



BMW Motorsport – 2011 Season

ALMS, ILMC, 24h, Customer Racing and talent promotion: BMW Motorsport looks back on a successful 2011.

Munich, 26th November 2011. The 2011 motorsport season once again saw BMW claim victories, podium finishes and titles around the world. Join us as we take a look back at last season's highlights.

American Le Mans Series: First “GT triple” for BMW since 2001.

Eleven podium finishes, three wins and at least one car within the top-3 after every race: BMW Team RLL's record in the GT class of the 2011 American Le Mans Series (ALMS) makes impressive reading. After nine thrilling races in the USA and Canada, Team Principal Bobby Rahal's (US) team was rewarded for its excellent performances with all three titles in the GT class.

Dirk Müller (DE) and Joey Hand (US), at the wheel of a BMW M3 GT, won the Drivers' Championship with 159 points. Their team-mates, Dirk Werner (DE) and Bill Auberlen (US), ended the season on 129 points in third place. In the team competition, BMW Team RLL won the title with 180 points, while BMW topped the manufacturers' standings with the same number of points. The result is that all three ALMS titles in the hard-fought GT class are destined for Munich for the first time since 2001.

BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt said: “This season, BMW Team RLL dominated proceedings in the GT class of the ALMS right from the first race. The one-two in Sebring was the perfect start, and was followed by a succession of further victories and podium finishes. The combination of the drivers' excellent performances, the team's consistency, and the reliability of the BMW M3 GT formed a near unbeatable package. Dirk Müller and Joey Hand went about their work in a very focussed and calculated fashion, particularly in the final stages of the season. This allowed them to defend their lead at all nine of the year's races. Bill Auberlen and Dirk Werner were initially unlucky after the one-two in Sebring. However, they managed to put together a very strong finish and were always there for the RLL Team and BMW when things were not going entirely to plan for Dirk Müller and Joey Hand. They were rewarded for their efforts with third place in the Drivers' Championship.”

Rahal said: “As we prepared for the 2011 season, we knew we had all of the ingredients to contend for the championship, but it takes a lot of effort from everyone involved to actually make it happen. Each one of our drivers gave us everything they had, BMW provided us with a great car and outstanding support from throughout its great organisation and the crew both at the track and at the shop worked extremely hard to make this happen, and now we have achieved our goals.”



Backed up by Andy Priaulx (GB) as the third driver, Müller and Hand started the 2011 season with a triumph at the iconic 12-hour race in Sebring (US). They followed this win with victories in Long Beach (US) and Lime Rock (US). After two fourth place finishes in Mosport (CA) and Mid-Ohio (US), the two team-mates returned to the podium with a third place in Road America (US). Second place at the first running of the “Baltimore Grand Prix” (US) gave Müller and Hand “match point” going into the race at Laguna Seca (US). They took their opportunity brilliantly, crossing the finishing line in second place to secure the championship. Werner and Auberlen also stepped onto the podium on five occasions and finished in the points at every race. The duo lined up alongside Augusto Farfus (BR) in Sebring and at the “Petit Le Mans” in Road Atlanta (US) at the end of the season.

Intercontinental Le Mans Cup: Strong start, strong finish.

Two BMW teams were responsible for running the two BMW M3 GT cars at the seven races that formed this year’s Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC): BMW Team RLL claimed a one-two in the GT category at the curtain-raiser in Sebring, before claiming another podium finish at the finale in Road Atlanta.

At the remaining starts in Spa-Francorchamps (BE), Le Mans (FR), Imola (IT) and Zhuhai (CN), at least one of BMW Team Schnitzer’s cars finished in the top three of the GTE class. The pairings of Farfus/Jörg Müller (DE) and Priaulx/Uwe Alzen (DE) scored an impressive one-two at the finale in China. Only in Silverstone (GB) were the BMW drivers mere spectators at the presentation ceremony.

Despite these excellent results, the title remained just beyond their grasps: BMW (125 points) ended the second ILMC season in second place in the GTE manufacturers’ competition, behind Ferrari (171). In the team competition, BMW Motorsport scored 101 points, just seven less than the winning AF Corse team.

“It was an interesting experience to see both BMW Team RLL and BMW Team Schnitzer picking up points for us in the ILMC,” said Marquardt. “The exchange between the two teams and BMW Motorsport worked really well, despite the distances. In the end we narrowly missed out on the title. As far as performance is concerned, the BMW M3 GT was challenging at the front of the field in every race. In several situations, however, we did not have the luck you sometimes need to pick up maximum points. The one-two at the finale in Zhuhai showed once again that the BMW M3 GT was a true winner in this championship.”

“The one-two at the end of the season was a great reward for the team’s hard work,” added Team Manager Charly Lamm. “Over the course of the season, various reasons meant we did not always pick up the results that we should have done. Motorsport is like that sometimes. However, everything clicked into place at the finale to give us a more than satisfying end to the season.”

24 hours Le Mans and Nürburgring: Podium finishes at the two classics.

Just as it did last year, when American artist Jeff Koons’ BMW M3 GT2 Art Car thrilled fans at the “Circuit de la Sarthe”, BMW Motorsport once again lined up at the legendary 24-hour race in Le Mans in 2011. As well as the prestige that comes with challenging for victory at this classic, BMW Team Schnitzer was also fighting for ILMC points. “Le Mans was one of those races where we did not exploit our full



potential,” said Marquardt. “When you start a marathon of this kind from pole position, you obviously want to be in contention at the end of the race. However, third place after such a turbulent race was a decent result. Anyone standing on the podium after 24 hours in Le Mans can be proud of their performance.”

Twelve years after the triumphant outright victory with the BMW V12 LMR, BMW Motorsport was once again on the Le Mans podium: Priaux, Dirk Müller and Hand finished third in the LM GTE class with the number 56 BMW M3 GT. After 313 thrilling laps and a distance of over 4,200 kilometres, Hand had the honour of taking the chequered flag. In contrast, the drivers of BMW M3 GT number 55 – Farfus, Jörg Müller and Werner – left the 13.629-kilometre circuit empty handed. The trio battled admirably for 276 laps, constantly fighting their way back through the field after early set-backs. However, with just two and a half hours of the race remaining, the BMW M3 GT rolled to a stop in the “Mulsanne” corner while running in fifth place.

Just 14 days later, on 25th/26th June, the team was back in action at the next 24-hour marathon – this time at the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (DE). Marquardt said: “The goal we set ourselves ahead of the start of the season was to be capable of winning the 24-hour races. We achieved this. To get that victory, however, you need a bit of fortune and an incident-free race. Unfortunately we had neither of these this year. The 24-hour race at the Nürburgring was another emotional rollercoaster. We would obviously have liked to have repeated last year's victory in the Green Hell. However, absolutely everything has to be 100% right to win a race like that. The minutes we lost due to the incident with the number 1 BMW M3 GT ultimately cost us the race. After the incident, the drivers and team members fought like lions – and their efforts were rewarded with second place.”

Last year's winners Farfus, Jörg Müller, Alzen and Pedro Lamy (PT) alternated behind the wheel of car number 1 and crossed the finish line 4:23 minutes behind the victorious number 18 Manthey Porsche. Apart from a collision on lap 24 and the subsequent stop-and-go penalty, the quartet produced a flawless race. Car number 7, which was driven by Dirk Müller, Werner and Dirk Adorf, retired after 139 laps while in 16th place. Early in the race, the repair work required to fix a fault in the brake system of the BMW M3 GT had already cost over an hour. Rejoining at the back of the field, the trio furiously fought their way back into the top twenty, but there was to be no reward this time for their fighting spirit.

BMW Customer Racing: Global success.

“Private BMW drivers and teams have once again celebrated countless victories this season,” said Marquardt. “The year got off to a perfect start with wins at the 24-hour races in Dubai and Daytona. These were followed by many highlights, whether with the BMW Z4 GT3, BMW 320 TC, BMW M3 GT4 or other competitive BMW models. The title in the GRAND-AM, victory in the WTCC Independents' Trophy, and the wins achieved by the BMW Z4 GT3 show just how diverse our customer racing programme is. We are very proud of what the BMW privateers have achieved again this year. Customer racing is and remains a key component of the BMW Motorsport programme.”



Victory at the 24-hour race in Dubai (AE) triggered an extremely successful season for the BMW Z4 GT3. At the wheel of this car, BMW privateers tasted success in the FIA GT3 European Championship, the Blancpain Endurance Series and the Japanese Super GT Series, to name but a few. The Schubert team finished second overall with the BMW Z4 GT3 at the Spa-Francorchamps 24-hour race.

The BMW 320 TC also proved to be a winner in 2011. Franz Engstler (DE) and Tom Coronel (NL) each celebrated a race victory in the FIA World Touring Car Championship, while Kristian Poulsen (DK) won the WTCC Independents' Trophy. The BMW 320si was also successful in the Scandinavian Touring Car Championship (STCC). At the wheel of the BMW M3 GT4, Ricardo van der Ende (NL) was the man to beat in the GT4 European Cup and the Dutch GT4 series.

BMW drivers also impressed on the other side of the Atlantic: Chip Ganassi Racing not only celebrated a one-two with the BMW Riley at the Daytona 24 Hours (US), but also defended its title in the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series with drivers Scott Pruett (US) and Memo Rojas (MX). BMW Sports Trophy winner Paul Dalla Lana (CA) claimed the title in the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge in a BMW M3, while his Turner Motorsport team celebrated the team title and BMW won the manufacturers' championship. In the Pro IT Series, Robert Thiele (US, IT-R) and Robert Driscoll (US, IT-S) both picked up overall victories in their respective classes.

Carsten Knechtges (DE), Manuel Metzger (DE) and Tim Scheerbarth (DE) won the title in the 2011 VLN Endurance Championship at the Nürburgring in a BMW Z4. This was BMW's fourth overall victory in a row in the VLN.

Formula BMW Talent Cup: Wackerbauer claims overall victory.

After many productive hours in the racing classroom, countless hours spent out on the track at the wheel of the FB02 racing car, and a flawless performance at the grand finale in Oschersleben, Stefan Wackerbauer (DE) emerged as the overall winner of the 2011 Formula BMW Talent Cup. The Bavarian finished ahead of Maximilian Günther (DE) and Lukas Schreier (DE), who finished second and third respectively.

"This is an unbelievable moment for me. I have been dreaming of this win all season, and now my dream has come true," said Wackerbauer. BMW Motorsport will finance the winner as he takes the next step on his way to a career in professional motorsport. "I am really proud of how all the drivers have developed over the course of the season. We had a magnificent finale and can definitely say that our Formula BMW Talent Cup programme was a success," said Marquardt, summing up the first year of the series.

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