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Marco Wittman set to make his 24h Daytona debut – Class win for QSR at the 24h Dubai.

Whether in the DTM, the IMSA WeatherTech 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.

WTSCC: Marco Wittmann set to make his 24h Daytona debut.

There is a first in store for BMW works driver Marco Wittmann (DE) come the end of the month: on 30th/31st January he will make his first appearance at the 24 Hours of Daytona (US). The 2014 DTM champion will bolster the Turner Motorsport team at the endurance classic, which is the opening round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship (WTSCC). The team will field two BMW M6 GT3s in the GTD class. Wittmann will share the driving duties in the number 96 car with BMW works driver Jens Klingmann (DE), Bret Curtis (US) and Ashley Freiberg (US). It is not only Wittmann’s debut at the 24 Hours of Daytona, but his first ever race in the USA. Last weekend he and Turner Motorsport completed tests with the new BMW M6 GT3 at the Daytona International Speedway (US), as part of the “Roar before the 24”. The newly-developed BMW GT racing car will contest its first race in Daytona. Turner Motorsport will run the GT3 version in the GTD class, while BMW Team RLL competes with two BMW M6 GTLMs in the GTLM class.

Three questions for ... Marco Wittmann.

Marco, how happy are you with the test at the “Roar before the 24” in Daytona?

“We came home with a positive feeling. The test was the first time we had taken to the track with the BMW M6 GT3 at the same time as the opposition. The test was primarily an opportunity to get to know the car and find a good balance. It is great to be part of a new project like this, and to be involved with the BMW M6 GT3’s first race. When you see where we started from and how far we have come, it only serves as confirmation that the developers have done a great job. We must now see how we compare to the opposition in the race itself. Durability is obviously another issue in a 24-hour race, particularly with a new car. However, we are positive going into the race weekend. We had three good days of testing, on which we learned a lot.”

Your home is the DTM – what do you think is the great appeal of a 24-hour race?

“It is simply a different type of race. In the DTM you have one-hour sprints. You are more or less on your own, always give 110 per cent and always drive right on the limit. It is a different story at a 24-hour race. You share the cockpit with other drivers. Because of this, you have to make compromises when setting up the car, as it must



be driveable for everyone, not just for one driver. Furthermore, you do not necessarily always push yourself to the very limit in the race. You have to make sure you look after every single component on the car. Because different classes are out on the track together, traffic management also plays a major role. These are all things that make the difference between the DTM and a 24-hour race. Also, it is obviously incredible fun to race at classics like the 24 Hours of Daytona or the race on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife.”

This is your debut at the 24 Hours of Daytona. Are you excited about the race weekend?

“Definitely! I have heard an awful lot about the race. The whole atmosphere and everything that goes with the race are supposed to be unique in Daytona. This will be the first time that I have raced in the USA. I am excited to see how it compares to Europe. There is a lot of anticipation. And it would be a dream to win the first race with the BMW M6 GT3.”

24h Dubai: Class win for the BMW M235i Racing of QSR.

The first 24-hour race of the new endurance season is already completed: this Friday and Saturday, the 24 Hours of Dubai (AE) marked the curtain raiser of the 2016 24h Series. The class win in the BMW M235i Racing Cup class was secured by the Belgian QSR team, who participated in the 24h Dubai for the first time. The victorious number 148 BMW M235i Racing was driven by Jimmy de Breucker, Mario Timmers, Luc Moortgat, Pieter Vanneste and Dylan Derdaele (all BE). Second place on the class podium went to Duwo Racing from Luxemburg, with Jean-Marie Dumont, Maurice Faber (both LU), Frédéric Schmitt, Nicolas Schmitt and Thierry Chkondali (all FR). The Bonk Motorsport team claimed third with Philip Bethke, Volker Piepmeyer, Axel Burghardt, Michael Bonk (all DE) and Liesette Braams (NL). In total, 98 cars tackled the race in nine different classes, among them 11 BMW racing cars.

Press contact:

Jörg Kottmeier, Phone: +49 (0) 170 566 6112, joerg.kottmeier@bmw.de

Ingo Lehbrink, Phone: +49 (0) 176 203 40224, ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

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