



Media Information

DTM

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### **Harald Grohs and the historic Zolder victory: “That makes me proud and happy”.**

- **Harald Grohs talks about his win in the first ever DTM race back in 1984 in an interview.**
- **Grohs: “I was jolly glad to bring home the win in the face of strong competition.”**
- **Comparison of the DTM back then and now.**

**Munich. The date was 11th March 1984. The newly founded “German Production Car Championship”, now the DTM, entered its maiden season at the “Circuit Zolder” to the east of Brussels (BEL). The very first DTM race was 24 laps, and a total of 102.288 kilometres - and ended with a BMW victory. After a dramatic race, Harald Grohs (GER) in the BMW 635 CSi was the first to cross the finish line and went down in motorsport history as the first ever DTM winner.**

And it was a top-four result for the Munich brand, since positions two to four were also taken by BMW drivers: Udo Schneider, Volker Strycek and Leopold Prince of Bavaria (all GER). In an interview, Grohs looks back at his historic win in the first DTM race, he remembers the initial phase of the touring car series and talks about the development of the DTM from back then to the new turbo era.

### **Mr Grohs, you won the first DTM race back in 1984. What are your memories of this victory in Zolder?**

Harald Grohs: “I must say that I was jolly glad to bring home the win in the face of strong competition. But then the rude awakening came an hour and a half after the race: I was disqualified due to a technical insignificance. I was granted the win but denied the points for the championship standings. And unfortunately it was by exactly that number of points that I lost the overall win to Volker Strycek at the end of the season.”

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### **What does it mean to you to be the first race winner in the history of the DTM?**

Grohs: "A great deal, But I didn't just celebrate that win in the DTM. I won every opening race with all four cars that BMW developed and built for various categories such as the DRM or DTM. That makes me proud and happy."

### **What was a DTM weekend like back then?**

Grohs: "We arrived on Friday, had a free practice session on Saturday morning and had a lot of time overall to take a really good look around the paddock. Then there was a qualifying session in the afternoon and we raced on Sunday. It was very relaxed. We also didn't have a lot of media or much PR work to do. And you weren't as under the microscope as you are today."

### **Describe your BMW 635 CSi from back then ...**

Grohs: "That car was relatively easy to drive in both wet and dry conditions. However, driving it at the limit was a real challenge for us all due to the high steering forces and pedal forces of 90 kilos for the brake and 80 kilos for the clutch."

### **How do you feel about the new turbo era of the DTM?**

Grohs: "It is simply fantastic. I have to say that how the BMW guys drove in Hockenheim, even in adverse circumstances, and how cool Marco Wittmann brought home the first win of the new era really deserves respect."

### **When you look at the period from back then to today, how do you feel the DTM has developed overall?**

Grohs: "We had highs and lows in the DTM. Now and again in the 90s, the costs got out of hand because there were no fixed limits. I'm really happy that we have Gerhard Berger now, who unites everything a bit, makes things a bit more normal and freezes the technology slightly. But you can't prevent technology from continually developing. When you think that the teams only have three of the new two-litre turbo engines available for two cars for the whole year, but the power trains still deliver

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more than 600 hp, it's fantastic. Now I would just like to see one or two more manufacturers so it's like the old days with 30 or 35 cars in the field."

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