



Media Information

DTM

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BMW Group Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt: “We want to offer all fans great racing in 2020”.

- **An interview with BMW Group Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt on the current crisis and the future prospects of the DTM.**
- **Marquardt: “The reveal of the amended DTM calendar is making us all the more excited about the start of the season”.**

Munich. The DTM is going through a difficult time at the moment, partly due to the current enforced break, and partly due to the uncertainty surrounding its future. However, the remodelled race calendar for the 2020 season and the virtual launch last Wednesday of the six BMW M4 DTMs run by BMW Motorsport have provided some welcome good news. In an interview, BMW Group Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt explains the situation in the DTM and takes a stand in the discussion regarding the future of the race series.

Mr. Marquardt, in your opinion, what affect is the coronavirus pandemic having on motorsport in general?

Jens Marquardt: “The pandemic is having a serious impact on everything and everyone – this obviously also includes the automotive industry and motorsport, which relies largely upon its events and the fans at the racetrack. I see the prospects for motorsport in three periods: in the short term, after everything the scientists and politicians had been telling us for weeks, it was absolutely essential to stop all racing operations. Medium term, we are hopeful – particularly after the announcement of the amended DTM calendar – that we will still be able to go racing this year, implementing concepts adapted to the pandemic, and to see our BMW M4 DTM in action. I am not prepared to make any long-term predictions, as the overall situation is too unpredictable.”

Going back a few weeks, would you have believed that there would be any motor racing at all this year?

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Marquardt: "Even given all the uncertainty that is inevitable when the situation is so fragile, I was still always hopeful that we would return to the racetrack this year. The signs of that happening are now a little better than they were previously. However, I feel it is important to stress that we are only able and willing to go racing again when the general situation allows it and the politicians are satisfied with the concepts. With this in mind, I would like to pay a big compliment: The hygiene concept that the manufacturers and ITR have worked on together is very well thought out and puts the health and safety of everyone involved in the DTM at the forefront of everything. We will obviously have to live with the fact that our fans will not be at the racetrack to support us. That is a real downer, but I believe we can still put on a good show on the screen."

What are your feelings as you prepare for the DTM season?

Marquardt: "To be perfectly honest – I have mixed feelings. The coronavirus pandemic obviously overshadows everything. However, when I look at it from a sporting perspective, we are more determined than ever to prove that our package is capable of more than we managed to show in the second half of last season. We have worked hard to make this possible during the long period of preparation. However, with all the anticipation ahead of the coming season, I will openly admit that the announcements by our competitors that they will be withdrawing from the series have tarnished the coming months and years."

What do you mean?

Marquardt: "We had two focusses: on the one hand, to offer fans great racing again in 2020 – on the screen, at least – and to achieve the prerequisites for this to happen. On the other hand, to prepare the DTM for the future and to work together to put the finishing touches to the 2022 hybridisation and the electrification in 2025. This second focus is now obviously no more."

What does that mean for the future of the DTM?

Marquardt: "All our works motorsport commitments have exactly the same DNA as the DTM, namely competition between manufacturers at the highest level. That is



what the DTM as a series, and the underlying Class 1 regulations, are designed for. The withdrawal of Audi contradicts that. That much is clear.”

When will you decide about a possible 2021 season?

Marquardt: “It is not up to BMW alone to make a decision. Now it is important to work together within the ITR committees to clarify and illustrate the effects of the Audi withdrawal. Once that has been achieved, we will see what it means for the DTM, the underlying Class 1 regulations, and the future.”

What is your focus on now?

Marquardt: “Our focus is still fully on the 2020 season. Everyone in our team is highly motivated and can hardly wait for next week’s tests at the Nürburgring. The launch of the amended DTM calendar has made us all even hungrier for the start of the season. Concentrating on Germany and its immediate neighbours, Belgium and the Netherlands, is in keeping with the order of the day – not to have any unnecessarily long journeys or transport routes. I also welcome the scheduling of back-to-back race weekends at the same circuit. That is also an expression of maximum efficiency and planning security. I can only stress once again, we remain passionate about the DTM – and we want to offer all the fans great racing in 2020. That is what we are now preparing for.”

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