



Media Information  
BMW M Motorsport  
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## **GT World Challenge Europe: Augusto Farfus, Dan Harper, and Max Hesse win the season opener.**

- The trio triumphs in the #998 BMW M4 GT3 of ROWE Racing after a flawless Le Castellet performance.
- It is the first victory for Farfus, Harper, and Hesse in the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS.
- Valentino Rossi, Maxime Martin, and Raffaele Marciello narrowly miss the podium, finishing fourth in the BMW M Team WRT #46 BMW M4 GT3 after a strong performance.
- You find post-race video interviews here: [https://b.mw/GTWC\\_Interviews](https://b.mw/GTWC_Interviews).

Le Castellet. The breakthrough has come! ROWE Racing has given BMW M Motorsport the first major success of the year 2024 at the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS Le Castellet (FRA) season opener. Augusto Farfus (BRA), Dan Harper (GBR), and Max Hesse (GER) were rewarded following a magnificent performance in the #998 BMW M4 GT3 and celebrated their first victory in the highly competitive race series. Starting from fifth place, the trio put on an impressive show and crossed the finish line in first place with a 13.5-second lead. In the BMW M Team WRT #46 BMW M4 GT3, Valentino Rossi (ITA), Maxime Martin (BEL), and Raffaele Marciello (SUI) also gave a strong performance to finish fourth.

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The #998 BMW M4 GT3, sporting the design of BMW M Motorsport partner MultiBank Group, moved up to third place thanks to a strong start by Farfus, and Harper put the car on the path to victory with a remarkable overtaking manoeuvre on the leading Lamborghini. Hesse then confidently drove to the finish line, securing the fifth overall victory for ROWE Racing in the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS. The sister car with Marco Wittmann (GER), Nick Yelloly (GBR), and Philipp Eng (AUT) also gave a very strong





performance and was on track for a podium finish, but a problem during the second refuelling initially cost valuable seconds and then forced Eng to make an additional pit stop shortly before the end of the race. That dropped the #98 BMW M4 GT3 back to twelfth position.

There were mixed feelings at BMW M Team WRT. While Rossi, Martin, and Marciello could be satisfied with fourth place thanks to a strong final sprint, the #32 BMW M4 GT3 was forced to retire after an unprovoked collision for Charles Weerts (BEL) with a competitor resulting in tyre damage. The Team WRT #30 BMW M4 GT3, in which BMW M works driver Jens Klingmann (GER) shared the cockpit with Ahmad Al Harthy (OMA) and Sam De Haan (GBR), finished sixth in the Bronze Cup. The #991 BMW M4 GT3 of Century Motorsport with Jake Dennis, Darren Leung, and Toby Sowery (all GBR) at the wheel was on course for a podium in the Bronze Cup but then retired.

#### **Comments after the race.**

**Andreas Roos (Head of BMW M Motorsport):** "A very good start to the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS season! Congratulations to Augusto Farfus, Dan Harper, and Max Hesse as well as ROWE Racing on the victory! They did a perfect job. Many thanks to the team, the drivers, and all the BMW M Motorsport employees who contributed to this success! We had no racing luck at the beginning of this season at Daytona, Bathurst, Qatar, and Sebring. Now the knot has been untied, and I hope we can carry this momentum into the rest of the season. BMW M Team WRT also gave a strong performance with the #46 BMW M4 GT3 of Valentino Rossi, Maxime Martin, and Raffaele Marciello. The three harmonised superbly in the new setup and just narrowly missed the podium. It's very unfortunate that there were difficulties with the ROWE Racing #98 BMW M4 GT3 and the BMW M Team WRT #32 BMW M4 GT3. We need to closely examine the refuelling issue that probably cost the ROWE Racing trio a podium place."

**Hans-Peter Naundorf (Team Principal ROWE Racing):** "That was a fantastic start to the season for the team! Augusto Farfus, Dan Harper, and Max Hesse impressively showed today where the hammer hangs and how well the combination of the experienced mentor and the young guns works. Dan and Max have proved that they are first-class BMW M works drivers. All three did a



perfect job, drove cleverly, and implemented the strategy superbly. The whole team has shown the mix of routine and enthusiasm needed to be at the front in this high-calibre series again this year. I feel sorry for the #98 guys, as they also did a flawless job and deserved to be on the podium. Unfortunately, there were irregularities with the fuel flow during their last pit stop which caused them to lose time first and then had to make an additional stop. Without that problem, a double podium like last year at Monza would have been possible."

**Augusto Farfus (#998 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 1st place):** "It is a great honour for me to share the car with these two amazing guys. This victory is for the entire team. We complemented each other very well. I had a good start and got to third place, Dan took the lead with his overtaking manoeuvre, and Max brought the victory home confidently in the last stint. I have been following the development of Dan and Max from the beginning and now share the car with real professionals."

**Dan Harper (#998 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 1st place):** "It's a very special feeling to win the season opener after we were second last year – just fantastic! A great way to start the year together with ROWE Racing, Augusto, and Max. Many thanks to BMW M Motorsport for this opportunity! We worked incredibly well together as a team, had no problems, and all three of us were happy with the driving feel in the car."

**Max Hesse (#998 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 1st place):** "That was a fantastic start. This season, 20 Pro cars and some of the best GT drivers in the world are competing against each other, and to win the first race with Augusto, Dan, and ROWE Racing is something very special for me. I will remember this day for a long time."

**Raffaele Marciello (#46 BMW M4 GT3, BMW M Team WRT, 4th place):** "Fourth place is a good result for us, bringing important points. But we can't be completely satisfied because if another team with the BMW M4 GT3 wins the race, we should be able to do that too. Congratulations to ROWE Racing! We will prepare very well for the next race."

**Philipp Eng (#98 BMW M4 GT3, ROWE Racing, 12th place):** "I am very happy for our sister car. That was a grand victory. The entire team did a super job all



weekend. Unfortunately, we didn't quite have the balance we wanted in qualifying, but the car was really top for the race. It looked like a podium for a long time, if not even a 1-2 for ROWE Racing and BMW M Motorsport. Then we unfortunately had a problem with refuelling and had to stop again to make it to the finish. Nevertheless, I am very happy for my teammates."

**Charles Weerts (#32 BMW M4 GT3, BMW M Team WRT, DNF):** "I had a good start moving up to P5, passing two cars together with Max in the #46 car, which was nice. Then there was the very aggressive Ferrari that hit me twice in one lap. Unfortunately, the second hit resulted in a puncture which basically ended our race. That's a shame as we had a very competitive car and could have achieved a good result."

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