



Media Information

IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship

26<sup>th</sup> January 2020

### **BMW Team RLL wins Daytona thriller: Second GTLM consecutive triumph for the BMW M8 GTE at the IMSA season-opener.**

- **#24 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE claims victory at the opening round of the 2020 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.**
- **Krohn, Edwards, Farfus and Mostert top the GTLM class at Daytona after 786 laps of racing.**
- **Klaus Fröhlich: “24 hours without a single mistake, under great pressure throughout the entire race; compliments to everyone”.**

**Daytona. The lead changed hands more than 40 times as the race went right down to the wire before triggering wild celebrations. BMW Team RLL won the opening round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship at Daytona (USA) for the second season in a row. John Edwards (USA), Jesse Krohn (FIN), Augusto Farfus (BRA) and Chaz Mostert (AUS) took victory in the GTLM class at the wheel of the #24 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE at ‘Daytona International Speedway’. The #25 car finished fifth. At the head of the field, the BMW works drivers thrilled GT fans with magnificent overtaking manoeuvres to finish ahead of two Porsche cars in second and third place.**

BMW Team RLL tasted victory at Daytona in 2019. Back then, Farfus gave an impressive final stint to clinch first place at the Florida endurance classic. This time, it was Krohn who took the wheel for the last stint of the race. He overtook the leading #911 Porsche with 46 minutes of the race remaining. Shortly thereafter, he came in for his final pit stop, following which he successfully defended his lead to the finish. Krohn also set the fastest lap of the race with a time of 1:42.168 minutes.

This latest triumph sees BMW Motorsport add another chapter to its success story at Daytona where BMW first won at the ‘World Center of Racing’ back in 1976 with the BMW 3.0 CSL. The BMW M3 GTR then took class wins in 1997 and 1998. Daytona prototypes with BMW engines crossed the finish line in first place in 2011 and 2013. This was the fourth GTLM victory in the IMSA series for the BMW M8 GTE.



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Connor De Phillippi (USA), Bruno Spengler (CAN), Philipp Eng (AUT) and Colton Herta (USA), who alternated at the wheel of the #25 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, were unfortunate. Their car ran over debris which damaged an oil line in the early stages of the race. That necessitated a long stop for repairs which saw the quartet drop well down the field. As a result, fifth place was the best the #25 car could achieve.

In the GTD class, the Turner Motorsport team was challenging for a top result at the season-opener in the #96 BMW M6 GT3. BMW works driver Jens Klingmann (GER), Bill Auberlen, Robby Foley and Dillon Machavern (all USA) finished sixth after 763 laps.

For Dan Harper (GBR), Neil Verhagen (USA) and Max Hesse (GER) – the members of the new BMW Junior Team – the victory for the BMW M8 GTE was the icing on the cake at the end of an eventful weekend. The three Juniors were involved in the processes within BMW Team RLL and gained valuable experience behind the scenes. This included a visit to Radio Le Mans, as well as the honour of waving the start flag for the BMW Endurance Challenge, Friday's opening round of this season's IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge.

The next round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship takes place on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020 at Sebring (USA).

### **Reactions to the 24 Hours of Daytona.**

#### **Klaus Fröhlich (Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG,**

**Development):** "That was an extremely exciting race. The final hours were particularly tense, with the lead changing hands many times. Today's victory for BMW Team RLL at the Daytona 24-hour race ranks very highly in many regards. It was the result of excellent teamwork between the team, drivers and our engineers. The operative excellence of BMW Team RLL was remarkable. 24 hours without a single mistake, under great pressure throughout the entire race. Compliments to everyone. The same goes for our quartet of drivers, who gave a perfect performance. Last but not least, our BMW M8 GTE once again demonstrated its winning genes at the scene of last year's triumph. In doing so, it underlined the fact that this car is one of the top GT cars out there right now. The BMW M8 GTE showed no signs of weakness in this 24-hour sprint. It was



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among the leaders all race and led for more kilometres than anyone else. And all that against extremely strong opposition. We certainly put on a display of great motor racing for the fans and spectators. That was a strong start to the year for BMW Motorsport, including in other categories. Congratulations to all involved. Long may it continue.”

**Jens Marquardt (BMW Group Motorsport Director):** “Two Daytona wins in a row for the BMW M8 GTE. That is a sensational effort from BMW Team RLL, the drivers and our engineers at BMW Motorsport in Munich. It is hard to compare the two triumphs. In 2019, we only led for one lap and took advantage of our late opportunity to take victory in the rain. This year, we were among the front-runners from the opening lap. We led for longer than any other GTLM car. The race was defined by the fantastic battle between our #24 car and the two Porsches. We witnessed hard but fair racing. That is how it should be. Congratulations to John Edwards, Jesse Krohn, Chaz Mostert and Augusto Farfus on their victory, as well as the entire team in the background. Had the #25 car not needed to come in early for repairs after debris from another car damaged an oil line, then Connor De Phillippi, Bruno Spengler, Colton Herta and Philipp Eng would definitely have been good for a top result too. We certainly head into the rest of the IMSA season with plenty of momentum now.”

**Bobby Rahal (Team Principal BMW Team RLL):** “Whoever thought we were just lucky to win last year were shown otherwise today. That was a battle for 24 hours. The drivers did a fantastic job, and the same goes for the crew. We did not make any mistakes. I feel sorry for the guys in the #25 car, as they would also have finished further up the field without the incident. On the whole, I am delighted for my team and BMW Motorsport. Congratulations to Porsche and Corvette, who were good from the word go with their new cars. We are simply very happy today.”

**John Edwards (#24 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, 1<sup>st</sup> place):** “I am very rarely speechless – but that is the case today. I had every faith in Jesse bringing it home at the end. And he did it. It was a really hard fight, as always in the GTLM class. The many battles were extremely tiring, particularly during my triple stint. This is definitely the biggest success of my career. I’m overjoyed.”



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**Jesse Krohn (#24 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, 1<sup>st</sup> place):** “What a race! It feels absolutely incredible. This is my third year in the GTLM class – and my first victory. We have come so close so often, and now we have actually done it here at Daytona. The team was awesome. Thank you very much to BMW Motorsport and RLL for trusting me to take the final stint of the race. Every single person did a mega job. I cannot believe that we are on the very top step of the podium.”

**Augusto Farfus (#24 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, 1<sup>st</sup> place):** “I am speechless. That was the best 24-hour race I have driven in my whole life. It was extremely fast, extremely close, and you could not afford to make any mistakes. We drove a perfect race: team, strategy, drivers, mechanics. The car worked well throughout the entire race. You don’t get through the full 24 hours like that very often. To win this race twice in a row is exceptional.”

**Chaz Mostert (#24 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, 1<sup>st</sup> place):** “Incredible! This is my biggest win since Bathurst 2014. My world-class team-mates carried me through this race. Thank you very much to BMW Motorsport and RLL for allowing me to be involved. In 2019, the other car won. Back then, I could not imagine how it must feel for those guys. Now it was me stood on the top step of the podium. That is something very special.”

**Connor De Phillippi (#25 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, 5<sup>th</sup> place):** “Two wins in a row, that is fantastic for the team. I may not have won the race, but I am still delighted for the guys. John and Jesse were often unlucky in recent years, which makes it all the nicer that they won today. It is obviously also great for Chaz and Augusto. Personally, I would have liked a better result. However, we win and lose as a team. Today, we won together. Now it is time to win at Sebring.”

**Bruno Spengler (#25 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE, 5<sup>th</sup> place):** “We were really unlucky in this race. Even early on in the race we were 13 laps off the pace and with no chance of making much progress through the field. However, the car was superb and the whole team did a fantastic job. I am very happy for the crew and my team-mates that we won with the #24 car. The guys deserve that. Congratulations on a great performance.”



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**Philipp Eng (#25 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE):** “I am overjoyed for the guys in the #24 car. The win is absolutely deserved. I am pleased for all the drivers, who are all great guys. We are good friends. One team, one goal – that’s not just an empty phrase. I am really pleased for them. What happened to our car is a shame. However, these things happen. We’ll go again next time.”

**Colton Herta (#25 MOTUL BMW M8 GTE):** “I am obviously disappointed for our car, but I am pleased for the team. Everyone was flawless all weekend. We dropped well back early on in the race, but had good pace after that. I am delighted for my team-mates, who really deserved this victory.”

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