edwards, Catsburg and Wittmann win thrilling race in the ROWE Racing #99 BMW M6 GT3.**
- **Blomqvist, De Phillippi and Jensen round off strong result with third place in the ROWE Racing #98 BMW M6 GT3.**
- **Jochen Neerpasch celebrates his 80th birthday – Jens Marquardt: “A great inspiration to me in many respects.”**

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.

VLN: BMW M6 GT3 wins Nordschleife season opener.

Perfect start to the new season: John Edwards (USA), Nick Catsburg (NED) and Marco Wittmann (GER) clinched victory in the BMW M6 GT3 at the VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring opener. The trio won the 65th ADAC Westfalenfahrt in the ROWE Racing #99 BMW M6 GT3. In the #98 sister car, Tom Blomqvist (GBR), Connor De Phillippi (USA) and Mikkel Jensen (DEN) finished in third place to round off a strong result. There was already evidence of the BMW M6 GT3's potential in qualifying, which was postponed by several hours due to fog. Blomqvist secured pole position at the wheel of car #98. The race, which was reduced to two hours and 45 minutes, provided spectators with excitement down to the final metre. After numerous changes at the front, and close duels, Edwards pulled off the winning manoeuvre on the 20th and final lap. BMW works driver Jens Klingmann (GER) was also in action in the Eifel mountains behind the wheel of the Team Falken Motorsports #3 BMW M6 GT3. Alongside Alexandre Imperatori (CHN), he finished



in eighth place, while a BMW M6 GT3 was also at the front in the SP9 Pro-Am class. Rudi Adams, Immanuel Vinke (both GER) and Jody Fannin (GBR) were victorious in the #35 Walkenhorst Motorsport car, and finished twelfth overall in the standings.

A total of more than 50 BMW cars were represented in the first 2019 race at the “Green Hell”. In addition to six BMW M6 GT3s, five BMW M4 GT4s also battled for points in the SP10 class, and recorded two podiums. In the #181 Team Sorg Rennsport BMW M4 GT4, BMW Motorsport Junior Erik Johansson (SWE) and Heiko Eichenberg (GER) finished in second place. The #180 BMW M4 GT4 driven by Stefan Beyer, Emin Akata (both GER) and Torsten Kratz (AUT) took third place. In the V4 class, Kratz, Oliver Frisse (GER) and Moran Gott (GBR) won in the Sorg Rennsport #706 BMW 325i. The second race in the VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring is scheduled for 13th April.

BMW M240i Racing Cup: Reigning champions Griessner/Fübrich are victorious.

New name – old winners: In the first BMW M240i Racing Cup race, which was held as part of the 65th edition of the ADAC Westfalenfahrt, the two reigning champions David Griessner (AUT) and Yannick Fübrich (GER) clinched the win. The Pixum Adrenalin Motorsport duo were victorious in the #650 BMW M240i Racing, ahead of Nico Otto and Lars Peucker (both GER) in the Team Scheid-Honert Motorsport #666 BMW M240i Racing. The runner-up “Eifelblitz” also gifted its drivers victory in the Juniors classification. Juha Hannonen (FIN) in the FK Performance Motorsport #679 BMW M240i Racing crossed the finish line in third place having shared the cockpit with Christian Konnerth and Marc Ehret (both GER). The win in the Gentlemen classification went to Jörg Breuer (GER) in the Walkenhorst Motorsport #682 car.

Jochen Neerpasch celebrates his 80th birthday.

A man inextricably linked with BMW Motorsport – Jochen Neerpasch (GER) celebrated his 80th birthday on Saturday. Neerpasch was head of BMW Motorsport GmbH from 1973 to 1979. He also formed the first BMW Junior Team, making him the father of BMW Motorsport junior development. “I would like to wish Mr. Neerpasch a very happy 80th birthday,” said BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt. “As one of the most important personalities in the history of BMW M and BMW Motorsport, he is a great inspiration to me in many respects, because as a pioneer he showed a path to the future around the world for BMW M and BMW Motorsport in particular, but also for BMW’s junior development and the BMW Art



Cars. Without his visions, his passion and his courage, BMW M and BMW Motorsport wouldn't be where they are today." In his time as chairman of the board at BMW Motorsport GmbH, Neerpasch was involved intensely in the development of the legendary BMW M1 sports car, among other things. True to his motto "only the combination of driver and technology can be successful," Neerpasch founded the BMW Motorsport junior development in 1977. It was the first time in German automobile racing that a works team introduced a pure team of juniors. To this day, the first generation of BMW Juniors – Marc Surer (SUI), Manfred Winkelhock (GER) and Eddie Cheever (USA) – are known as the "Wilde Reiter GmbH" (Wild Riders Ltd) due to their spectacular driving style.

With their works car, a BMW 320i modified according to Group 5, the trio contested the German racing championship, as preparation for their later entry in the one-make world championship. As their careers progressed, each of the three drivers made it to Formula 1. Neerpasch also carried out important pioneering work for BMW in the USA and with the appearance of the BMW 3.0 CSL in American racing, significantly increased brand awareness overseas. BMW competed there for the first time in 1975, and in the second race, at the 12 Hours of Sebring, Hans-Joachim Stuck (GER), Brian Redman (GBR), Sam Posey (USA) and Allan Moffat (CAN) clinched the win.

Italian GT Championship: Johansson and Krohn share the cockpit at Monza.

Current and former BMW Motorsport Juniors Erik Johansson (SWE) and Jesse Krohn (FIN) will share the BMW Team Italia BMW M6 GT3 cockpit at the Italian GT Championship opener at Monza (ITA) from 5th to 7th April. Johansson, who as part of his first year of training will contest the entire season of the Italian GT Championship at the wheel of the BMW M6 GT3, has in Krohn a partner who was promoted from BMW Motorsport Junior to BMW works driver. "I'm really looking forward to contesting the first race at Monza with Jesse Krohn," said Johansson. "Two Scandinavians in an Italian team – it's an exciting combination. I think we are very well-positioned and I'm happy to be able to pick up a few tips from a former BMW Motorsport Junior. I'm really excited and can't wait for the first race." In addition to the Italian GT Championship, Johansson, who was admitted to the BMW Motorsport Junior programme in an intensive selection procedure at the start of the year, will also contest the VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring (GER), where he will take the wheel of a Team Sorg Rennsport BMW M4 GT4. In the first VLN race of the year, the Swede, with Heiko Eichenberg (GER), finished second in the SP10 class in



the #181 car. Krohn, who successfully completed BMW Motorsport's junior development programme from 2014 to 2016, will contest the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship in a BMW Team RLL BMW M8 GTE.

DTM: Marco Wittmann completes special test drive at the Nürburgring.

On Saturday, BMW works driver Marco Wittmann (GER) contested his first race this season at the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (GER) as part of the VLN Endurance Championship, however the 2014 and 2016 DTM champion had already completed his first kilometres on the Nürburgring this year a few days prior to the race. At the wheel of a BMW M2 (fuel consumption in l/100 km combined: 10.0 – 9.8; CO2 emissions in g/km combined: 227 – 224) he was allowed to complete a few laps of Grand Prix track, while professional racing cyclist Christian Knees (GER) sat in the passenger seat. The pro-cyclist, who has already been in action at the Nürburgring a few times as part of “Rad am Ring”, was tasked with reproducing the Grand Prix track layout, while Wittmann drifted around the corners in the BMW M2. “It was a funny idea. In my view, he mastered it really well. He had two small swerves, but I can forgive him for those,” said Wittmann with a wink in his eye. The result, an art print on Alu-Dibond, will be given away in a competition on the Nürburgring's Facebook page.

Media Contact.

Ingo Lehbrink
Spokesperson BMW Group Motorsport
Phone: +49 (0)176 – 203 40 224
E-mail: ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

Benjamin Titz
Head of BMW Group Design, Innovations & Motorsports Communications
Phone: +49 (0)179 – 743 80 88
E-mail: benjamin.titz@bmw.de



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