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**Final preparations for the start of the ADAC GT Masters – First podiums for the BMW M6 GT3 in Italy and Japan.**

Whether in the DTM, the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, or countless other championships: week after week BMW teams and drivers around the world do battle for points, victories and titles. Away from the track too, members of the large BMW Motorsport family around the world are also creating headlines. The “BMW Motorsport News” allows us to regularly summarise all the action for you in a compact and informative manner. This way, you are always up to speed.

**ADAC GT Masters: Jesse Krohn and Martin Tomczyk in action at season-opener.**

The countdown is on to the start of the 2016 ADAC GT Masters: last week, the two BMW Motorsport Juniors, Jesse Krohn (FI) and Louis Delétraz (CH), took the opportunity to test the new BMW M6 GT3 in Oschersleben before the opening race at the same venue. Krohn and Delétraz will line up together in the BMW M6 GT3 Junior Car at four of this season’s race weekends. They do so for the first time at the second race weekend of the year, at the Sachsenring (DE). DTM driver Martin Tomczyk (DE) will take his place alongside Krohn for the opening round in Oschersleben. The experienced German will be on hand to offer valuable advice, as well as sharing the driving duties. In doing so, Tomczyk can call on his own experience as a BMW Junior.

**Three questions for... Martin Tomczyk.**

**Martin, you also took your first steps towards a career in motorsport through the BMW Junior programme. How important are promotional programmes like these to young racing drivers?**

Martin Tomczyk: “Very important. Back then, the programme had only just been launched. I was there in the first year of the ADAC Formula BMW Junior Cup, and so witnessed its very beginnings. Over the following years, you could see how the programme was becoming increasingly established. The promotion of juniors is incredibly important. The drivers are getting younger and younger. We now have 18-year-olds driving in Formula One and the DTM. For this reason, you have to receive good encouragement and support from the word go, in order to adapt quickly to professional motorsport, even in the entry-level classes.

**Jesse Krohn, the 2014 BMW Motorsport Junior of the Year, will contest the entire season in the ADAC GT Masters. You will join him for the first two races. This is a big step for such a young driver. How good is Krohn already?**

Tomczyk: “Very good. He has proven that emphatically. The fact that, at just 25 years of age, he asserted himself in Daytona among the elite of the motorsport world, and that he is lining up in endurance races in America and all over the world, just goes to underline his undoubted ability. The BMW Motorsport Junior programme has naturally played an important role in his magnificent development.”



The car you are both sharing is the new BMW M6 GT3. How do you like the new GT car?

Tomczyk: "It goes without saying that I like it, because it looks absolutely fantastic. However, a racing car should not only look good, but also be quick. The BMW M6 GT3 has already proven that it is precisely that. You obviously have to bear in mind that this is a brand-new car, and is designed for a longer life cycle. As such, it is definitely more work at first to get the car to the level it should be at. However, we are on the right track, and the car showed in its first races in the USA that it has great potential and is really quick. We are now working hard to ensure that the BMW M6 GT3 is also successful on its debut in the ADAC GT Masters."

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**Blancpain GT Series Sprint Cup: Successful start to season for Rowe Racing.**

The Rowe Racing team enjoyed a well-nigh perfect start to the new season in the Blancpain GT Series Sprint Cup in Misano (IT) at the weekend. Philipp Eng (AT) and Alexander Sims (GB) had to start Saturday's qualifying race from 30<sup>th</sup> on the grid, but produced an impressive fightback in difficult conditions to finish second. This represented the first podium for the BMW M6 GT3 in Europe. Eng and Sims returned to the podium after the main race on Sunday afternoon: this time they came home third. Nick Catsburg (NL) and Stef Dusseldorp (NL) finished tenth on Saturday and 29<sup>th</sup> on Sunday in the second Rowe Racing BMW M6 GT3. As well as the two Rowe Racing cars, another BMW M6 GT3 was in action for the Belgian Boutsen Ginion Racing team in the Pro-Am class. Amateur driver Matias Henkola (FI) received support from BMW works driver Maxime Martin (BE), who had travelled straight to Misano from the DTM test in Hockenheim (DE). The two drivers produced an outstanding performance in the qualifying race, finishing second in the Pro-Am class. The duo then finished third in their class in the main race. Martin was in positive spirits at the end of the weekend: "Unfortunately we were spun at the start, but third place in the Pro-Am class is quite okay. It was the first time for the team and for my co-driver Matias. All in all it was a positive weekend." This year's Blancpain GT Series Sprint Cup consists of five events. The next races take place in Brands Hatch (GB) on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May.

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**Japanese Super GT Championship: Third place for BMW Team Studie at season-opener in Okayama.**

Successful start to the season for BMW Team Studie: The first race weekend of the 2016 Japanese Super GT Championship at the Okayama International Circuit (JP) saw the Japanese team finish on the podium in the GT300 class. This was also the first podium finish for the new BMW M6 GT3 in Asia. Starting from third on the grid, BMW works driver Jörg Müller (DE) and his team-mate Seiji Ara (JP) remained on course for a spot on the podium throughout the entire race, and ultimately crossed the finish line in third place. The second BMW M6 GT3, run by Autobacs Racing Team Aguri and driven by Japanese duo Shinichi Takagi and Takashi Kobayashi, came home eleventh. Round two of the Japanese Super GT Championship is in Fuji (JP) on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

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**Rom marathon: BMW works driver Alessandro Zanardi wins Rome marathon.**

BMW works driver and Brand Ambassador Alessandro Zanardi (IT) has successfully started his 2016 para-cycling season. This Sunday, he contested the Rome Marathon (IT) – and celebrated his 5th win at this event. Zanardi completed the 42 kilometre distance through the historic centre of the Italian capital on his handcycle in a time of 1:09.15 hours. In doing so, he bettered his own race record set in 2012 by two and a half minutes. „It was a fantastic race in a magic place like Rome. I have been really fast today,“ he said after the finish. In 2016, Zanardi fully focuses on his para-cycling competitions.

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