



Media Information

DTM

24th November 2019

Birthday podium in action-packed ‘Dream Race’: Marco Wittmann takes second place for BMW at Fuji.

- **Thrilling Sunday race at first joint event between the DTM and SUPER GT Championship in Japan.**
- **Marco Wittmann finishes second on his 30th birthday.**
- **Impressive performances from Kamui Kobayashi in fifth and Alex Zanardi in 13th.**

Fuji International Speedway. Countless battles, three safety car periods and a beaming birthday boy, Marco Wittmann (GER), was on the podium. Part two of the ‘SUPER GT x DTM Dream Race’, the first joint event held by the DTM and SUPER GT Championship on Japanese soil, delighted Fuji (JPN) fans on Sunday. Wittmann, celebrating his 30th birthday, battled his way to second place in the Schaeffler BMW M4 DTM. Kamui Kobayashi (JPN) also gave an action-packed display, as did Alessandro Zanardi (ITA), who found himself as high as second place at times in the ZF BMW M4 DTM. Kobayashi came home fifth, while Zanardi finished in 13th place.

The safety car made three appearances over the course of the race. Fuji fans were not only treated to countless battles out on the track, but also the odd contact between cars and a few crashes. The action came thick and fast in the closing stages. Wittmann crossed the finish line in third place, but was then promoted to second place after Loïc Duval (FRA, Audi) received a one-second penalty for a previous incident. Victory went to Narain Karthikeyan (IND, Honda).

Wittmann, whose family and many friends had travelled to Fuji, can now celebrate his 30th birthday in style in Tokyo (JPN). Before the race, BMW Group Motorsport Director, Jens Marquardt, fellow drivers Zanardi and Kobayashi, and the entire BMW Team RBM sang to him and presented him with a big birthday cake during the morning’s pit walk.

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Quotes after race one of the 'SUPER GT x DTM Dream Race' at Fuji.

Jens Marquardt (BMW Group Motorsport Director):

“That is exactly the kind of race we wanted for our fans here in Japan – and, of course, for those watching in Europe. That was really great motorsport, although it was rather chaotic at times, but that is what the fans want to see. Our trip to Fuji was definitely worth the effort. Thank you to Bart Mampaey and everyone at BMW Team RBM. They all did a fantastic job, ensuring our three cars were running at the very highest level and performing great pit stops. Congratulations to Marco Wittmann – on his birthday, and second place here. That was another superb performance from him. Kamui Kobayashi also fought hard and put on a sensational display on his first weekend in a DTM car. Alex Zanardi was also in the thick of the action and once again produced some very special moments. All in all, it was a great advert for touring car racing. We saw that a joint event with SUPER GT and the DTM can work brilliantly and produce superb racing. The Dream Race was a total success – let’s do it again. On the whole, it has been a very successful weekend for us with Alexander Sims’ victory in Formula E and second place for the BMW M6 GT3 in the IGTC in Kyalami.”

Bart Mampaey (Team Principal BMW Team RBM):

“The races had a bit of everything: uncertainty with regard to the weather, safety cars, crashes, and a lot of battles. We adapted to the conditions and the circuit over the course of the weekend. We had a better package today. Marco Wittmann did an outstanding job, as did Kamui Kobayashi and Alex Zanardi. The strategy worked well with all three cars today. I think we can congratulate everyone who was involved in getting this event up and running and making it such a success. Motorsport is the big winner today. For the entire trip to Japan, preparing for the race, and then this result I have to say a big thank you to my team. As in the past, we showed again today that we feel at home on an international stage.”

Marco Wittmann (#11 Schaeffler BMW M4 DTM, BMW Team RMG, Grid: 7th, Race: 2nd):

“I am delighted. When you consider how we started the weekend, we can be extremely happy with second place on Sunday. It was a crazy race, with many safety cars. However, somehow, we always seemed to have the right instinct and came away with a great result. This event was awesome. The Japanese fans are really enthusiastic and friendly. It was great fun. Now it is time to celebrate my birthday.”

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Kamui Kobayashi (#00 BMW M4 DTM, BMW Team RMG, Grid: 13th, Race: 5th):

“It was a tough race. It was really wild out there at times. Compared to yesterday, we improved dramatically. The race was great fun and we battled hard. It was a great experience to work with BMW Team RBM. We met for the first time in Fuji this week, and soon gelled. We will take a lot of great memories away with us. Thank you very much, guys.”

Alessandro Zanardi: (#4 ZF BMW M4 DTM, BMW Team RMG, Grid: 22nd, Race: 13th):

“I am sure that being in second place, on the front row, at the re-start means I will be in some nice photos....But seriously, I really enjoyed that race. I would like to thank BMW Team RBM for the fantastic job they did. It is not easy to transport three cars to Japan and get them ready to race. The car was very good over the full race distance today. I received a few nudges from the opposition, with the last one in particular causing some serious damage to my car. It was an eventful race. However, I was able to stay clear of all the problems and took my chances. The pace was good. I could hardly be happier.”

Media Contact.

Ingo Lehbrink

Spokesperson BMW Group Motorsport

Phone: +49 (0)176 – 203 40224

E-mail: ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

Daniela Tadday

Media Relations Manager BMW M 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

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