



Media Information
BMW Motorsport Junior Programme
7th February 2019

Erik Johansson is the new BMW Motorsport Junior for 2019 following intensive selection process.

- **Erik Johansson comes through three-day selection process ahead of 15 other candidates.**
- **Top four candidates put to the test in the BMW Motorsport simulator to decide winner.**
- **Johansson to contest entire Italian GT Championship season in BMW M6 GT3 as part of his training programme.**

Munich. After an intensive three-day selection procedure, the decision has been made: Erik Johansson (SWE) has been accepted onto the 2019 BMW Motorsport Junior Programme. The 22-year-old former BMW Customer Racing driver triumphed over three other candidates in Wednesday's shoot-out in the BMW Motorsport simulator. As a reward, a substantial part of his training programme will see him contest the entire coming season of the Italian GT Championship at the wheel of the BMW Team Italia BMW M6 GT3. On Monday and Tuesday, 16 candidates underwent a comprehensive programme of physical, mental and communication tests. The top four participants then went through to the simulator shoot-out.

"Congratulations, Erik Johansson," said BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt. "He follows in the footsteps of our current works driver and former Junior, Joel Eriksson, as the second Swede to be accepted onto the BMW Motorsport Junior Programme. Erik came through our reshaped selection procedure against the other impressive candidates. I am particularly pleased that we managed to successfully stage a shoot-out like that in our race simulator. I would now like to welcome Erik to the BMW Motorsport family and look forward to seeing him on the track in the BMW M6 GT3 soon."

As well as Johansson, who was introduced to endurance racing in 2016 in the BMW M235i Racing Cup, Benjamin Lessennes (BEL) and two current BMW Customer Racing drivers, Aaron Seton (AUS) and Ben Tuck (GBR), were given the opportunity to drive on a virtual racetrack. The quartet simulated practice sessions, qualifying and a long run. Supported by a team of BMW Motorsport engineers, the focus was on driver feedback and data analysis, as well as lap times. Each driver had several



sessions in which to familiarise themselves with the simulator and the circuit. Johansson ultimately made the best impression and secured his place on the 2019 BMW Motorsport Junior Programme.

“This is an incredible opportunity for me. At the moment, I really don’t know what to say,” said Johansson, who, having won titles in single-seater racing series, made his first appearance on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (GER) as a BMW Customer Racing driver in a Securtal Sorg Rennsport BMW M235i Racing. It was there last year that he attracted attention with a number of impressive performances in a GT3 car. “I am really looking forward to driving the BMW M6 GT3 in the coming months, getting to know the other BMW works drivers, and being a part of the BMW Motorsport family.”

The first two days of the selection process saw 16 promising young drivers from all over the world stake their claim to a place on the BMW Motorsport Junior Programme. For the first time, these also included a number of candidates who had earned their opportunity through their performances with BMW Customer Racing teams. The jury consisted of Dirk Adorf (GER), long-term mentor of the BMW Motorsport Juniors, and Philipp Eng (AUT), himself a former BMW Motorsport Junior who made the step up to works driver, with both getting to know the participants in intense discussions.

“It was a great experience for me to be part of this selection process,” said Eng. “It was great fun getting to know the guys over the three days, and accompanying them through the shoot-out. Erik ultimately won because he is very quick, clever and mature for his age. That is very important for a successful racing driver.”

The Formula Medicine experts, under the guidance of Dr. Riccardo Ceccarelli, put the young drivers through a programme of physical and mental tests. The candidates’ appearances in front of the camera and on social networks were also evaluated. Adorf and Eng considered all these aspects when selecting the four candidates who were given the opportunity to prove themselves in the BMW Motorsport simulator on day three.

The simulator was developed by BMW Motorsport and designed from the beginning to be multi-functional. It can be used to simulate all BMW race cars. Work in the simulator plays a crucial role in both the development of the cars and in pre-race preparations. Shortly before the juniors’ shoot-out, the BMW i Andretti Motorsport drivers used the simulator to prepare for the coming Formula E race in Mexico City (MEX). That meant the young drivers also used the realistic reproduction of the BMW iFE.18 cockpit for their drives.



"I think the package we put together for the candidates, consisting of various performance tests, individual discussions and, for the first time, the simulator drives, worked very well," said Adorf. "I am particularly pleased that we had so many young BMW Customer Racing drivers – current as well as former –, three of whom made it into the top-four. Their extremely high standard is proof that our decision to bring the BMW Motorsport Junior Programme significantly closer to BMW Customer Racing was spot on. Congratulations to our winner, Erik Johansson, who proved to be the strongest candidate and impressed us with his speed and his professional approach."

This season's Italian GT Championship, in which Johansson will compete in the BMW M6 GT3, kicks off on 5th April at Monza (ITA).

Note for editors:

You can find video highlights of the 2019 BMW Motorsport Junior shoot-out at the following link: <https://youtu.be/T3e51S6tdBU>.

Media Contact.

Ingo Lehbrink
Spokesperson BMW Group Motorsport
Phone: +49 (0)176 – 203 40 224
E-mail: ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

Daniela Tadday
Media Relations Manager BMW Motorsport
Tel.: +49 (0)151 – 601 24 545
E-Mail: daniela.tadday@bmw.de

Benjamin Titz
Head of BMW Group Design, Innovations & Motorsports Communications
Phone: +49 (0)179 – 743 80 88
E-mail: benjamin.titz@bmw.de

Media Website.

<http://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global>



BMW Motorsport on the web.

Website: www.bmw-motorsport.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bmwmotorsport

Instagram: www.instagram.com/bmwmotorsport

YouTube: www.youtube.com/bmwmotorsport

Twitter: www.twitter.com/bmwmotorsport