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BMW works driver Alessandro Zanardi is back racing again – Ecurie Ecosse off to a winning start at the British GT season opener at Oulton Park.

Whether in the DTM, the United SportsCar 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.

Blancpain Sprint Series: BMW works driver Alessandro Zanardi is back on track.

BMW works driver Alessandro Zanardi (IT) was one of the hottest properties at the season-opener of the 2014 Blancpain Sprint Series in Nogaro (FR). After four years away from motorsport, the 47-year-old is making his comeback in this series with a modified BMW Z4 GT3, run by ROAL Motorsport. He was the centre of attention for the media and fans in Nogaro. The priority for Zanardi on his debut weekend was to familiarise himself with the new championship, and to gain experience with the BMW Z4 GT3 under race conditions. He finished 14th in Sunday's qualifying race. Despite problems with the clutch, which has been manufactured especially to meet his unique requirements, the Italian spent long periods of the main race in the top ten, before ultimately coming home in 13th place.

Sergio Jimenez and Caca Bueno (both BR) were the most successful BMW pairing in Nogaro. They qualified third in the BMW Z4 GT3 run by BMW Sports Trophy Team Brazil. In the main race they were once again in contention for a spot on the podium, but eventually had to settle for fifth. Zanardi's ROAL Motorsport teammates, Stefano Colombo and David Fumanelli (both IT), were 11th on Monday. The second BMW Z4 GT3 belonging to BMW Sports Trophy Team Brazil, driven by Nelson Piquet Jr. and Matheus Dall'Agnol Stumpf (both BR) finished 15th in the main race.

British GT: Ecurie Ecosse wins opener at Oulton Park.

Ecurie Ecosse made a winning start to the 2014 season of the British GT Championship. The series opened with two races at Oulton Park (GB) this weekend. Victory in race two went to Ecurie Ecosse, thanks to Marco Attard and Alexander Sims (both GB) in their BMW Z4 GT3. The duo was forced to retire in the first race. Derek Johnston and Luke Hines (both GB) finished in seventh and fifth in the BMW Z4 GT3 run by the Triple 8 team.

BTCC: Turkington on the podium again in Donington.

After victory at the opening round of the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) at Brands Hatch (GB) at the end of March, Colin Turkington (GB) of the eBay Motors team once again stepped onto the podium this weekend in Donington (GB). Driving the number 5 BMW 125i M Sport, the 2009 BTCC champion finished runner-up in the third race of the weekend, after coming home fifth and sixth in the first two races. At the end of the 18 laps, Turkington was just half a second behind victorious Honda



driver Gordon Shedden (GB). The other eBay Motors drivers, Robert Collard (GB) and Nick Foster (GB), also finished in the top ten. Collard just missed out on a podium in race one, finishing fourth. Turkington currently lies fourth in the Drivers' Championship with 84 points, just three behind leader Andrew Jordan (GB).

FIA WTCC: double success for Engstler in Le Castellet.

Franz Engstler (DE) and his BMW 320 TC were once again the dominant force in the TC2 category on the second race weekend of the FIA World Touring Car Championship (WTCC) in Le Castellet (FR). The experienced German won the opening race, coming home ahead of team-mate Pasquale di Sabatino (IT). Engstler, who tops the TC2 table with 45 points, also crossed the line first ahead of Sabatino in the second BMW 320 TC in race two.

FIA ETCC: two podiums for Fulín on opening weekend.

The World Championship weekend in Le Castellet also marked the start of the new season for the FIA European Touring Car Cup (ETCC). Petr Fulín (CZ) finished second and third in his BMW 320si to claim podiums in both races. Because of this, he has moved straight to the top of the SUPER 2000 TC2 standings, which he leads with 22 points after two of ten races. In the TC2T class, Aytaç Biter (TR) finished third in both races in a BMW 320 TC.

European Le Mans Series: solid start for Team Russia by Barwell.

Team Russia by Barwell passed its first test in the European Le Mans Series (ELMS) at the four-hour race in Silverstone (GB). Leonid Machitski (RU), Timur Sardarov (RU) and Jonathan Cocker (GB) finished fourth in the GTC class in the number 78 BMW Z4 GT3.

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