



Media Information  
DTM  
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**An interview with Jens Marquardt: “An arms race in the DTM has to be prevented.”**

- **BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt looks back on the season, prior to the DTM finale.**
- **Future of the DTM looks positive if the necessary course is set and other manufacturers come on board.**
- **BMW with unique portfolio in international motorsport.**

**Munich. After 16 of 18 DTM races, BMW works driver Marco Wittmann (GER) still has a mathematical chance of winning the title. In the Team and Manufacturer competitions, first place is already out of reach. In an interview, BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt analyses the reasons behind the difficult 2017 season and explains how BMW envisages the future of the DTM.**

**Mr. Marquardt, the 2017 DTM season draws to a close this weekend. How would you sum it up, from a sporting point of view?**

Jens Marquardt: “Since we returned to the DTM in 2012, we have won at least one title every year. Going into the final two races at Hockenheim, there is still a mathematical chance that Marco Wittmann can win the Drivers’ Championship. While that chance still exists, we will give it our absolute all and, as always, fight right down to the final lap.”

**Why has the opposition come out on top this year?**

Marquardt: “In trying to locate the causes, we can pinpoint two major factors. On the one hand, there have been our own mistakes: we cannot lose 25 points due to half a litre of fuel – as was the case in Zandvoort. If that had not happened, the Drivers’ Championship would have a different look to it. On the other hand, we have seen the true balance of power in the 2017 DTM, without performance weights, in recent races. This has revealed a fundamental problem that the DTM

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has with its two-year homologation cycle. If disparities arise, and corrective elements like performance weights do not come into play, this cannot be in the interest of the fans.”

**How can that kind of thing be prevented in the future?**

Marquardt: “There are ultimately three options. Firstly, performance weights could be considered as a means of balancing things out. However, we rightly decided not to go down that path in the future, in the interest of the sport. Another scenario is that the other two manufacturers increase their resource input to close the gap to the opposition. The consequence of this kind of situation is a technical arms race, as we have seen in Formula 1 and the LMP1 class. However, this is out of the question in the DTM – that’s we have agreed on long homologation cycles. The third approach covers the standardisation of parts in areas that are both visible and indistinguishable to the fans, and the reduction of aerodynamic components. This has a lot of positive effects, including the fact that it would improve the racing, as the cars would be less sensitive from an aerodynamic point of view. It would also reduce costs.”

**Which method do you prefer?**

Marquardt: “BMW’s position is definitely behind the third approach. It also represents our vision for the future of the DTM. The role of the series cannot be as a replacement for LMP1 for a manufacturer. An arms race simply has to be prevented – and, as it stands, that largely takes place in the field of aerodynamics. The most important selling point of the DTM has to be the fact that it allows spectacular, close racing between all the manufacturers involved, in which the focus is on the driver. The driver’s performance should ultimately be the deciding factor. The DTM has to be all about spectacular racing between the best touring car drivers in the world – not an expensive competition between engineers. For this to be the case, it is essential to significantly reduce aerodynamics. It can no longer be possible to ruin the system by, for example, using resources that were freed up in other racing series. It is for this reason that we have been in favour of the so-called Berger proposal right from the word go – and we are pleased to see the others following us in this regard.”

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**With conditions like this in place, how is it possible for a manufacturer to demonstrate its core areas of expertise?**

Marquardt: "If we run engines with turbo technology in the DTM, perform the best pit stops, find the best set-up and, at the same time, reduce the complexity of the cars in a way that is virtually indistinguishable to the fans, then everyone is a winner in the end – particularly the spectators. And that ultimately has to be what it is all about: What do the fans want to see, and what do they not want to see? We are convinced that the fans are not at all bothered about the fractions of a second gained through aerodynamics. They want to see spectacular motorsport and, ideally, to see their favourite driver or favourite manufacturer win. As far as the fans are concerned, the heroes are sat in the cockpit, not at laptops."

**What role can the DTM play within the BMW Group in the future? How will it compare to other race series?**

Marquardt: "We are excellently positioned at BMW. We want to use the DTM to offer spectacular, high-quality, driver-oriented sprint races, in which the best touring car drivers in the world go head-to-head. We are demonstrating the company's innovation in the most demanding GT racing series in the world with the BMW M8 GTE. We use Formula E as the technology lab for developing future BMW iNEXT models and to demonstrate our innovation and integration skills in the field of electromobility out on the track. We are also very close to the production side of things with our customer racing programme. The diversity of our portfolio is unique. Every commitment fulfils a very special function, with its own specific objectives."

**Do you believe in the future of the DTM?**

Marquardt: "The announced withdrawal of Mercedes obviously poses some big challenges for the DTM. However, when you look around the paddock you become aware of the full dimension of the DTM – with all the suppliers and partners, the many fans in the grandstands and watching on television – and its importance on the international racing scene. We joined the DTM in 2012 because we believe in this series. Who knows whether there would still be a DTM today without this move. We must now fight for its survival – and that is precisely what we are doing. The coming months will definitely be very exciting."

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