



Media Information
BMW M Motorsport
21st May 2023

Second place for ROWE Racing and the BMW M4 GT3 at the Nürburgring 24 Hours.

- **Maxime Martin, Sheldon van der Linde, Dries Vanthoor and Marco Wittmann in contention right down to the final lap.**
- **Top 20 finish for the Pro-Am BMW M4 GT3 of Walkenhorst Motorsport.**
- **Further BMW M4 GT3s promisingly positioned during the race, but fail to make it through a turbulent, incident-filled night.**

Nürburgring. The ROWE Racing team finished on the podium at the 51st staging of the Nürburgring 24 Hours (GER). Dries Vanthoor (BEL) crossed the line in second place in the number 98 BMW M4 GT3, 26.911 seconds behind the winning Ferrari. Vanthoor had alternated at the wheel with Maxime Martin (BEL), Sheldon van der Linde (RSA) and Marco Wittmann (GER) on their way to completing 162 laps. For BMW M Motorsport, this was the first podium with the BMW M4 GT3 at the endurance classic in the Eifel Mountains.

Starting from 31st on the grid, the quartet of drivers steadily worked their way up the field in the opening hours of the race, and were already in the top ten after the second round of pit stops. Afterwards they were embroiled in a long-range battle with the eventual winners, which saw the lead repeatedly change hands between the two cars. The ROWE Racing crew made up a lot of ground on the winning Ferrari due to a shorter final pit stop, but were ultimately unable to close the gap.

The number 100 BMW M4 GT3 also made it to the end of the marathon at the Nürburgring. The Walkenhorst Motorsport Pro-Am car, with drivers Christian Bollrath (GER), Jörg Breuer (GER), Sami-Matti Trogen (FIN) and Henry Walkenhorst (GER), came home 16th, which earned them fifth place in the Pro-Am class.





It looked for a long time as though several BMW M4 GT3s would have a say in the battle for overall victory. However, that all changed as incidents occurred thick and fast in the early hours of the morning on the 25-kilometre Nordschleife. 13 hours into the race, Connor De Phillippi (USA), Philipp Eng (AUT), Augusto Farfus (BRA) and Nick Yelloly (GBR) were forced to retire from the race in the second ROWE Racing BMW M4 GT3, after De Phillippi collided with a slower car. Shortly after, the BMW Junior Team hit trouble; the number 72 BMW M4 GT3 suffered more damage as the result of a puncture. BMW M Team RMG spent a long time trying to repair the car and get it back out onto the track. Eventually however, Dan Harper (GBR), Max Hesse (GER) and Neil Verhagen (USA) had no choice but to retire, having spent much of the race in the top three.

Walkenhorst Motorsport was also unlucky with its remaining SP9 cars; on course for a top-ten finish in the seventh hour of the race, the #101 BMW M4 GT3 was forced out after two crashes in close succession. The race also came to a premature end for the number 102 car after an accident in the early hours of Sunday morning. At the time of the crash, the BMW M4 GT3 was running seventh.

This all means that BMW remains on 20 overall victories in "Green Hell". No other manufacturer can look back on a more successful history at the 24-hour race. The last BMW win on the Nordschleife came courtesy of ROWE Racing with the BMW M6 GT3 in 2020.

The BMW M4 GT4 Media Car was also denied a creditable result in the SP10 class. Specialist journalists Jethro Bovingdon (GBR), Christian Gebhardt (GER) and Guido Naumann (GER), together with BMW M test and development engineer Jörg Weidinger (GER), were initially able to make up a lot of ground in the first eight hours of the race. However, an accident then required lengthy repairs before a second collision in the 14th hour of the race forced the team out of the race for good.

Despite this, there was still cause for celebration in the SP10 class. The FK Performance Motorsport team took victory with the new BMW M4 GT4. Christian Konnerth (GER), Maxime Oosten (NED), Lorenz Stegmann (GER) and Miklas Born (SUI) crossed the finish line well ahead of their closest rivals. Third





place also went to an FK Performance BMW M4 GT4. In the BMW M240i Racing class, first place went to Adrenalin Motorsport Team Motec. GITI Tire Motorsport by WS Racing took victory in the SP 8T class with the first-generation BMW M4 GT4, while Adrenalin Motorsport also won the VT 2 class with the BMW 330i. Hofer Racing triumphed in the SP 6 class with the BMW M3 GTR, and the number 542 BMW 325i came home first in the V4 class.

Reactions on the 24 Hours of the Nürburgring.

Franciscus van Meel (CEO of BMW M GmbH): "I was thrilled by the atmosphere this 24-hour race provided. 235,000 spectators turned the race into a festival that is unrivalled in the world of motorsport. The action on the racetrack was also gripping, and I was delighted to see that we could stage a fantastic comeback with the BMW M4 GT3 and ROWE Racing and fight for the win. Second place is not quite the result we had hoped for in the end, but still an excellent performance. Congratulations and a big thank you to everyone! As always, it was also fantastic this year to see the entire range of BMW M and BMW vehicles on the starting grid and at our traditional M Corso before the race. BMW M and the Nürburgring are and will remain closely connected. I'm already looking forward to returning in the 2024 season!"

Andreas Roos (Head of BMW M Motorsport): "That was an eventful 24-hour race for us. Second place with the #98 BMW M4 GT3 of ROWE Racing is a fantastic result. Congratulations and a big thank you to everyone! Our drivers did a flawless job and worked their way into the leading group from outside the top 30. At the same time, I would like to congratulate the Frikadelli Racing Team on a deserved victory. Our other SP9 crews were also showing good pace and were in with a chance of a podium finish. At times, we had four BMW M4 GT3s in the top ten. However, the 'Green Hell' then struck back, particularly in the night, and took out no fewer than four of our trump cards with the #99 BMW M4 GT3 of ROWE Racing, #72 BMW M4 GT3 of the BMW Junior Teams, and the two Walkenhorst Motorsport Pro cars. As such, the podium is a nice way to finish and, above all, a worthy reward for the hard work of all the teams, drivers, and the BMW M Motorsport employees. I would also like to thank all the BMW teams who gave it everything and produced some fantastic motorsport in the various different classes. We were also able to make a statement with our new BMW M4 GT4. I congratulate the FK Performance Motorsport team on victory





and third place in the SP10 class. Generally speaking, the 24-hour race was an outstanding event in 2023 with a crowd and atmosphere, the likes of which I have never experienced in my career. We will be back next year, when we will again do our best to make it 21 overall victories."

Hans-Peter Naundorf (Team Principal ROWE Racing): "For us, the top priority is always to be capable of winning here – and we were precisely that! We were always in contention for the podium. The challenge we faced was not easy, but everyone involved did a super job. We don't know what we could have done better. The drivers, particularly in the race, did a flawless job. You cannot but admire the ability to come through from 31st on the grid to finish runner-up, and to be in contention for the win for so long. That is a really great effort. My team feels like a champion. It is a real honour to stand on the podium here. That cannot be taken for granted."

Maxime Martin (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 2nd place): "All in all, we had a strong race and, given our starting position, that is a good result. The team did a perfect job with the strategy. We were fast and consistent. However, I am also pleased for Frikadelli Racing. Klaus and the whole team deserved it. We can be happy with ourselves."

Sheldon van der Linde (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 2nd place): "Simply getting through this race without any major issues or incidents is a very good performance. We saw a lot of crashes, particularly during the night. We wanted to survive that phase without any issues – and we managed that. We were just lacking a little bit of pace that would have allowed us to push for victory. However, we still produced a flawless race."

Dries Vanthoor (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 2nd place): "That was not an easy race. We gave it everything and were ultimately rewarded with second place. Everyone did a fantastic job. A lot happened in the race, and the traffic was very difficult at times. Thank you to ROWE Racing and everyone at BMW M. We'll go again next year."

Marco Wittmann (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 2nd place): "We can be extremely proud of ourselves. To challenge for victory from the back row of our starting row, that is a very good team effort. That goes for both the team and us





drivers. Not once did we make contact with another car. Although we did not quite have the pace to take victory, we can be happy on the whole."

Connor De Phillippi (#99 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, DNF): "The Nürburgring 24h was an eventful one this year. Unfortunately in the early morning there was a light contact with a slower car that made a sudden movement on the straight and ended our race for the #99 crew. The team deserved a podium result and I'm sorry to have not achieved that this year for them. Hopefully next year we will have more luck on our side. Congratulations to our sister car on the podium finish."

Dan Harper (#72 BMW M4 GT3, BMW M Team RMG, DNF): "Obviously I am a bit gutted about how it ended after a strong showing especially during the night. We had a super-strong car that was very nice to drive. It all went well until the end of my second double stint, when we had our first problem. After that another problem arose for Max, and we decided together with the team and BMW M Motorsport to retire the car. This is very disappointing for everyone in the team. They work so hard to prepare for this event. Up until our problems, we were super-fast and in a strong position. I think all of us three drivers did a very good job. It is a big shame for everyone."

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