



Media Information
BMW M Motorsport
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IGTC finale in Abu Dhabi: Second place on the podium for #46 BMW M4 GT3 at the Gulf 12 Hours.

- **Valentino Rossi, Dries Vanthoor, and Nick Yelloly fight for victory to the chequered flag.**
- **After twelve hours of racing, they secure second place with a twelve-second gap.**
- **Technical issue sets back the #32 BMW M4 GT3 in the field.**

Abu Dhabi. BMW M Team WRT concluded the 2023 season in the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC) with another podium finish. At the Gulf 12 Hours in Abu Dhabi (UAE), the #46 BMW M4 GT3 fought for victory to the finish line. After twelve hours of racing on the Yas Marina Circuit, Valentino Rossi (ITA), Dries Vanthoor (BEL), and Nick Yelloly (GBR) secured second place with only a twelve-second gap. The #32 BMW M4 GT3, driven by Philipp Eng (AUT), Sheldon van der Linde (RSA), and Charles Weerts (BEL), fell back in the field after the first third of the race due to an exhaust issue and finished in 14th place overall (ninth in IGTC ranking). In the IGTC manufacturer standings, BMW ended the season in second place, while in the driver standings, Vanthoor, Eng, and van der Linde secured positions three, four, and five.

From fourth place on the grid, Vanthoor in the #46 BMW M4 GT3 immediately moved up to third place after the start. Thanks to the strong performance of all three drivers and the team's clever strategic work, the #46 car quickly joined the battle at the front. After seven and a half hours, Rossi took the lead at the end of a longer FCY (Full Course Yellow) and safety car period. He maintained that position throughout his entire one-hour stint and handed over the #46 in the lead to Yelloly. However, a problem with the pedal box cost a few seconds during the pit stop, and car #46 slipped back to second place. In the remaining hours of the race, the crew continued to push and kept the fight for the win alive until the end.



The #32 BMW M4 GT3 was also promisingly positioned in the first third of the race. However, after four hours of racing, an issue with the exhaust necessitated a brief repair in the pit and car #32 returned to the track several laps behind. Eng, van der Linde, and Weerts then drove a smooth race, gaining positions again. However, the gap was too large to re-enter the fight for the top positions.

Reactions after the Gulf 12 Hours.

Vincent Vosse (Team Principal BMW M Team WRT): "Of course, when you come to a race it's always with the goal to win. And we don't see it another way. We got close to it with car #46. Finishing a 12-hour race 12 seconds behind the leader after we had the technical issue with that car at a pit stop losing 15 seconds or so feels a bit bitter-sweet, but at the end we had a strong race. The #32 unfortunately had an exhaust issue that cost us a few laps and we could never really come back with that car. We did the job. Finishing second in the manufacturers and finishing the race second is not exactly what we like but this makes us stronger for next year."

Valentino Rossi (#46 BMW M4 GT3): "At the end, it was a great weekend for us. The target was to make it to the podium and we were very strong, very fast. We had a close to perfect race. We could have also won and have been in P1. So in the end we are a little bit upset because we felt the taste of the victory but we had an issue with the pedal box and lost crucial seconds at the pit stop. This is a great shame because in the end we missed it by 12 seconds so it could have been a fantastic battle to the last lap. But anyway, it's great, the car was very strong, the teamwork was as always very good and I enjoyed it a lot to race with Dries and Nick. It is great to finish the season with a podium. It is the sixth podium of the season. So I am very happy about this season and about the improvement."

Dries Vanthoor (#46 BMW M4 GT3): "We finished second at the end at the Gulf 12 Hours. I think we can be happy with the result starting from P4. We had a good weekend and our car was actually really good. So from that aspect we can be very happy, I must say. It's just a pity to end up second, missing out on first by only 12 seconds. But I gave it all in my double stint, I think I never gave so much so I can be happy."



Nick Yelloly (#46 BMW M4 GT3): "After the long 12-hour race we managed to finish in P2. We can be super happy about that. It was a great, long, hard fought race. It's been a pleasure to work with BMW M Team WRT for the first time in our BMW M4 GT3 and also with Vale, a real legend, as well as Dries, who is also a legend. Everyone did a great job over the entire 12 hours and to come away with a podium is obviously really good for us all."

Philipp Eng (#32 BMW M4 GT3): "It was, of course, disappointing that we had the technical issue. It cost us several laps, and thus, the championship battle was essentially over. However, we had a good package here, and the car performed well. The highlight of the season was, of course, the victory at Spa. Additionally, there was the win at Indianapolis and the podium at Kyalami. I wasn't personally present at the season opener at Bathurst. Therefore, it was fantastic to be in the title fight until the last race in this highly competitive field despite one race less. But, in the end, it wasn't meant to be. I gave it my all, and I can only express my gratitude to BMW M Team WRT, ROWE Racing, and all my teammates. I've driven with many of them in different combinations this season. Thanks to Marco (Wittmann), Nick, Dries, Sheldon, Charles, Maxime (Martin), and Augusto (Farfus). And thanks to BMW M Motorsport for the trust. It was a cool season!"

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