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Media Information
BMW Motorrad Motorsport
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Team principal Shaun Muir in portrait: Perfectionist, manager, doer – Visiting the ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team in Guisborough.

- **After his active career as a racer, Shaun Muir founded his own race team more than 20 years ago.**
- **Perfectionism at the racetrack and in everyday life between races.**
- **Shaun Muir on the development of the team, working with BMW Motorrad Motorsport, and the things that drive him.**

Guisborough. The small town of Guisborough is in northeast England. There is a passion for racing at the heart of this town, after all this is where the ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team is located. Team principal Shaun Muir, who hails from Guisborough, founded his company Shaun Muir Racing here more than 20 years ago. During a visit to the headquarters, we take a look behind the scenes of the team that has been contesting the FIM Superbike World Championship (WorldSBK) as a works team alongside BMW Motorrad Motorsport since 2019. We learn how the team has grown continuously over the years, just how many areas the everyday tasks outside of race weekends cover, and what tirelessly drives team principal Muir.

"Yes, I'm a perfectionist. I always try to do my best in whatever I am doing," is Muir's assessment of himself. This attitude to life plays a key role in all areas of his work. Coming from a family crazy about motorsport, Muir started to ride motocross at the age of ten or eleven. He rode in the national championship before switching to the circuit to ride in the British Superbike Championship. An injury brought his career as an active racer to an abrupt end, but that was the beginning of Shaun Muir Racing. "After having to take a year off because of the injury, the question was how I could make a comeback," remembered Muir. "It was at this point that I decided to go into team management and to try and set up my own team."

From the BSB to the WorldSBK.

Starting in 2002, Shaun Muir Racing contested the British Superbike, Supersport and Superstock Championship and also enjoyed success in major road racing events such as the Isle of Man TT, the Ulster Grand Prix, the North West 200 and the Macau Grand Prix. After the second British Superbike Championship title win in 2015 came promotion to the

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WorldSBK in 2016. "It was a natural step for us," said Muir. "But we knew that we still had a certain way to go. We needed to understand WorldSBK racing, familiarise ourselves with the travelling and the tracks, as well as the organisational aspect of running a world championship team." That was when the collaboration with BMW Motorrad Motorsport began; Shaun Muir Racing contested their first WorldSBK season in 2016 as a customer team. Despite the switch to a different manufacturer for the 2017 season, Guisborough and Munich never fully lost contact, in part due to the collaboration in road racing. And that's how Shaun Muir Racing became the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK team in its works re-entry in 2019.

The team has grown massively since then. "In the beginning we had a team of around 20 people, made up of SMR and BMW Motorrad Motorsport employees. And now there are more than 30," reported Muir. "We started out with two mechanics, a tyre man and a crew chief for each bike. Now there are three mechanics, the tyre man and the crew chief, as well as two data engineers. Then there are additional engineers, a coordinator for the spare parts, and additional mechanics here in Guisborough. The team has also grown in the non-technical areas, the PR and marketing departments, and VIP catering. We had maybe 50 or 60 VIP guests in 2019, now we have 120. Everything is getting bigger, and we have also grown accordingly."

A big project with two strong partners. Unlike in some of the other teams, the riders at BMW Motorrad Motorsport all have direct works contracts these days. The other key members of staff in the pit also have contracts with BMW Motorrad Motorsport, for example, the crew chiefs and the data engineers. SMR provides the other employees for the operational activities, from the truckers to the mechanics and catering staff. "This structure that has evolved over the years is a big step," said Muir. "It enables us at SMR to take care of the operational side of things and BMW has the strong leadership role in the technical development programme."

Perfectionism at the racetrack and in everyday life.

During the European season, the race bikes and trucks usually travel from one racetrack to the next directly and only come back to Guisborough occasionally. However, work at SMR doesn't stand still even in everyday life. "The organisational work here at the workshop in Great Britain carries on, with the team management and coordination team, consisting of three or four people," said Muir. "And then there is the preparation for the next race of course. Our mechanics prepare a large number of parts that we take to the track, not just for us, but for the Bonovo action BMW Racing Team as well. Here, the guys prepare the stuff that we are given. We have a type of dummy bike, on which we install the stuff and

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see if it all fits and, if necessary, it is remodelled, revised, and readjusted. That is how we make sure that everything fits 100 percent before it is all packed up and taken to the next race. So, a lot of work is done here, even though the bikes aren't here."

What is evident both in the workshop and at the racetrack is perfectionism, which Muir mentioned at the start. Everything is highly professional, be that the workshop in Guisborough, the trucks, the garage at the racetrack, or the hospitality. "When we entered the WorldSBK as a privateer team, it was always important to me to represent the manufacturer," explained Muir. "We are proud of the responsibility of representing the BMW Motorrad brand which is why we always want to improve things to ensure they are at the best and highest possible level. With every new sponsor that we have on board, my goal is to reinvest in even better equipment and even better material. Our workshop here is my pride and joy and I want to implement what we do here at the racetrack as well, not only in terms of what the pit looks like, but also in terms of the quality of the mechanics, the team's performance, the tools, the motorhomes, and the hospitality. As a works team, everything needs to be at the highest level, so each year I take another look at what can be improved. That really is very important to me."

The entrepreneur's expertise.

A big advantage for Muir is his many years of experience as a businessman with his own construction company. "I have run both a successful construction company and a WorldSBK team in recent years," he explained. "And throughout that time, I noticed that my passion, my energy, and my efforts were all being poured into the racing team. So, I have taken a step back from the construction company over the past three years and am now only acting as a consultant there. Now, I am fully focussed on the race team. But you need a great deal of business acumen to run a racing team, and that has to come from owning and running a company. I think that most team owners or team managers are fundamentally successful entrepreneurs as well. That is very important. It is not just about running a company. It is also about managing things, coordinating staff, the ability to negotiate with sponsors, manage budgets, coordinate accounts, and so on. You are responsible for many aspects and I think that experience is hugely important here."

As an entrepreneur, Muir also learned to rise to challenges. One of the greatest challenges in racing is getting the team motivated again in difficult times and getting the team to re-focus on success. "It is easy to focus on the negatives and give up," as he is well aware. "But you also need to know how to handle difficult times. All it takes is a glimmer of hope, a minor success, and a step in the right direction to regain momentum and share that strength with everyone. And we know that we can do it when we all work together and are

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strong as one." The fact that there are crew members who have been with SMR for 18 or 20 years is further evidence of how committed the team is.

The goal that everyone is striving towards is getting on the winning track in the WorldSBK. "That is also one thing that I think sets us apart from some of the other teams. All of us at SMR and BMW Motorrad Motorsport have a common goal that we haven't achieved yet. But we have put everything in place to achieve that goal. I think we have one of the best coordinated teams and the right package to make it happen."

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