



DTM

Jens Marquardt: "We made motorsport history."

Munich (DE), 25th October 2012. When Jens Marquardt stepped into the role of BMW Motorsport Director in July 2011, he took on sole responsibility for all of the manufacturer's motor racing projects. BMW's triumph in Hockenheim (DE) last Sunday and the clean sweep of 2012 DTM titles was a dream come true, as he reveals in an interview.

Jens Marquardt, a few days down the line, have you had chance to take in what happened on Sunday?

Jens Marquardt: "Sunday was quite simply an unbelievable day, even looking back a few days later. You experience moments like that very, very rarely in your professional life. Obviously all possible scenarios and possibilities run through your head before that kind of race, but the fact it developed into such a thriller was really sensational. It goes without saying we felt suitably relieved in the hours after the race. I am gradually starting to grasp that we made motorsport history on Sunday. However, our days are still packed full of appointments. It will probably be Christmas before I have enough time to take a really relaxed look back on what we have achieved."

You won the drivers' title, the team competition and the manufacturers' title in your comeback season. On top of all that, you also had the best DTM rookie in the form of Augusto Farfus ...

Marquardt: "Sometimes I have to pinch myself to check I am not dreaming. What makes me really proud is that these official and unofficial titles show that the entire team, every single person, did an unbelievable job this season. You can only achieve this kind of performance if you all pull together as a team. That was clear to see on Sunday. After the race you could sense the emotion across all the teams. It was very moving."

Mercedes' Gary Paffett led the standings all season until Bruno Spengler passed him in the very last race. Can you sympathise with him?

Marquardt: "Sympathy is possibly the wrong word in sport. Of course Sunday was tough for Gary to take. On the other hand, you have to see that Bruno has also been through the same things for several years – and he always hung in there, learned his lessons and is now the beaming winner. I am sure Gary will look back slightly differently on the season in a few weeks, especially as he has already been champion once. He will see that he, just like Bruno, performed

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outstandingly throughout the entire season. However, there can ultimately be only one winner in sport."

How have the past few days been for you?

Marquardt: "Sunday evening and Sunday night were obviously spent celebrating the title win in style. And then we celebrated again in Munich this week. However, preparations for next year began on Monday. This season showed everyone how unbelievably competitive it is in this series. The DTM project does not allow you to take a break."

Is there, in your opinion, any one big winner in your team this year?

Marquardt: "So many stories have developed this year that I don't know where to start. There are our engineers, who started developing the BMW M3 DTM with a blank sheet of paper, and this piece of paper produced a hat-trick of titles at the end of the year. Then there are our teams, who prepared so professionally for the DTM and who did not make a single serious mistake all year during pit stops, and that was under extreme pressure. And we have our drivers, with Bruno Spengler being crowned champion in his first year with us, having suffered disappointment on several occasions in the past. There is Augusto Farfus, the DTM rookie who landed on the podium in just his second race and went on to win his ninth. Our other rookies also have an exceptional learning curve behind them. And then there is Martin Tomczyk who, after such a great first half to the season, endured a disappointing second half of the year, through no fault of his own, but refused to let it get him down and was genuinely delighted for Bruno. Let's not forget BMW Team Schnitzer, who returned to the DTM after almost a quarter of a century and promptly won the title at the first attempt. I could go on like this for hours: there were an awful lot of winners this season."

How did you find the DTM environment?

Marquardt: "We are proud to be part of the DTM. The atmosphere in the paddock is very good. In Audi and Mercedes-Benz we have two top-class competitors. Together with them and the ITR, we managed to make a great platform even more attractive. The DTM attracted far more spectators to each and every race than last year – we passed last year's spectator record after eight of the ten races. That shows the high regard, in which the DTM is held among the fans."

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Next season you will no longer be the hunter, but rather the hunted. How can you improve on this level of success?

Marquardt: "We will be defending champions next year, which is the nicest situation we could wish to be in. That is exactly why we enter these sporting contests. We are happy to take on this role, although we must show the necessary respect and humility. Sport will always be sport: with two strong rivals like Audi and Mercedes-Benz, you can never rest on your laurels, but must work hard to remain competitive in the long-term. We will prepare very conscientiously for next season. The winter will be hard work – after all, we will have a fourth team and two more cars with the addition of BMW Team MTEK. As you can see, there is plenty of reason for us to look forward to next year. One thing is certain, however: it will not be possible to repeat this kind of historical success – winning the title in our comeback year."

When will you announce the driver line-up for next year?

Marquardt: "The end of season celebration at the start of December is always an important date for us. We hope to be able to say more about the coming season by then."

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