



Media Information
24h Nürburgring
28th May 2017

Dramatic 24-hour finale in the rain: ROWE Racing secures second place at the Nürburgring with the BMW M6 GT3.

- **First top-3 result for the BMW M6 GT3 at the 24-hour race in the “Green Hell”.**
- **Four BMW M6 GT3s in the top-10, watched by 205,000 spectators.**
- **Downpour just before the end causes turmoil.**
- **BMW M4 GT4 passes endurance test on the Nordschleife.**

Nürburgring. A dramatic and rain-soaked finale, soaring summer temperatures and 205,000 thrilled spectators: the 45th edition of the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring (GER) lived up to the event’s reputation as one of the toughest and most spectacular GT races in the world. Alexander Sims (GBR), Markus Palttala (FIN), Nick Catsburg (NED), Richard Westbrook (GBR) and BMW had every reason to celebrate. After completing 158 laps in the number 98 BMW M6 GT3 from ROWE Racing, the quartet finished in second place. The positions were only decided during a thrilling last lap.

A heavy downpour about half an hour before the end of the race led to chaotic scenes all around the Nordschleife. Catsburg kept a cool head as the final driver of the #98 car and improved by one place on wet-weather tyres before celebrating a second-place finish with his team-mates. Second place is the best result recorded yet by ROWE Racing at the 24-hour race in the Eifel region.

Strong team performance from all BMW M6 GT3 teams.

Five more BMW M6 GT3s made it to the top-15. The #42 BMW M6 GT3 just missed out on the podium, recording a fourth-place finish to mark the 24-hour comeback of the BMW Team Schnitzer. Marco Wittmann (GER), Tom Blomqvist (GBR), Martin Tomczyk (GER) and Augusto Farfus (BRA) put in a strong chasing

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performance after losing time due to technical problems during a fuel stop in the night. The second Schnitzer car, #43, had to retire from the race over five hours before the finish after an accident. Up to that point, António Félix da Costa (POR), Alex Lynn (GBR), Timo Scheider (GER) and Farfus had also been battling for a podium position.

The two Schubert Motorsport team BMW M6 GT3s reached 11th (#20) and 12th (#19) places on the 25.378-kilometre circuit. Jesse Krohn (FIN), Bruno Spengler (CAN), Kuno Wittmer (CAN) and Jörg Müller (GER) were at the wheel of the #20 car. Jens Klingmann (GER), John Edwards (USA), Tom Onslow-Cole (GBR) and Müller shared driving duties in the #19 car. The second BMW M6 GT3 from ROWE Racing (#99) claimed tenth place with Philipp Eng (AUT), Alexander Sims (GBR), Maxime Martin (BEL) and Marc Basseng (GER).

Strong showing from Falken Motorsports – BMW M4 GT4 passes test.

The Falken Motorsports team also put on a strong performance. Peter Dumbreck (GBR), Alexandre Imperatori (SUI), Stef Dusseldorp (NED) and Marco Seefried (GER) took the #33 BMW M6 GT3 to eighth place overall and always kept pace with the leading group. The Walkenhorst Motorsport team had less luck, as their #101 BMW M6 GT3 retired early but the Walkenhorst BMW Z4 GT3 crossed the finishing line in a convincing 18th position.

The BMW M4 GT4 passed its 24-hour endurance test in the “Green Hell” with flying colours: Dirk Adorf (GER), competing in the 24-hour race on the Nordschleife for the 25th time, BMW Motorsport Junior Ricky Collard (GBR), Jörg Weidinger (GER) and Jethro Bovingdon (GBR) finished in 37th place overall.

Reactions to the Nürburgring 24 Hours:

Jens Marquardt (BMW Motorsport Director): “This year, we experienced another great weekend at the Nürburgring. We were watched by a great crowd with record spectator numbers – it was a real party. After a few days of fantastic weather, the inevitable rain reached the Nürburgring just before the finish and provided us with a dramatic finale that was not for the feint-hearted. The spectators at the circuit and those watching on television really got their money’s

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worth. Second place for ROWE Racing and the quartet of drivers – Palttala, Catsburg, Sims and Westbrook – is a great success. This excellent team result is emphasised by three more BMW M6 GT3s in the top 10. This shows what a high level of performance and reliability has been reached. It is just reward for the intensive preparations from the whole team – the mechanics, engineers, teams, and drivers. A big thank you to all of them. I was also delighted with the super performance from our BMW M4 GT4 media car. The team and the drivers did a great job, claimed the class win and crossed the line in the top-40 overall. Of course, we would have liked to have added another triumph to our 19 overall wins here, but we are pleased with this result nonetheless. Congratulations to the Land team on their win.”

Hans-Peter Naundorf (ROWE RACING Team Principal): “It was very exciting and dramatic. After driving round and round for 23 hours, the weather gods suddenly decide to make things interesting just before the end and everything happened so fast. We very nearly snatched the win at the finish. Nicky’s performance in the final stint was masterful. Most drivers would lose the car, driving in this rain on slicks. He deserves maximum respect for catching up and showing nerves of steel. Second place is absolutely fine when you take the race as a whole. It was a great show.”

Alexander Sims (#98/#99 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing): “I’m ecstatic. It’s absolutely awesome. It’s my fourth time coming here, and just like the victory at Spa last year I didn’t expect it. We didn’t put a foot wrong the whole race; everyone did a superb job. I feel like we capitalised on every opportunity we had so the team deserved to be on the podium. It was a really exciting final stint, and Nick did a fantastic job. I’m really pleased to be on the podium.”

Markus Palttala (#98 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing): “If you look at it overall, we didn’t expect a podium this weekend. After top-30 qualifying, when everyone went flat out, we knew it was going to be really tough. Just to be on the podium is awesome. The last few laps were pretty exciting, Nicky was sensational. The whole team, and BMW Motorsport, did a great job this weekend to squeeze the maximum result from the race.”

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Nick Catsburg (#98 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing): “We all read that there was a chance of rain, but in the car I was sure it wasn't going to - it was so sunny. The team came on the radio and told me spots of rain were reported but I passed that location and it was totally dry. That happened twice... Then suddenly there was massive rain, but it was localised so I stayed on slicks. But then the second lap after it started raining, huge sections of the track were absolutely soaked; I was barely able to stay on the track at 10km/h! On the last lap, the car was amazing on the wets, and we were able to take P2. It feels amazing to be on the podium. It's a very, very big event and I'm very happy with this result.”

Richard Westbrook (#98 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing): “It almost, in a funny way, feels like a victory. We struggled in practice and qualifying, but then we just drove our socks off. It wasn't easy with tyres, and the Audi was a little faster, but I feel like the podium is deserved for the whole team, because we had the perfect 24-hour race.”

Philipp Eng (#99 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing): “I think that the whole BMW family did a really good job here and the reward was a podium finish. Of course, I would have liked to have been on the podium but I am delighted to congratulate my team-mates. They have earned this success. The early tyre problems with our car left us with a deficit that we could not make good for the rest of the race.”

Charly Lamm (Team Principal BMW Team Schnitzer): “That was an unbelievable event – it had everything that a 24-hour race should offer. It is a real positive for us that we were able to compete with such a strong field. Unfortunately, we had incidents with both cars that were decisive in the end. We lost a lot of time with #42 during the night, due to a defective refuelling component. That meant that we could not improve on the result. Actually, #43 ran like clockwork and we were in the leading group early on but then Augusto had an accident and we had to retire.”

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Augusto Farfus (#42/#43 BMW M6 GT3, BMW Team Schnitzer): “It is a real shame that we didn’t make it to the finish in the #43 car. Another car clipped me while overtaking and our vehicle was damaged. A few turns later, I hit the crash barriers and the race was over. It is great for the team that we recorded a good result with the #42 car and that we were rewarded for our fighting spirit.”

Martin Tomczyk (#42 BMW M6 GT3, BMW Team Schnitzer): “You will only experience a crazy finale like that at the Nürburgring. It was a lottery with the tyres and the ROWE Racing guys made the right decisions. Congratulations on the second place. We were in the running for a podium finish for a long time but a few incidents caused us problems. We were always close to the leading group but could not get within striking distance. Maybe we could have done with a bit more speed at the end but we had great team spirit and worked really well together. We will be on the attack again next year.”

Torsten Schubert (Team Principal Schubert Motorsport): “The Nordschleife really didn’t do us any favours this year. My team put in a great performance one again and produced two perfectly prepared cars for the race despite our accident in qualifying. Everyone can be proud of that. We just didn’t quite have the speed we needed in the race to keep pace with the leading group. It might be a good idea to rethink the short time available for preparation for the 24-hour race. Our tactics for night racing here were probably too defensive. We couldn’t make up the deficit after that, even though our speed improved towards the end of the race.”

Jens Klingmann (#19 BMW M6 GT3, Schubert Motorsport): “I have mixed feelings when looking back at this race. On one hand, we made it through without any problems - no scratches, no punctures, no technical issues. That is very positive. On the other hand, we just didn’t have the speed to allow us to compete with the Audis at the front.”

Bruno Spengler (#20 BMW M6 GT3, Schubert Motorsport): “I have learned so much in my first 24-hour race at the Nürburgring. You cannot compare this classic event with any other 24-hour race. For one thing, I had to get used to the amount of traffic on the Nordschleife as there are so many cars

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competing. It is a shame that we could not record a better result for the team, as the team performed fantastically after our accident in Top-30 Qualifying and ensured that we had a great car for the race. This weekend was a fantastic experience for me.”

Marco Seefried (#33 BMW M6 GT3, Falken Motorsports): “It was a difficult race for everyone and the pace was unbelievably fast. Although we started from quite a way back, we got into the race pretty quickly, made good progress and settled in between fifth and sixth places. A puncture after an incident with another car did cost us some time but overall I am happy with the result.”

Dirk Adorf (#40 BMW M4 GT4, Securtal Sorg Rennsport): “We took on the challenge of the toughest race in the world with the new BMW M4 GT4 – and we passed the test. Apart from a few minor details, we made it through the race without any serious problems and we were lapping quite quickly. We can be proud of that. It was clear for everyone to see that BMW Motorsport has done a good job with the development of the new customer racing car. Our BMW Motorsport Junior Ricky Collard delivered a flawless performance. We were also racing with two amateur drivers and they felt at home in the cockpit. And that is what was important to us: developing a car that was ideally suited to the requirements of customer racing drivers.”

Results of the BMW M6 GT3 teams:

#19 BMW M6 GT3, Schubert Motorsport – 12th

Jens Klingmann (GER), Jörg Müller (GER), John Edwards (USA), Tom Onslow-Cole (GBR)

#20 BMW M6 GT3, Schubert Motorsport – 11th

Jesse Krohn (FIN), Jörg Müller (GER), Bruno Spengler (CAN), Kuno Wittmer (CAN)

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#42, BMW M6 GT3, BMW Team Schnitzer – 4th

Marco Wittmann (GER), Tom Blomqvist (GBR), Martin Tomczyk (GER), Augusto Farfus (BRA)

#43, BMW M6 GT3, BMW Team Schnitzer – DNF

Augusto Farfus (BRA), Alexander Lynn (GBR), António Félix da Costa (POR), Timo Scheider (GER)

#98 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing – 2nd

Markus Palttala (FIN), Nick Catsburg (NED), Alexander Sims (GBR), Richard Westbrook (GBR)

#99 BMW M6 GT3, ROWE Racing – 10th

Philipp Eng (AUT), Alexander Sims (GBR), Maxime Martin (BEL), Marc Basseng (GER)

#33 BMW M6 GT3, Falken Motorsports – 8th

Peter Dumbreck (GBR), Alexandre Imperatori (SUI), Stef Dusseldorp (NED), Marco Seefried (GER)

#101 BMW M6 GT3, Walkenhorst Motorsport – DNF

Henry Walkenhorst (GER), Jordan Tresson (FRA), David Schiwietz (GER), Jaap van Lagen (NED)

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