



Media Information
BMW M Motorsport
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FIA WEC: The Le Mans adventure has begun – test day provides valuable insights ahead of race week.

- **BMW M Team WRT completes 167 test laps on the Circuit de la Sarthe with both BMW M Hybrid V8 cars.**
- **Both BMW M4 GT3 EVO cars complete 145 test laps.**
- **The BMW M Motorsport family mourns the loss of Herbert Schnitzer.**

Le Mans. The 2026 24 Hours of Le Mans (FRA) has kicked off with the 'Pesage' – the public technical scrutineering of the race cars in the city centre – and the official test day. BMW M Motorsport and Team WRT gathered valuable insights for the upcoming race week with both the BMW M Hybrid V8 and the BMW M4 GT3 EVO. Following the one-two finish at Spa-Francorchamps (BEL), BMW M Motorsport, along with Robin Frijns (NED) and René Rast (GER), lead the manufacturers' and drivers' standings in the FIA World Endurance Championship (FIA WEC). Ahead of the opening weekend, BMW M Motorsport received the sad news of the passing of Herbert Schnitzer. The BMW M Motorsport family mourns the loss of one of the architects of the 1999 Le Mans victory.

Buoyed by its first victory in the FIA WEC and its championship lead, BMW M Team WRT prepared the two BMW M Hybrid V8s for next weekend's race on Sunday, completing a total of 167 test laps without any issues. Testing with the two BMW M4 GT3 EVOs in the LMGT3 class also went smoothly over 145 laps. In their third year in FIA WEC and with victories for the Hypercar at Spa-Francorchamps and the GT3 car at Imola (ITA) under their belts, BMW M Motorsport and Team WRT are set to battle for the podium in both classes and, ideally, even for victory.

BMW M Motorsport mourns the loss of Herbert Schnitzer.

The only overall victory at Le Mans to date came in 1999 with the BMW V12 LMR, which was fielded by Schnitzer Motorsport. The team owner, Herbert





Schnitzer, passed away last Friday on his 85th birthday. Together with his brothers, he created Schnitzer Motorsport, one of the most legendary racing teams in history. Together with BMW M Motorsport, they achieved countless victories over many decades. In addition to the Le Mans triumph, the team secured five overall victories each at the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps and the Nürburgring (GER), the DTM titles in 1989 and 2012, and the World Touring Car Championship title in 1987. The list of successes could go on and on, and it is no exaggeration to describe Schnitzer Motorsport's successful era as a racing dynasty.

Franciscus van Meel, CEO of BMW M GmbH, said: "The entire BMW M Motorsport family is mourning the loss of Herbert Schnitzer. Together with his brothers, he shaped a dynasty with Schnitzer Motorsport that is unrivalled in the history of global motorsport. Our thoughts are with his family, and we wish them much strength. The fact that the news of his passing has reached us just before the 24 Hours of Le Mans is symbolic, as it was here that BMW M Motorsport and Team Schnitzer celebrated victory together in the 1999 24-hour race with the BMW V12 LMR. With this wonderful memory and in tribute to Herbert Schnitzer, we will give our all this coming weekend to add another successful chapter to our history at Le Mans."

Quotes ahead of the 24 Hours of Le Mans:

Andreas Roos (Head of BMW M Motorsport): "As always, we used the test day to work through our programme step by step. That went very well, and we're naturally pleased with the results. Here at Le Mans in particular, testing is always important for trying out the different tyre compounds and seeing which ones are best to use in the race. Lap times haven't played a role at all yet, but I get the impression that the field is as tightly bunched as it was in the first two races."

Vincent Vosse (Team Principal, BMW M Team WRT): "Everything went according to plan on the test day. We focused entirely on race pace and are looking solely at ourselves. It's all about preparing everything optimally for race week. It's too early to make any predictions for the race. Our aim is to get through the 24 hours without any mistakes. If we manage that, we'll be able to secure a good result."





Raffaele Marciello (BMW M Team WRT, #15 BMW M Hybrid V8): "The day was okay, although it was a bit disrupted by the yellow flags. We still learnt a lot, though. Of course, we want to achieve a top result next week, but to do that we first need to get through the race without any problems. Our focus is therefore currently on preparing the car for the race rather than lap times."

René Rast (BMW M Team WRT, #20 Shell BMW M Hybrid V8): "That was a good day. We worked through a lot of test areas, did plenty of laps and had absolutely no problems. That was the aim. We'll see the rest next week. Following our victory at Spa-Francorchamps, we have high expectations and want to finish on the podium, but it will be a long race in which anything can happen."

Augusto Farfus (Team WRT, #32 BMW M4 GT3 EVO): "We completed our programme and are therefore very satisfied with the day. The LMGT3 field looks very tight, with 20 cars within a second of each other. Nevertheless, I'd be lying if I said that our goal isn't victory. This week, Herbert Schnitzer will be watching us from above. I knew both him and his brothers well and am forever grateful that I was able to work with such wonderful people. I'm sad, because it feels as though Herbert's passing marks the end of the final chapter of Schnitzer Motorsport. Now it lives on in the history books."

Dan Harper (Team WRT, #69 BMW M4 GT3 EVO): "It was our first day on the track, and we all had a steep learning curve. It's not an easy circuit, but the car felt good right from the start. We made great progress from the first to the second session and are feeling confident ahead of race week. I'm really excited ahead of my first 24 Hours of Le Mans. The Pesage this weekend was really cool with all the fans in town. I can't wait to see what happens here next week. Our goals are high, but in a 24-hour race, everything has to come together."

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