



Media Information
24h Nürburgring
29th May 2022

24h Nürburgring: BMW M Motorsport teams unable to convert the strong pace of the BMW M4 GT3 into good results.

- **BMW M Motorsport teams battle for the lead with strong pace, before retiring after accidents and technical problems.**
- **50 years of BMW M: BMW M GmbH provides spectacular support programme for the 230,000 fans at the Nordschleife.**
- **Franciscus van Meel: "First and foremost, we wanted to celebrate with our fans this weekend."**

Nürburgring. The 50th edition of the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring (GER) represented the conclusion to the anniversary week for BMW M GmbH. However, the race debut for the BMW M4 GT3 did not go as well as hoped. The BMW M Motorsport teams showed strong pace, but both cars, from ROWE Racing and the BMW Junior Team, retired after accidents. Schubert Motorsport was in fourth position until just before the finish, only to be forced to retire due to overheating in the engine compartment. BMW M GmbH provided a spectacular support programme around the classic endurance race, which took part in front of an impressive 230,000 fans, to mark its 50th birthday – the highlight being the BMW M Race of Legends on Saturday.

The crew in the Schubert Motorsport #20 BMW M4 GT3, Jens Klingmann (GER), Jesse Krohn (FIN), Alexander Sims (GBR) and Niklas Krütten (GER), retained their composure during the hectic early hours of the race. The four deliberately took as few risks as possible, working their way up gradually from 20th on the grid once the race had calmed down a little. They were within sight of a podium for a long period, but around 30 minutes before the finish Krohn was forced to head for the pits due to overheating in the engine compartment. The only BMW M4 GT3 to cross the line was the #102 from Walkenhorst Motorsport, a long way back after several breaks for repairs.



Starting from second place, the ROWE Racing #99 BMW M4 GT3 battled for the lead, as did the BMW Junior Team in the #72 car. However, BMW Junior Dan Harper (GBR) first collided with a slower car when lapping and consequently had to spend 30 minutes in the pits to repair the suspension. Nick Yelloly (GBR) then suffered similar misfortune with the #99 on the Grand Prix circuit as suspension damage ended his race. The #98 car was in the hunt for first place into the night, but Sheldon van der Linde (RSA) was forced to retire due to a problem with the front-right suspension. After the long break for repairs, the BMW Junior Team put on a strong recovery to return to the top 20, only for Max Hesse (GER) to retire the damaged car after taking a spin.

BMW M Motorsport teams celebrated wins in the individual classes. FK Performance Motorsport triumphed with the BMW M4 GT4 in SP10, Adrenalin Motorsport by Alzner Automotive with the BMW 330i in VT2 RWD and with the BMW M240i Racing in the Cup class, Schubert Motorsport in the BMW M2 CS Racing Cup category, Hofer Racing with the BMW M3 e46 GTR in SP 6 and Rockstar Games by Viken Motorsport & Tomcat with the BMW 325i in V4.

BMW M Race of Legends thrills fans with plenty of action.

As part of the 50th anniversary celebrations, BMW M GmbH provided some spectacular highlights for fans in the support programme. Most notably, the BMW M Race of Legends, which featured BMW M Motorsport heroes from the past and BMW M CEO Franciscus van Meel dishing up top-quality racing action on Saturday in the BMW M2 CS Racing cars on the Grand Prix circuit. Cheered on by the fans, no mercy was shown as they executed overtaking manoeuvres, drifts, battles and some accidents before celebrating together on the podium. Victory went to Bill Auberlen (USA), who fought his way through the entire field after starting from last place on the reverse grid, having posted the best time in qualifying. Second and third places went to the BMW DTM legends Johnny Cecotto (VEN) and Steve Soper (GBR). Guest of honour, the former FIA President Jean Todt waved the chequered flag and joined Franciscus van Meel and Jochen Neerpasch, co-founder of BMW M GmbH, to hand over the trophies. Spectators were drawn to the BMW M Race of Legends paddock throughout the weekend and the drivers lost count of the autograph requests.

The support programme included more highlights in the M Town event space in the Ring Boulevard, where BMW M Motorsport drivers and management



appeared regularly for interviews and autographs. Directly opposite, the M Showroom housed BMW M Motorsport race cars from various eras for the fans to admire in detail. The BMW M parade featured around 40 BMW M vehicles on a demonstration lap of the Nordschleife, greeted enthusiastically by the many spectators at the campgrounds.

Reactions to the 24h Nürburgring.

Franciscus van Meel (CEO BMW M GmbH): "First and foremost, we wanted to celebrate with our fans this weekend. I think they more than deserved that after two years away due to the pandemic. We managed to do so with an impressive programme of events. The motto was: 50 years of motor racing, 50 years of emotion, 50 years of BMW M, 50th edition of the 24h Nürburgring. Virtually the whole area was sporting the M colours. Our set-up in the paddock, at the circuit and at the Ring Boulevard was fantastic and the fans loved it. It was an honour for me personally to be able to compete against the legends in the BMW M Race of Legends. The race was really exciting for us and also for the fans. The announcement of the reverse grid just before the race certainly contributed to that. Of course, the legends really had the bit between their teeth. Congratulations to Bill Auberlen on the win. Unfortunately, the 24-hour race then didn't go as we had hoped. The car, the teams and the drivers all had the speed to reach the podium. It is disappointing that we were unable to convert this speed into fitting results. Congratulations to Audi on the overall win."

Andreas Roos (Head of BMW M Motorsport): "Sadly, that was a very disappointing race for us and we could have done significantly better. Our expectations were high after the good, intensive preparations saw us show good pace and record some top results. It is particularly galling that we lost two cars early on due to our own errors. We allowed ourselves to be influenced by the hectic events on the track. There was nothing Sheldon van der Linde could do about his accident. He had a problem with the front-right suspension. Schubert Motorsport was in fourth place until just before the end, but then struggled with overheating in the engine compartment. The very positive aspect is that our new BMW M4 GT3 has shown that it has the potential to win this race, being right up there in qualifying and in the race. Many thanks to our teams, the engineers and the drivers for their efforts! We are all highly



motivated to go back on the attack next year. Congratulations to Audi on their win."

Jens Klingmann (#20 BMW M4 GT3, Schubert Motorsport, DNF): "I think that the Nordschleife really did prove to be the "Green Hell" for the BMW M Motorsport teams this time. Until just before the end, we were in a good position. We lost a lot of time in the morning after a slip-up when in the lead, but we were able to battle our way back to within touching distance of third spot. A podium would not have been a dream result, but would have been pleasant consolation for the team. Not even making it to the chequered flag after battling away from 23.5 hours is a bitter pill to swallow. However, there are some positives for us and we will be back even stronger next year to claim the 21st overall win for Munich."

Nick Yelloly (#99 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, DNF): "Of course, it's disappointing to retire so early – for me, for the team and for BMW M Motorsport. We entered the turn three abreast and once I noticed that the Porsche was moving over from the far right, it was too late to brake. Ultimately, it was my mistake. I am very sorry that the team lost both cars. However, the BMW M4 GT3 is great to drive and has huge potential. We will be back and I am sure we will win this race sooner or later."

Sheldon van der Linde (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, DNF): "The race actually went very well and we moved up plenty of places. I felt good in my first night-time stint, but then this accident was caused by a technical problem. The highlight of my weekend was the lap in Top Qualifying 1. There was great pressure to get us into Q2, as it is difficult to reach the front if you don't start in the top 20 but I drove a great lap. It's a shame that the weekend ended like it did, but that's how it goes."

Max Hesse (#72 BMW M4 GT3, BMW Junior Team, DNF): "A disappointing weekend for us. It is a big shame for everyone at BMW M Motorsport that we were unable to record any good results here on the debut for the BMW M4 GT3. In the run-up, everything went well: preparation, qualifying and the start of the race. We were always at the front, but then Dan's accident meant that we had no chance of a good result. Nonetheless, the BMW M Team RMG did a fantastic job and repaired the car quickly. Then I lost the rear end in 'Mutkurve' in my



second stint and wasn't able to catch it. That was that. Finishing empty-handed after all the preparations is really hard to take but we will not stick our heads in the sand. Our team prepared a phenomenal car and we still have a few races this season to make it better."

Bill Auberlen (BMW M Race of Legends winner): "That was so much fun! I had a superb time on the track with these guys. I knew that Johnny Cecotto would be the toughest nut to crack – and he did shove me into the gravel once. Once I passed him, I simply enjoyed watching his duel with Steve Soper in the rear-view mirror. Overall, a fantastic event from BMW M. Thanks for letting me be part of it!"

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