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Media Information
BMW Motorrad Motorsport
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Best European team at the Suzuka 8 Hours: BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team scores important points in the FIM EWC.

- **P7 at Suzuka thanks to an outstanding, faultless performance from Markus Reiterberger, Ilya Mikhalechik, Jérémy Guarnoni and the entire team.**
- **BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team wins the Le-Mans-Award for the best European team.**
- **Heading to the season finale at Le Castellet in third place in the World Championship standings.**

Suzuka. The BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team recorded an outstanding, hard-earned seventh place at the Suzuka 8 Hours (JPN) to secure important championship points in the FIM Endurance World Championship (FIM EWC). Markus Reiterberger (GER), Ilya Mikhalechik (UKR) and Jérémy Guarnoni (FRA) defied the hot and humid conditions as well as rain on the #37 BMW M 1000 RR. In a very competitive field featuring numerous Japanese teams on home soil, the BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team was the best European team and was accordingly awarded the Le-Mans-Award. Suzuka was hosting the third of four events in the 2023 FIM EWC. Ahead of the September finale at Le Castellet (FRA), the team is in third place in the World Championship standings. There is still every chance of closing the 37-point gap to the leaders in the final 24-hour race.

The Suzuka 8 Hours is the most important race of the year for the Japanese manufacturers. They compete with correspondingly strong works teams and works-supported squads. The target of the European teams is to score as many points as possible, which is exactly what the BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team managed to do.

At 11:30 local time, the #37 BMW M 1000 RR started the eight-hour race from eleventh on the grid. The bike fell back to 16th place during the opening stages, but Reiterberger, Mikhalechik and Guarnoni battled back courageously into the top ten before continuing to further progress through the standings. Despite the high temperatures and extreme humidity, they stayed cool, lapping consistently without making any mistakes. The BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team also applied its extensive experience to produce some

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outstanding work in the pits. The team and riders even kept their focus when rain set in around an hour before the end of the race. As darkness fell, the #37 BMW M 1000 RR finished in a very good seventh place at 19:30 local time.

The season finale, the famous Bol d'Or 24-hour race at Le Castellet, will take place from 14th to 17th September.

Four privateer BMW teams from Asia also made an appearance at Suzuka. The SANMEI Team TARO PLUSONE claimed 17th place overall (16th in the EWC class) with the #44 BMW M 1000 RR. The team from TONE RT SYNCEDGE 4413 BMW was able to rejoin the race after falling at the start, crossing the line with the #85 BMW M 1000 RR in 43rd positions (13th in the Superstock class). The Shinshu activation project Team NAGANO and the TEAM FRONTIER both retired early.

Reactions after the Suzuka 8 Hours.

Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director: "Taking the tremendous commitment of the Japanese manufacturers into account, as well as the strong line-up of competitive Japanese teams and riders on home soil, we can be extremely pleased to secure seventh place, being the best European team. This becomes even clearer when you see where our main world championship rivals finished. We dropped a few points to FCC, but got closer to YART and moved further ahead of SERT. This means that the world championship is still wide open, as one-and-a-half times the points will be awarded at the season finale. So, we are confident! The team gave another faultless race performance that underlines our consistency. The rain made the final hours somewhat tricky. We also had a few minor technical issues during the last stint, which cost us in terms of lap times but not positions. The performance of the tyres in our package must be regarded as critical. The statistics don't lie. But we performed well, thanks to support from Dunlop, and Dunlop Japan in particular. We are working hard on further improvements with our partner, which we hope will allow us to battle for the world championship at the next race, the Bol D'Or season finale. The omens are good!"

Werner Daemen, Team Manager BMW Motorrad World Endurance Team: "Before the race I said that a top-eight result would be perfect because we did not have the strongest package here. I think we are world champions in changing the wheels as we always have been the fastest. I am very proud of that. Also the riders did a tremendous job. They made no mistake, no crash and P7 in the end is really great. Now I am pretty exhausted but very much looking forward to the last race of the season where everything is possible."

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Markus Reiterberger: "I am relieved and happy. We were aiming for a top ten finish. Of course, the top five would have been even better, but we finished right in between and that is a good result. All three of us had a good race. I made a great start but then had a minor problem with the bike, which cost me a few positions. However, we were able to move up again. The third and final stint was draining, physically and mentally. It repeatedly rained and then dried out. I wasn't sure whether to head to the pits or not. Luckily, we chose to stay out and our communication was good using the pit board. That enabled me to make up a few places. We really achieved the best possible result and finished ahead of all but one of our world championship rivals. That was important for the finale at Le Castellet too. A big thank you is due to the team for delivering superb pit stops once again and working so well, and to everyone who was cheering for us and helping us. That was a tough, demanding week, but everyone gave their all."

Ilya Mikhalechik: "For sure I am really happy and I want to say a big thank you to everyone in the team. The race was really difficult. In the first two hours, it was really hot. We also struggled a bit with the grip. But apart from that, we tried to have a good pace, to focus, and all three riders made a really good job. The last part of the race was the most difficult but we managed to finish in P7 and I am really happy about that. Thanks to BMW, they've made a big step with the bike from last year. Also here in the heat, the bike was perfect and I enjoyed riding it. We can be more than satisfied because our target was to finish in the top ten and we achieved that and have been quite close to the top five. That shows that we did a good job."

Jérémy Guarnoni: "It was really good. Maybe we could have fought for the top five but in these kind of conditions, when it was raining, we lost a bit. It has been like a roulette, like a game. But we did our race and we bring home a lot of points for the championship. We have seen that it has been difficult to finish the race as some of our competitors made mistakes or had problems. We are really happy. We are the best European team and we have the best European tyre. That shows that we did our job. Before the race we said that we want to be in the top ten and we finished in P7. We all three riders and the team did a great job. We now are looking forward to the Bol d'Or where we clearly can win the world championship. The fight will be there."

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