



Media Information  
BMW M Motorsport  
15th October 2023

## **Plenty of podium honours for BMW M Team WRT at the GT World Challenge Europe Sprint Cup finale at Zandvoort.**

- **Valentino Rossi and Maxime Martin storm from P15 to P3 on Saturday.**
- **Charles Weerts and Dries Vanthoor finish second on Sunday.**
- **A podium, too, and the title in the GTWC Gold Cup for Calan Williams and Niklas Krütten.**

**Zandvoort. The final weekend of the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS Sprint Cup in Zandvoort (NED) saw the BMW M Team WRT crews standing several times on the podium over the weekend. BMW M works drivers Valentino Rossi (ITA) and Maxime Martin (BEL) impressed with a fantastic comeback to third in Saturday's race. Fellow BMW M works drivers, Charles Weerts and Dries Vanthoor (both BEL), finished an epic Sunday's race in second position. They were joined on the podium by WRT's Niklas Krütten (GER) and Calan Williams (AUS) in third, who were crowned Champions in the GTWC Gold Cup and the GTWC Sprint Gold Cup.**

On Saturday, after a difficult qualifying session, BMW M Team WRT's four BMW M4 GT3s started the race in the middle of the grid. At the start, the four cars managed to stay out of trouble and to gain some positions. Rossi, at the wheel of the #46 BMW M4 GT3, made up five positions before the race was interrupted by a Safety Car. Rossi then handed the #46 car to Martin, who had a fantastic drive, and, thanks to several audacious overtakes, managed to bring the car into third position after starting from P15, delivering the third podium of the sprint season for the #46 team. The #32 car of Vanthoor and Weerts crossed the line in fifth.

Sundays' race was action-packed due to mixed weather conditions. The day started with a good qualifying with the BMW M crews locking out the front row. The #46 BMW M4 GT3 started from pole with Martin at the wheel, followed by



Williams, who had finished a sensational qualifying in second on the grid in the #30 car.

All drivers made a great start, with Martin comfortably staying in front. But, after a few laps, heavy rain poured down on the Zandvoort circuit making the track conditions very difficult. A Full Course Yellow procedure followed by a Safety Car neutralised the race for a few laps. After the re-start, Krütten was leading the race with the #30 car and Rossi was in second, while Vanthoor worked his way towards the front from further behind. Until the chequered flag, the slippery track resulted in several position changes. After one hour of exciting racing, it was P2 for Weerts and Vanthoor and P3 plus the titles for Krütten and Williams. Martin and Rossi finished the final race of the season in seventh. Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer and Thomas Neubauer (both FRA) finished the races in seventh and 13th in WRT's number 31 BMW M4 GT3.

#### **Quotes after the Zandvoort races.**

**Vincent Vosse, BMW M Team WRT Team Principal:** "Finishing the season with a double podium and winning the drivers' championship in gold class is a great feeling. Of course, when you enter a championship it's always to get the overall win, and as we did not we are a little bit disappointed. But we have learnt a lot and we will come back stronger next year."

**Valentino Rossi (#46 BMW M4 GT3):** "Yesterday was very good, we reached our third podium of the season. It was a great race, because we started P15 and we made a very good come back with a lot of overtakes between Max and me, and I was very happy. Today we, for sure, expected more because we started from pole position and Max was flying, especially in the dry. We had a very good advantage. But unfortunately, after it started to rain very hard, I was not fast enough with the rain tyres in the wet. I don't have a lot of experience, so I lost time. And before the end I made a mistake and lost three positions. It's a shame, but anyway the season was good, we had three podiums, one win, we finished P5 in the championship, so I enjoyed it a lot and I would like to thank Max and the whole team for this season."

**Maxime Martin (#46 BMW M4 GT3):** "In the end it was a good final weekend. For sure, yesterday's podium was the highlight of our weekend, starting from



P15 and being able to be on the podium was definitely very satisfying. Today was more unfortunate. We started from pole position, which certainly was positive. We were very good in the dry and then I was the first one to come into heavy rain with slicks and I made a very small mistake but, in the end, we were able to keep P2. After the pitstop, the conditions were very difficult in the wet and in the end we finished P7. We still scored some points and I think we had a good and strong sprint championship. We are happy about this weekend and now let's see what next season brings us."

**Charles Weerts (#32 BMW M4 GT3):** "Overall it was quite a difficult weekend for us. Coming here as title contenders and not having the title in the end is a bit of a shame, even though we knew our chances were quite slim. We did the maximum we could, so yesterday we scored some points, but not enough to stay in the battle. Today we had nothing to lose, so we just went flat out. This morning we were a bit unlucky with traffic in qualifying, but nevertheless Dries did a great drive in the second stint that helped us to get a podium, which is a nice way to end this sprint season."

**Dries Vanthoor (#32 BMW M4 GT3):** "For sure it's not the weekend we would have hoped for, but we are ending it on a positive note. After yesterday's race, our chances of the championship were gone just because in general we did not do a good race, we did not optimise what we had in our hands. Today we had nothing to lose, we just went all out and it was great to give a P2 to the team and everyone for the work they've done the whole season. It was a nice Sunday for the whole team, which I think is the most important going into next year to start again on a high note."

**Calan Williams(#30 BMW M4 GT3):** "The day started fantastically with qualifying and then on the podium as well, that's just amazing! Well done to Niklas as well, it has been a great season. We were obviously behind in the championship, and we knew we had to give everything we had got. And that's what we did!"

**Niklas Krütten (#30 BMW M4 GT3):** "Today's race was quite interesting. Racing at the front is something we weren't used to too much. The last couple of rounds have been pretty hard for us and we have not been sure if it would be



possible to turn it around. But Calan changed it all this morning. He made it possible and, in the end, ... I still can't believe that we are champions!"

### **Media Contact.**

#### **Andrea Schwab**

Spokesperson BMW M

Phone: +49 (0) 151 601 60988

Email: [Andrea.Schwab@bmw.de](mailto:Andrea.Schwab@bmw.de)

#### **Martin Schleypen**

Spokesperson BMW M

Phone: +49 (0) 151 601 37889

E-mail: [Martin.Schleypen@bmwgroup.com](mailto:Martin.Schleypen@bmwgroup.com)

### **Media Website.**

[www.press.bmwgroup.com/global](http://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global)

### **BMW M Motorsport on the Web.**

Website: [www.bmw-motorsport.com](http://www.bmw-motorsport.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.facebook.com/bmwmotorsport)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.instagram.com/bmwmotorsport)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.twitter.com/bmwmotorsport)