



Media Information  
BMW M Motorsport  
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**One-two for ROWE Racing and the BMW M4 GT3 at the opening round of this season's Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe in Monza.**

- Marco Wittmann, Philipp Eng and Nick Yelloly lead from start to finish, second place goes to Max Hesse, Neil Verhagen and Dan Harper.
- Tyre damage sees the #32 BMW M4 GT3 of BMW M Team WRT drop from second to sixth, DNF for the number 46 car.
- Four BMW M Motorsport teams run a total of eight BMW M4 GT3 in various classes – more success in other categories.

**Monza. Perfect start to the season for ROWE Racing at the opening round of this season's Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe Powered by AWS (GTWC): the team claimed a one-two with its two BMW M4 GT3 in the first Endurance Cup race of the year in Monza (ITA). The trio of Philipp Eng (AUT), Marco Wittmann (GER) and Nick Yelloly (GBR) led from start to finish to take a victory in the #98 BMW M4 GT3. Their team-mates in the 998 car – Max Hesse (GER), Neil Verhagen (USA) and Dan Harper (GBR) – came home second after three hours of racing to complete the team success. In contrast, BMW M Team WRT was unfortunate. Sheldon van der Linde (RSA), Charles Weerts (BEL) and Dries Vanthoor (BEL) were running second in the #32 BMW M4 GT3 until, with just half an hour remaining, a puncture saw them fall back to sixth place. The #46 BMW M4 GT3 of Valentino Rossi (ITA), Augusto Farfus (BRA) and Maxime Martin (BEL) failed to finish after the rear diffuser was damaged on a kerb.**

Following Sunday morning's qualifying, in which only two of the three scheduled sessions were possible due to a power failure, the four BMW M4 GT3 aiming for overall victory in the Pro class found themselves in excellent positions going into the race. Eng, Wittmann and Yelloly in the number 98 car secured the first pole position for the BMW M4 GT3. The number 46, 32 and 998 cars followed in second, third and fourth, making the front two rows of the grid an all-BMW affair.





The three-hour race on Sunday afternoon went entirely to plan for the ROWE Racing trio of Eng, Wittmann and Yelloly. They led from start to finish in the #98 BMW M4 GT3. Behind them in second place was the #46 BMW M6 GT3 of BMW M Team WRT, until the rear diffuser was damaged on a kerb and Rossi, Farfus and Martin were out of the race. That left van der Linde, Weerts and Vanthoor to inherit second place in the number 32 car, followed by Hesse, Verhagen and Harper in the number 998. It looked like being a one-two-three for the BMW M4 GT3. However, with half an hour of the race remaining, BMW M Team WRT suffered another setback when a puncture forced Vanthoor into the pits. The number 32 dropped back, while the number 998 moved up to second.

A further four BMW M4 GT3 lined up in other categories. In the Pro-Am class, BMW Italia Ceccato Racing around team principal Roberto Ravaglia (ITA) looked like certain victors until shortly before the finish. The BMW M4 GT3 of Stefano Comandini, Marco Cassara and Francesco Guerra (all ITA) held a comfortable lead until it was hit from behind and spun by another car with 15 minutes to go. Guerra was able to rejoin the race and brought the BMW M4 GT3 home in second place in the class.

In the Gold class, Team WRT took third place. The #30 BMW M4 GT3 was driven by Calan Williams (AUS), Niklas Krütten (GER) and Jean Baptiste Simmenauer (FRA). In the Bronze class, Walkenhorst Motorsport and its drivers Thomas Neubauer (FRA), Anders Buchardt (NOR) and James Kell (GBR) narrowly missed out on the podium in the #35 BMW M4 GT3. The Bronze car of Team WRT – the number 31 with Tim Whale, Adam Carroll and Lewis Proctor (all GBR) at the wheel – came home ninth in the class.

**Quotes after the race.**

**Andreas Roos (Head of BMW M Motorsport):** "It was a super race Sunday, and I don't believe we expected to achieve such a strong result coming into the weekend. It is not every day you get four BMW M4 GT3 out in front after qualifying. That is something we can be very proud of. I am delighted for ROWE Racing that they claimed the one-two. I am very pleased for the winning trio of Philipp, Marco and Nick, but also for Max, Dan and Neil, who were runners-up. Everyone showed a strong performance. It was a shame for BMW M Team WRT.





The team was also in contention for the win with both cars, but unfortunately had bad luck. I must also say that Valentino did a great job. He defended second place robustly and drove very well. It is a shame the car had to retire. The BMW M Motorsport teams have shown how strong they are, and I am confident that there are more top results to come. I would also like to thank and congratulate the BMW M Motorsport teams that flew the flag for BMW in the other categories, Team WRT, BMW Italia Ceccato Racing and Walkenhorst Motorsport. In total, four teams lined up with eight BMW M4 GT3, a sensational contingent."

**Hans-Peter Naundorf (team principal ROWE Racing):** "Unbelievable, unimaginable, it doesn't get any better! It is huge to claim a one-two like that at a racetrack with so much tradition. We could never have dared to dream of anything like that, and I still cannot quite believe it. To secure pole position and then produce a race like that makes everyone in the team incredibly happy. That is the reward for all the hard work over recent weeks. Everyone in the team has done a fantastic job – and one with fewer errors than the opposition. It was incredibly enjoyable to watch. For now, we will simply enjoy this and celebrate it a bit."

**Vincent Vosse (team principal BMW M Team WRT):** "First of all, congratulation to BMW M Motorsport for this double success. For us, it was a challenging weekend. We had our two Pro cars at the front but in the end, we had punctures on both cars, once maybe because of debris, the other time because of the diffuser damage, so it is just unfortunate. On the other hand, to already be challenging the best and to be challenging a team like ROWE Racing, which already knows the car and has done so much with BMW, is an achievement. Of course, we are disappointed and I'm disappointed, but we have seen some very good things today on track. The car was competitive, the work of the mechanics during the pitstops was very good. It's also difficult not to mention the fantastic job of Vale at the beginning of the race: everyone was a little bit surprised, but we also know him, and know that he learns very quickly. It's difficult to say that it was a good weekend but there are still some positives and we finished third with the Gold car. Now let's just head onto the next race and we will keep fighting harder and harder throughout the season."



**Philipp Eng (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 1st place):** "I am extremely happy for the whole team. Since the first test I had at Paul Ricard, we have always been working in the right direction and were today rewarded for that work. We did not make any mistakes, only received one warning for Track Limits, the car was unbelievably well balanced, and we did not make any operational mistakes either. All the drivers were on good form, and I believe that is the first one-two for ROWE Racing in this championship. For me, it was mega cool to start alongside Valentino Rossi. That really was a great moment. He drove superbly and deserved a better result. I also feel sorry for the number 32 car, which had a puncture. However, we will now celebrate the victory and I hope it will be the same story in the big race at Spa-Francorchamps."

**Marco Wittmann (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 1st place):** "It was a dream start to the season for us. I think, generally speaking, that we have improved the set-up and are going in the right direction. We were there in qualifying when everything was very chaotic. First the delay for the power failure, and then the cancellation of session three. However, it was a super weekend for us. You cannot make a better start to the GT World Challenge Europe than with first and second place. The fact that BMW M Team WRT had the puncture was a bit of a downside. However, I think that all three of us showed very good pace today. The last thirty minutes were ultimately all about avoiding a puncture and bringing the car home. Let's hope it continues this way. To be fair, you have to say that we had a long, barren spell in the GT World Challenge. That obviously makes it all the nicer to start the Endurance season with the one-two for the team."

**Nick Yelloly (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 1st place):** "It's an amazing start to the season. To be honest, my two team-mates left me a pretty easy job. I knew I had a gap to Dries of four or five seconds, my biggest headache was definitely lapping the traffic because they weren't getting out of the way. Once I could pass a few of those cars and had a little bit of margin between myself and Dries, I knew I was going to be safe. The car was fantastic. I think this shows that BMW and ROWE Racing are working really well together. I'm also really happy for the 'juniors' that I now call the 'seniors', they have been upgraded to be BMW M works drivers. What a way to start the season. For me it has been a cool couple of months with P2 in Sebring, P2 in Long Beach and





now a win here so I'm really happy for all the team and also all the people based in Munich as well."

**Max Hesse (#998 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 2nd place):** "We are super happy. First and second place for the team and BMW M Motorsport. I am very happy. We made very good use of our package from this morning and did a super job in Q1 and Q2. We were even perhaps a little unlucky that Q3 did not take place, which meant we started from fourth on the grid. The first stint was really tough, but we were able to establish ourselves at the front as the race progressed. In the end, we were happy to finish on the podium. More of the same please."

**Dries Vanthoor (#32 BMW M4 GT3, BMW M Team WRT, 6th place):** "The end of the race was a little bit unfortunate for us, we were doing really well. Sheldon made a good start and we were third after a really good stint from Charles. We had the pace, and we were second and fighting with ROWE Racing for the whole second stint as we were going back and forth with the traffic. My last stint was going well, I was slowly catching Nick, but it was hard, mid-stint I realised it was going to be a difficult fight, but we were catching. And then unfortunately we suffered from a front left puncture, we need to investigate why, probably because of debris on track that cut the tyre. This is just unlucky, but it is what it is, and we just have to keep the positive in mind. We were fighting for the victory, so we must keep this in mind and keep working for the next race."

**Valentino Rossi (#46 BMW M4 GT3, BMW M Team WRT, DNF):** "It was a good weekend because we were already strong on Saturday and especially today. We had a good qualifying and started the race from second place. My stint was very good because it was very fast and I stayed with the top guys. Then unfortunately I made a small mistake and went wide in the chicane, the car stayed in neutral and I had to put it back into first gear. So we lost 15 seconds. After that, we were there but unfortunately, we had the problem with the car. We had damage which was a great shame because the potential was very high but unfortunately, we could not finish the race. It is very sad, but we were strong, the car was strong, I drove well, so I enjoyed it. The result is very bad but for the rest, it was a good start to the season."



# BMW

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