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Successful season 2003.



Almost there.

Munich. Stunning victories, surprising turns of events, bitter disappointments – the 2003 motorsport season had a little of everything in store for BMW.

“For us it was up one minute, down the next”, admits BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen, “but overall we can look back on a successful season: in Formula One we fought for the Constructors’ title right until the end – we have never been so close to our big objective. And in the European Touring Car Championship we won that title in the final.”

Following a shaky start in the FIA Formula One World Championship, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team achieved four Grand Prix wins, including the only two double victories of the 2003 championship. With the GP win in Monte Carlo and a truly triumphal race at Hockenheim, drivers Juan Pablo Montoya (COL) and Ralf Schumacher (GER) collected twelve podium places between them. Once again the team proved to be the most reliable of all, completing more race laps than any other. The latest BMW Formula One engine also set benchmarks at the top echelon of motor racing and never once let the team down. Four pole positions furnished further proof of the team’s strength.

“Our development curve since returning to Formula One continues to climb steeply upwards”, concluded Theissen, adding: “We aim to continue this trend in 2004.”

In the FIA European Touring Car Championship (ETCC), ten out of 20 races were won by the BMW 320i. Most of these victories were collected for BMW Team Deutschland by Jörg Müller (GER), who was first to cross the finishing line five times in all. With one race to go before the end of the season, BMW had become unassailable in the Manufacturers’ standings. In the battle for the Drivers’ title, Müller was defeated in the final race by just one championship point.

The third pillar of BMW Motorsport likewise continued to gain in stature. While Formula BMW has already established itself in Germany and Asia as the first port of call for promising young racing drivers, sister series have been set up for 2004 in England and the USA as well.



BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen:

“The course is set for 2004 – we want to win.”

How do you rate the season from BMW Motorsport's point of view?

Mario Theissen: Positively. In Formula One we have demonstrated our strongest performance so far and fought for the World Championship right to the end. We had four wins, including two one-two finishes, and we earned more than one and a half as many championship points again as in the previous year. In the European Touring Car Championship we won the Manufacturers' title and fought for the Drivers' title up to the final round, ultimately missing out on it by a single point. In Formula BMW, the youngsters in Germany and Asia delivered first-class racing. We have also managed to extend the series further around the globe: in 2004 this talent hothouse will also be racing in England and the USA. Private competitors have similarly claimed major successes with BMW, foremost among them Claudia Hürtgen in the German Touring Car Challenge – the first woman to win a German touring car title.

How do you explain why the team didn't quite manage to win the Formula One championship?

Mario Theissen: If you want to win the World Championship, you have to be on good form from the very first race. In 2003 we hadn't yet managed that. Our kick-off to the season was too weak. Towards the middle of the season we did brilliantly, but in the last three races our error rate was simply too high.

What were the season's highlights for you?

Mario Theissen: In terms of individual results, undoubtedly the Formula One wins. The eyes of the world are on Monte Carlo, and to win that Grand Prix is something very special. The one-two victories at the Nürburgring and Magny-Cours were a dream. I was almost more impressed by our dominance at Hockenheim – winning with more than a minute's lead doesn't happen every day in Formula One. But apart from those successes, there are two more aspects that made 2003 such a good season in my book. Firstly, the fact that our engine was not only strong but also extremely reliable. Only once did the

car have to cruise back to the pits before the end of the race due to a leak in the cooling system – not even the best engine can run without cooling water. Secondly, the fact that WilliamsF1 showed impressive prowess with the amazing progress they made during the course of the season.

What's on the BMW Motorsport agenda for 2004?

Mario Theissen: We want to win the Formula One World Championship, that is clearly our number one priority – and the course is set for that. The BMW P84 engine has successfully undergone its first tests already, WilliamsF1 have announced yet another innovative chassis, and the networking of the factories in Munich and Grove is progressing apace. Our comprehensive, joint project management will bear further fruit in 2004. At the same time, BMW will also be involved with the national teams in next year's European Touring Car Championship, will carry on promoting the international expansion of Formula BMW, and will also continue to support mass motorsport involvement as before.

What's your view on the 2004 Formula One calendar?

Mario Theissen: We welcome the increase to 18 races because it is primarily the fans and spectators who stand to gain from that. Also, we want to continue racing in Montreal. North America is a key marketplace for BMW, and the Montreal Grand Prix has its own particular appeal. Besides, it is logistically well placed in the calendar because it can be combined with the Indianapolis race into one transatlantic trip. We look forward to the new venues, Shanghai and Bahrain, with curiosity and keen anticipation. To be able to display our technical competence in China and the Middle East is a highly attractive prospect for us as a car manufacturer.

Are you happy with the regulations adopted for 2004?

Mario Theissen: By and large, yes, and I'm not expecting any surprises in January this time around. Having to tackle the entire race weekend with just one engine is, of course, a major challenge. In terms of that regulation, for which we've prepared ourselves well ahead of time, the new schedule represents a good solution. In particular the requirement to commit to our race tires as early as Saturday morning will ensure some intensive free practice on Friday. It makes both the Friday and the Saturday with its two successive qualifying sessions more interesting for the spectators.

**Weak start, strong mid-season, disappointing finale.**

Munich. The BMW WilliamsF1 Team had never come so close. With two races to go before season's end, the team still had both titles within their grasp. In the USA, however, any hopes of the Drivers' World Championship title were swept away in the rain. In Japan, capricious weather during qualifying and a rare technical fault in the race meant the Constructors' title also fell by the wayside. Yet at the outset of the season nobody could have imagined that the BMW WilliamsF1 Team would have cause for complaint having attained such heights.

BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen summed up the season on a corresponding note: "Our fourth season has been the strongest so far. After some initial difficulties we achieved four wins, including both one-two finishes of the 2003 World Championship. Furthermore, with 1,800 racing laps we were once again the most reliable team. We can be proud of the huge strides made by the chassis and likewise by the BMW P83. Under the new regulations, which demand a longer running time, our engine has again demonstrated its reliability. We fought for the title right to the finish."

With 144 points, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team posted a clear improvement on the previous year's results. In 2002, a total of 92 World Championship points had sufficed to put them into second place in the FIA Formula One Constructors' World Championship.

Testingstart.

At its public unveiling on 31st January, the FW25 received an enthusiastic welcome. Far from an iteration of its predecessors, it was clearly an innovative, all-new design. A shorter wheelbase was the most striking of its new attributes – and largely responsible for the fact that the team had to jettison most of the empirical evidence gathered. Despite disappointing test results, faith in the new concept remained undiminished, and this perseverance was to pay dividends.

Ripe for victory.

"A truly impressive achievement", Theissen said of the team who had evolved the FW25 into a winning car. "Under the pressures of an ongoing season", he went on, "nobody has made such progress for a long time." At the seventh Grand Prix of the season, the car with the BMW P83 engine would prove

unbeatable: Ralf Schumacher took pole at Monaco, while Juan Pablo Montoya won the most prestigious Grand Prix in the calendar. Henceforth the Colombian took to the podium eight times in a row – a feat unrivalled by any other driver on the grid. Ralf Schumacher, meanwhile, was the only driver to make it into the points in every one of the first ten races.

Victory in Monaco marked the real breakthrough and more outstanding Grands Prix would follow. Canada saw both drivers on the podium, while at the Nürburgring and Magny-Cours there were one-two finishes, and Montoya's winning performance at Hockenheim was like a triumphal procession – he finished with a lead of more than 65 seconds.

No luck overseas.

With a four-point lead in the Constructors' rankings, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team set off for the two final races of the season, the US and Japanese GP. BMW had a further evolution of the P83 in its cargo hold. This engine registered 19,200 revolutions a minute at the final in Suzuka, surpassing the peak engine speed of 2002 – a remarkable feat in the light of the regulation change compared to the previous year.

But not even this powerpack from Munich managed to salvage any of the titles. Performance during qualifying at Indianapolis was modest, while in the race itself a penalty for Montoya and a heavy downpour combined with pit stop troubles put paid to Montoya's chances of the Drivers' title. In Japan, Ralf Schumacher's hard-fought ride ended in twelfth place, while Montoya had to retire from the lead with a technical fault for the second time in the season. A leak in the hydraulic system also quashed any hopes of the Constructors' title.

Australian GP.

It was a successful curtain-raiser for the BMW WilliamsF1 Team in Melbourne: after sobering test results from the new FW25, Montoya came second at Albert Park in a turbulent race interrupted by safety car phases. He could have won, but made a mistake on lap 48 of 58 while in front, losing his lead to Coulthard. Due to the cars being stacked in the pitlane Schumacher had to wait for Montoya to finish his stop. Additionally, problems during a tire change in the pits forced him from third place to the back of the field. Ultimately he had to settle for an eighth-placed finish, which now came with a championship point. The team benefited from their decision to start the race with dry tires on a still damp track. It was the first time that qualifying was based on a single timed lap. Montoya took third place on the grid, Schumacher ninth.

Malaysian GP.

Schumacher brought the team a comforting race result in Sepang. Although he had started from 17th place on the grid, after an action-packed 56 laps he was fourth to cross the finishing line. Montoya wasn't so lucky.

With temperatures of 34 degrees Celsius and very high humidity, he had started from eighth on the grid, but was rammed by Pizzonia in a Jaguar on the first lap and, following a lengthy repair stop, finished back in twelfth place.

Brazilian GP.

The 700th Formula One race since the World Championship premiere in 1950 turned out to be one of the most turbulent in history. Extreme weather conditions, numerous accidents and five safety car phases accompanied the race in Sao Paulo. Due to a cloudburst, the race started 15 minutes late behind the safety car and was interrupted following serious accidents involving Webber and Alonso. After a delay of several days, the results were finally based on the positions at the end of lap 54 of the scheduled 71. That put Schumacher into seventh place – he had come in for a pit stop from third position on the track just before the race was abandoned. Montoya had retired from fifth place on lap 25 following a mistake, having been among the victims of aquaplaning at turn three. In qualifying, Schumacher had bettered his team mate for the first time in 2003 – the German came sixth after his flying lap in the second qualifying session, the Colombian ninth.

San Marino GP.

Schumacher was mourning the death of his mother on Sunday morning but still managed to build up his leading laps and just missed a hoped-for podium place at Imola with a fourth-placed finish. Montoya ended the race in seventh place. Both drivers lost valuable time during their pit stops. On one occasion Montoya hadn't lined his car up perfectly and later on had a problem with the operation of the fuel rig, which required an extra stop. Schumacher selected the wrong gear. But there were still positive aspects to be gleaned from the first European round of the championship: in qualifying, grid places two and four for Schumacher and Montoya respectively showed they were back in fine fettle. There was also clear evidence that the ongoing evolution of the FW25 was paying off.

Spanish GP.

Fourth and fifth places in the race for Schumacher and Montoya made for a satisfactory ending to a difficult weekend at Barcelona. The conditions of the Circuit de Catalunya once again proved treacherous. Here the wind blows sand onto the racing line and causes fluctuations in air and track temperatures. It poses a particularly tough challenge for any team. Schumacher started from seventh on the grid, Montoya from ninth. A safety car phase prompted the team to switch from a three - to a two-stop strategy, which proved

disadvantageous, however. Then, when Schumacher spun off the track, he sustained damage to his aerodynamics and the cooling air supply to the engine. The final eight laps accordingly became an extreme test in terms of water and oil temperature – one which the BMW P83 passed with flying colours.

Austrian GP.

The team effort in Spielberg bore disappointing results, but nevertheless confirmed the upward trend. Montoya qualified for third place on the grid, while Schumacher started the race from tenth after becoming beached in the gravel during Friday's first qualifying session. The starting procedure at this, the final Austrian GP for the foreseeable future, had to be aborted twice because a Toyota stalled on the grid. Later, Montoya led the race for eight laps before retiring on lap 32 due to a water system failure – the first technical retirement of the season for the team. Schumacher was battling in the race with his third set of tires and skidded off the track as a result of understeer. This lost him a position and he finished the race in sixth place.

Monaco GP.

At the most prestigious race of the year in Monte Carlo, Montoya – starting from third position on the grid – won the first race of the season for the BMW WilliamsF1 Team. Prior to that, Schumacher had taken the team's first pole position of 2003. In the race itself, he was very quick to begin with but could not maintain the same pace, losing places and spinning at Rascasse to ultimately finishing fourth. In the Constructors' Championship, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team consolidated their third place. In the seventh of 16 World Championship races the team had finally got into their stride, and it was not to be just a one-off success. From now on the FW25 was a force to be reckoned with. The season was getting even more exciting.

Canadian GP.

For the first time since Hockenheim in 2002, both drivers made it onto the podium together again, with Schumacher and Montoya taking second and third places in Montreal. For the fourth time since the inception of the BMW WilliamsF1 Team, they had both begun the race from the front row of the grid. For Schumacher it was the third pole position of his F1 career and the second in succession. At the start of the race the two drivers defended their positions against Michael Schumacher, but by the second lap the double lead was over: Montoya spun after he outbraked himself and had to slot back in in fifth place, subsequently moving up into third after two successful passing manoeuvres. Following the first pit stops, Ralf Schumacher lost the lead on his outlaps to his brother Michael, who drove a faultless race and gave his younger brother no chance of getting past.

European GP.

A one-two victory at the Nürburgring – with Schumacher ahead of Montoya – took the team into second place in the Constructors' Championship. And there was more good news: BMW and WilliamsF1 announced the continuation and intensification of their collaboration, with their contract now extended until the end of 2009. Schumacher and Montoya had qualified for third and fourth places on the grid. The key factors in this double victory were: firstly, Ralf Schumacher outaccelerated his brother, who had started from second place on the grid ahead of him. Secondly, the team's race strategy proved correct – with a relatively light load before the next refuelling stop, Ralf was able to gain time against Michael Schumacher and Räikkönen, pitted later; Montoya was in a similar situation in relation to Barrichello. And thirdly, Montoya outmanoeuvred Michael Schumacher in a plucky pass to take second place.

French GP.

This round brought the second one-two win in a row: in France too, Schumacher was first to cross the finish line ahead of Montoya. After the tenth race of the 2003 season, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team now had 100 points and were just three adrift of Ferrari. Schumacher had claimed pole once again and was sharing the front row of the grid with Montoya. A perfect start, textbook pit stops, Montoya claiming the fastest race lap – it was a commanding performance from the first to the final lap.

British GP.

The GP at Silverstone saw two safety car phases – one sparked by a demonstrator. Problems with handling and a very windy qualifying meant that Schumacher and Montoya had to make do with places four and seven on the grid. Due to the altered timings of the pit stops brought about by the safety car phases, Montoya was driving in 13th place for a while, but steamrolled his way back up through the field to finish second for the third time in succession. Schumacher was also in contention for a good finish, but was thrown back into 20th place following an extra pit stop to remove a torn-off guide vane that was blocking the air flow. His catching-up efforts ultimately took him into ninth place. For the first time in 2003, he had not made it into the points.

German GP.

In the blistering heat of Hockenheim, Montoya celebrated his second win of the season to put himself into second position in the Drivers' rankings behind World Champion Michael Schumacher. The Colombian took pole position ahead of Ralf Schumacher and, before a gathered crowd of 105,000, dominated the race to claim victory with a 65-second lead over Coulthard. His teammate was forced to retire following an accident with Barrichello and Räikkönen immediately after the start. This collision became the subject of an FIA hearing in Paris: stewards at Hockenheim had made Schumacher responsible for

the crash and penalized him for it. At the next GP in Hungary the German was to be put back ten grid positions. The team appealed, and the penalty was commuted to a fine. In the Constructors' Championship, just two points now separated the BMW WilliamsF1 Team and Ferrari.

Hungarian GP.

After entirely unsuccessful starts on the dirty side of the track – Schumacher had qualified for second place in Budapest, Montoya for fourth – both drivers found themselves in the middle of the pack. Then Schumacher spun on the first lap, which threw him back to the end of the field. In a spectacular bid to catch up again on a circuit where passing is deemed to be virtually impossible, Montoya and Schumacher managed to battle their way into third and fourth positions. They triumphed in some brilliant duels and capitalized on the times when the competition was refuelling earlier than them to pick up some fast laps. Schumacher in particular put up an impressive fight. Montoya drove his fastest race lap ever, with Ralf Schumacher second fastest. For the first time in 2003, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team took the lead in the Constructors' World Championship. In the Drivers' rankings, the top three were almost level-pegging on points: Michael Schumacher (72), Montoya (71) and Räikkönen (70).

Italian GP.

At Monza, Montoya just lost the battle for pole to Michael Schumacher and, despite a bold attack, also failed to overtake him in the race and the Drivers' Championship. Ralf Schumacher had to drop out of the Italian GP. He had suffered concussion on the same track in a serious accident during testing the previous week. After free practice and first qualifying on Friday, his problems returned. Test driver Marc Gené stood in for him and delivered an impressive performance. Although he was first out on the track during the final qualifying session, he drove the fifth -fastest time. In the race, too, the Spaniard finished fifth, earning the team four crucial points. With two GPs to go, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team still had a four-point lead over title defenders Ferrari (141:137).

USGP.

At Indianapolis the BMW WilliamsF1 Team were in for a bitter disappointment. Unpredictable weather made for difficult conditions during practice and qualifying, as well as in the race, on what is already an extremely challenging circuit in terms of the car's set-up. Montoya started the race from fourth on the grid, Schumacher from fifth. The German had the better start, but missed the ideal moment for a tire change during a heavy shower and skidded out of the race. Montoya lost ground at the start and collided with Barrichello on the third lap, for which he received a drive-through penalty. The timing was unfortunate. Since no work on the car is permitted during such a drive-through, he too missed the right moment for a tire change. Following this string of incidents the Colombian had to settle for a sixth-placed finish. With Michael Schumacher winning the race and Räikkönen finishing second,

Montoya would have had to secure fifth place to remain in contention for the Drivers' World Championship. In the Constructors' rankings, meanwhile, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team were now three points behind Ferrari.

Japanese GP.

At Suzuka, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team also had to bury all hopes of winning the Constructors' title. After the inclement weather during the race at Indianapolis, conditions during final qualifying in Japan were little different. Montoya was one of the last drivers to take his flying lap on a dry circuit and made it into second place on the grid. Schumacher had no chance in the rain and started the final race from the back of the field. In the race – on a dry track – Montoya outmanoeuvred Barrichello to take the lead until a loss of hydraulic pressure forced him to bow out on the ninth lap. His teammate put up a good fight over the entire distance, only to finish the race in twelfth place. It meant the BMW WilliamsF1 Team ended the season as runner-up in the Constructors' World Championship once again. Montoya finished one of the most exciting F1 World Championships ever in third place, while Ralf Schumacher came fifth. His brother Michael secured an eighth-placed finish to claim a historic sixth World Championship title.

FIA Formula One World Championship 2003. Drivers' points.

[illegible]

FIA Formula One World Championship 2003. **Team points.**

Team	AUS	MAL	BRA	SMR	ESP	AUT	MCO	CDN	EUR	FRA	GBR	GER	HUN	ITA	USA	JPN	Total
1 Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro	5	11		16	16	16	7	14	10	8	15	2	1	16	10	11	158
2 BMW WilliamsF1 Team	9	5	2	7	9	3	15	14	18	18	8	10	11	12	3		144
3 West McLaren Mercedes	16	10	13	12		12	10	3		9	10	8	12	5	8	14	142
4 Mild Seven Renault F1 Team	6	10	7	3	8	1	7	5	5		3	11	12	1	5	4	88
5 Lucky Strike BAR Honda		2	3	1		5			2		1	1		3		8	26
6 Sauber Petro nas	3	1	4						1						10		19
7 Jaguar Racing					2	2		2	3	3			3	2	1		18
8 Panasonic Toyota Racing					3			1		1	2	7				2	16
9 Jordan Ford			10		1										2		13
10 European Minardi Cosworth																	0

Position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Points	10	8	6	5	4	3	2	1

Results BMW WilliamsF1 Teams 2003.

	Qualifying Friday MOY	Qualifying Friday RSC	Qualifying Saturday MOY	Qualifying Saturday RSC	Race Sunday MOY	Race Sunday RSC
A U S	10 th 1:27.450	16 th 1:28.266	3 rd 1:28.101	9 th 1:28.830	2 nd	8 th
M A L	3 rd 1:35.939	13 th 1:36.809	8 th 1:37.974	17 th 1:38.789	12 th collision lap 1	4 th
B R A	17 th 1:27.961 mistake, wet	13 th 1:26.709 wet track	9 th 1:14.223	6 th 1:14.124	accident, wet track in 5 th position	7 th
S M R	4 th 1:21.490	3 rd 1:21.193	4 th 1:22.789	2 nd 1:22.341 T-car	7 th	4 th
E S P	14 th 1:18.607	11 th 1:18.409	9 th 1:19.377	7 th 1:19.006	4 th T-car	5 th
A U T	6 th 1:08.839	20 th spun, no time	3 rd 1:09.391	10 th 1:10.279	retired from lead, water sys.	6 th
M C O	8 th 1:17.108	6 th 1:17.063	3 rd 1:15.415	1 st 1:15.259	1 st	4 th
C D N	12 th 1:37.479 rain	15 th 1:38.210 rain	2 nd 1:15.923	1 st 1:15.529	3 rd	2 nd
E U R	3 rd 1:30.378	4 th 1:30.522	4 th 1:31.765	3 rd 1:31.619	2 nd	1 st
F R A	14 th 1:28.988 wet track	17 th 1:29.327 wet track	2 nd 1:15.136	1 st 1:15.019	2 nd fastest lap	1 st
G B R	2 nd 1:19.749	3 rd 1:19.788	7 th 1:22.214	4 th 1:21.727	2 nd	9 th extra pit stop
D E U	2 nd 1:14.673	1 st 1:14.427	1 st 1:15.167	2 nd 1:15.185	1 st fastest lap	accident at start
H U N	8 th 1:23.305	2 nd 1:22.413	4 th 1:22.180	2 nd 1:21.944	3 rd fastest lap	4 th
I T A	1 st 1:20.656	missed chicane, no time	2 nd 1:21.014	Marc Gené 5 th 1:21.834	2 nd	Marc Gené 5 th
U S A	5 th 1:10.372	4 th 1:10.222	4 th 1:11.948	5 th 1:12.078	6 th	retired (spun) from lap 22
J P N	8 th 1:31.201	2 nd 1:30.343	2 nd 1:32.412	20 th no time (rain)	retired from lead, hydraulics	12 th

Race laps completed by the BMW WilliamsF1 Team.

Grand Prix	2000 season	2000 GP/ laps	2001 season	2001 GP/ laps	2002 season	2002 GP/ laps	2003 season	2003 GP/ laps
1 st race	104	AUS/58	44	AUS/58	58	AUS/58	116	AUS/58
2 nd race	244	BRA/71	102	MAL/55	170	MAL/56	225	MAL/56
3 ^d race	294	SMR/62	194	BRA/71	312	BRA/71	303	BRA/54
4 th race	414	GBR/60	304	SMR/62	436	SMR/62	427	SMR/62
5 th race	540	ESP/65	389	ESP/65	564	ESP/65	556	ESP/65
6 th race	631	EUR/67	440	AUT/71	706	AUT/71	656	AUT/69
7 th race	684	MCO/78	499	MCO/78	830	MCO/78	812	MCO/78
8 th race	816	CAN/69	587	CAN/69	956	CAN/70	952	CAN/70
9 th race	959	FRA/72	721	EUR/67	1043	EUR/60	1072	EUR/60
10 th race	1081	AUT/71	845	FRA/72	1162	GBR/60	1212	FRA/70
11 th race	1171	GER/45	941	GBR/60	1306	FRA/72	1332	GBR/60
12 th race	1324	HUN/77	1010	GER/45	1440	GER/67	1400	GER/67
13 th race	1412	BEL/44	1163	HUN/77	1593	HUN/77	1540	HUN/70
14 th race	1475	ITA/63	1200	BEL/36	1681	BEL/44	1646	ITA/53
15 th race	1547	USA/73	1306	ITA/53	1718	ITA/53	1739	USA/73
16 th race	1641	JPN/53	1380	USA/73	1862	USA/73	1800	JPN/53
17 th race	1702	MYS/56	1486	JPN/53	1963	JPN/53		
Percentage of possible laps	79 %		70 %		90 %		88 %	
Possible laps	2148		2130		2180		2036	

Facts and figures.

- With 1,800 completed race laps, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team once again proved the most reliable team of 2003. Ferrari (1,754) and McLaren-Mercedes (1,704) came second and third.
- In 2003, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team were the only team to gain one-two finishes (European GP and French GP).
- Montoya was the only driver in 2003 to claim eight podium places in a row (Monaco GP to Italian GP).
- A BMW WilliamsF1 Team driver made it onto the podium a total of twelve times in the season's 16 races – in addition to four wins (Monaco, Europe, France, Germany) the team gained six second places and two third places.
- On two occasions during 2003 a team car had to abandon the race due to a technical fault, both retirements involving Montoya. In Austria the water system had a leak, in Japan it was a leak in the hydraulic system.
- The BMW WilliamsF1 Team achieved four pole positions in qualifying during 2003 (one by Montoya, three by Schumacher) and a total of eleven places in the front row of the grid.
- With four wins in the 2003 season, WilliamsF1 now has a tally of 112 GP victories, the first team win going back to 1979 at Silverstone. It matches exactly the number of McLaren wins during the same time. Ferrari took 98 first-placed finishes. BMW now has a total of 18 wins.
- 475 staff at Grove in England and 220 in Munich are involved in the Formula One project.
- During a race weekend, the BMW WilliamsF1 Team number around 100 staff – 70 of them from WilliamsF1, 20 from BMW and another ten or so involved in tasks such as catering.
- From January 2003 to the end of the season, the test team – averaging 60 members – covered 54,604 test kilometres on nine European racing circuits over 107 days. Six drivers were involved.
- At WilliamsF1, more than 200,000 chassis components were produced for the FW25, and more than 200 engines from Munich's Formula One factory were used during the 2003 season. BMW brought ten engines along to every Grand Prix race weekend.
- Six chassis were deployed in the 16 World Championship races of 2003: the FW25 02 to the FW25 07.

- 250,000 working hours were invested from the concept to the completed FW25.
- 1,200 drawings were produced at the WilliamsF1 design office for the construction and further development of the chassis.
- Assembly of the BMW engine takes approximately 80 working hours.
- 1,950 CAD drawings were produced for the BMW P83 engine.
- In the course of its working lifespan, the engine undergoes 1,388 upgrade modifications.
- The BMW P83 is made up of around 5,000 individual components, 1,000 of them different.
- Over a GP weekend, the team uses up to 1,200 litres of petrol, between 60 and 80 litres of engine oil and up to 30 litres of gear oil – and if it is a hot venue, anything up to 3,300 litres of mineral water and soft drinks are consumed.

European Touring Car Championship (ETCC).



BMW claims Manufacturers' title after exciting ETCC.

Munich. The FIA European Touring Car Championship (ETCC) was one of the most exciting series of the year with a neck and neck battle for the titles between BMW and Alfa Romeo. In the end it was a fifty-fifty split for honours with the Manufacturers' title going to BMW and the Drivers' to Alfa Romeo.

After ten race weekends and twenty races it was not until the season finale in Monza that the championship was decided. BMW went into the weekend fairly confident of the Manufacturers' title, as only two points were needed. These were scored in the first of the two races, but it was only when the cars crossed the finishing line in race two that the Drivers' title went to Gabriele Tarquini (ITA) with BMW Team Deutschland's Jörg Müller finishing just one point behind.

While the three BMW national teams – BMW Team Deutschland, BMW Team Great Britain and BMW Team Italy-Spain – were fighting for these titles, it was another team running the BMW 320i cars that claimed the Independents' Trophy. Duncan Huisman (NLD) in the privateer Carly Motors team won this title at the penultimate round in Estoril, and in Monza his teammate, Tom Coronel (NLD), made sure of the runners-up position.

BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen accompanied the BMW teams to the final round at Monza and had this to say: "The ETCC season was sheer suspense right up to the final race lap. The BMW teams won the Manufacturers' Championship in compelling style. We have seen that the ETCC is able to provide outstanding sport. Under the current regulations, Alfa Romeo and BMW were equally strong." He also pointed to the potential for improvement: "We take a critical view of the sporting side. In several races, including the finale, the driving was at times overzealous. Occasional contact between metal is part of touring car racing, but manoeuvres aimed at eliminating rivals have no place in sport. We are also concerned about the way in which these infringements were treated in very different ways. We expect a consistent interpretation of the rules for all participants and over the season as a whole."

From the first race in Barcelona in April it was obvious this was going to be a tough championship for all concerned. The first win went to the eventual champion, Tarquini, but BMW Team Deutschland's Dirk Müller made sure the second was his. This weekend there were new faces driving BMWs and they soon showed the Müllers that the opposition was not going to come only from the Alfa Romeo camp.

BMW Team Italy-Spain had opted for a combination of youth and experience. They had lured Fabrizio Giovanardi (ITA), one of the most successful touring car drivers and the reigning ETCC champion, away from Alfa Romeo, and teamed him up with one of the youngest drivers in the series, Antonio Garcia (ITA). Both these drivers were on the podium for the first race, while in the second it was the turn of BMW Team Great Britain's Andy Priaulx to finish in the top three. Both Antonio and Andy were new to the ETCC.

The results soon showed how hard BMW and the teams had been working over the winter as from the very first race the marque led the Manufacturers' battle. The Drivers' was not so clear cut as Tarquini led out of Spain, but thanks to two wins in France Jörg went into the third race meeting in Sicily with a 13 point lead and the battle raged all year.

Andy Priaulx impresses in rookie year.

Andy was without doubt one of the most impressive new drivers in the championship. His team had no idea how quick he would be as he came from the British Touring Car Championship. However, it was soon obvious he was no slouch and he fitted into the RBM team very quickly, developing a great working relationship with his team boss, Bart Mampaey.

Andy was soon well on the pace and his first win in Brno was the first of three during the year. While a win in this series is never easy, drivers who win in Spa are usually hailed as something special. Andy was in magnificent form that weekend and delighted Belgium-based RBM by claiming pole. However, disaster struck when he found his handbrake still partially on when the starting signal was given. A lesser driver would have panicked as he saw the opposition rush by him into Eau Rouge. Andy is not a driver to panic and he brought the car home in sixth. He was then in a good position for race two. This time he made no mistake, shot off from row two and led the race from start to finish.

Teamwork plays its part.

Dirk said goodbye to his championship hopes after some disappointing results at the end of the season, but played a crucial part in helping his teammate at the final race. BMW never expected to be competitive in Monza. This was an Alfa Romeo track and the drivers all admitted they expected the grid to have all the red cars up front.

Sometimes fact is stranger than fiction, and it certainly was here as Jörg and Dirk were first and second quickest in every session. Although three of the Alfas having their own accidents in qualifying didn't harm the BMW cause, it was the slipstreaming skills of the Müllers that certainly made sure of this front row. Dirk was determined to do everything he could to help Jörg win the title, and perfect timing for the slipstreaming gave the championship contender pole.

Sadly Dirk could do nothing to help in the race, as a few laps in he was unceremoniously pushed off the track by the Alfa Romeo of Roberto Colciago. The stewards immediately took action and disqualified the Italian driver and took away his win. Thankfully Dirk escaped with nothing worse than a sore back, but he admitted it was most probably the biggest accident of his career.

Highs and lows for Jörg.

While a driver should never say "if only", Jörg could be excused for uttering these words. If only he had not got a slow puncture in the first race in Monza he may have been champion. If only he had not crashed his car in free practice in Donington he may have been champion. While Jörg is renowned as one of the true characters of the sport, he is also known as a driver who can overcome adversity. This was never shown better than in Donington when his car was almost destroyed halfway through the first free practice session. A team with less determination than Schnitzer Motorsport, who run BMW Team Deutschland, may have put the car back in the transporter and sent Jörg home. However, this did not happen. Thanks to Charly Lamm and his dedicated team, a sleepless Saturday night resulted in the car being rebuilt at a local BMW dealership and ready for the Sunday morning warm-up. Jörg drove his heart out in race one to get from the back to fifth and then won race two.

Alex Zanardi makes guest appearance.

The appearance in Monza of Alessandro Zanardi, who lost both of his legs in a CART accident in Germany two years ago, was welcomed by everyone. Thanks to Ravaglia Motorsport, who run the BMW Italy-Spain cars, this was made possible. Alex took his road-going BMW 540i to be adapted and his former engineer, Roberto Trevisan, joked about doing the same to a racing car. To cut a long story short, the dream became reality and Alex was on the grid in Monza. Sadly he got involved in a big accident at the first corner in race one, but repairs were made to his car and he finished in the points in race two. The future is not certain but it is certain his many fans would love to see him make a full-time return to the sport where he is so greatly admired.

What exactly are the ETCC cars?

These cars, which are based on those that can be bought from your local BMW dealer, have to be homologated into Group N to make them comply with the regulations. There are stipulations and the cars have to have a minimum of four doors and a two-litre normally aspirated engine. The manufacturer must also have produced at least 2,500 identical units. The engine is a straight six with a production standard aluminium block and cylinder head, in racing trim produces 260bhp and is restricted to 9,000 rpm.

All wheel drive is not allowed in the ETCC and the use of a sequential shift gearbox is allowed, although this entails an additional weight factor of 30 kg. The regulations stipulate minimum weights of 1,170 kg for rear wheel drive cars such as the BMW and 1,140 kg for front wheel drives such as the Alfa Romeo.

Rules and regulations of the ETCC races.

The ETCC races are part of a package known as the LG Super Racing Weekends, where there are also rounds of the FIA GT Championship. There are ten weekends with two races of a minimum of 50 kilometres. The time the teams can spend working on the cars between the races is limited to 15 minutes.

For 2003 the new FIA scale of points – 10 – 8 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1 – was adopted for the Drivers' and Manufacturers' championships, although only the first two best-placed cars from the respective marques will count for the latter title. While the grid for the first race is decided during a single 30-minute qualifying session, for race two the top eight finishers from race one will start in reverse order.

The system started halfway through 2002 and the addition of weight ballast for successful drivers was continued. This means the three drivers scoring the most championship points in the two races of the weekend have 30 kg, 20 kg and 10 kg of ballast added respectively for the next two rounds. The top three in the overall championship points also have these same ballast weights. These two handicaps are cumulative, with the maximum weight for any one driver not exceeding 40 kg.

FIA ETCC– Manufacturers' points 2003.

Manufacturer	Barcelona (ESP)	Magny-Cours (FRA)	Pergusa (ITA)	Brno (CZE)	Donington (GBR)	Spa (BEL)	Anderstorp (SWE)	Oschersleben (GER)	Estoril (PRT)	Monza (ITA)	Total
1 BMW	14 18	16 16	13 7	18 18	11 18	14 16	14 13	16 18	9 9	14 18	290
2 Alfa Romeo	12 8	13 12	16 18	5 9	18 6	15 12	13 11	12 7	18 18	15 11	249
3 Seat	- -	- 3	- -	- 1	- -	- -	- -	3 6	- -	- -	13

FIA ETCC– Drivers' points 2003.

Drivers	Barcelona (ESP)	Magny-Cours (FRA)	Pergusa (ITA)	Brno (CZE)	Donington (GBR)	Spa (BEL)	Aderstorp (SWE)	Oschersleben (GER)	Estoril (PRT)	Monza (ITA)	Total
1 Gabriele Tarquini (ITA) Alfa Romeo	10 5	5 -	6 10	3 5	10 -	10 -	- -	8 4	10 10	5 6	107
2 Jörg Müller (GER) BMW	5 8	10 10	3 -	- -	5 10	6 5	5 5	10 5	5 4	- 10	106
3 Andy Priaulx (GBR) BMW	3 6	6 -	5 5	5 10	- 4	3 10	1 8	6 10	2 5	8 3	100
4 Nicola Larini (ITA) Alfa Romeo	2 3	8 8	2 4	- 4	8 5	5 8	3 10	- 1	8 8	- 5	92
5 Dirk Müller (GER) BMW	4 10	- -	8 -	10 6	6 -	8 6	6 -	- -	- 2	- -	66
6 Roberto Colciago (ITA) Alfa Romeo	- -	3 4	10 8	1 3	3 -	1 4	10 -	4 3	6 6	- -	66
7 Duncan Huisman (NLD) BMW	- -	4 6	- -	4 -	1 8	2 3	4 2	- 2	4 3	4 -	47
8 Antonio Garcia (ESP) BMW	6 2	- 1	- 2	8 2	- -	- -	8 4	5 8	- -	- -	46
9 Fabrizio Giovanardi (ITA) BMW	8 4	- 2	- -	6 8	- -	4 -	- 3	1 -	- -	3 4	43
10 Tom Coronel (NLD) BMW	1 1	2 5	- 1	- -	- -	- 1	- -	2 -	- -	6 6	25
11 Rickard Rydell (SWE) Volvo	- -	- -	- -	- -	4 6	- -	2 6	- -	- -	- -	18
12 James Thompson (GBR) Alfa Romeo	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 1	10 -	12
13 Paolo Ruberti (ITA) Alfa Romeo	- -	1 -	- 3	- -	2 1	- 2	- -	- -	3 -	- -	12
14 Alessandro Balzan (ITA) Alfa Romeo	- -	- -	1 6	2 -	- -	- -	- 1	- -	- -	- -	10

15 Frank Diefenbacher (DEU) Seat	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	9
16 Fabio Francia (ITA) Alfa Romeo	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
17 Jordi Gené (ESP) BMW	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
18 André Couto (MAC) Honda	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
19 Adriano De Micheli (ITA) Alfa Romeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
20 Salvatore Tavano (ITA) Honda	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
21 Alessandro Zanardi (ITA) BMW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
22 Tomas Engstrom (SWE) Honda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Sebastian Stahl (GER) Alfa Romeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Jordi Palomeras (ESP) Honda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Miguel Ramos (POR) Honda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Jan Nilsson (SWE) Volvo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Donald Molenaar (NLD) BMW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Eric Cayrolle (FRA) Alfa Romeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Mattias Andersson (SWE) Alfa Romeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Reinhard Huber (GER) Alfa Romeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Johan Stureson (SWE) Seat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Niklas Karlsson (SWE) Seat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Yvan Muller (FRA) Seat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Sandro Sardelli (ITA) Volvo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Giancarlo Fisichella (ITA) Alfa Romeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0

Position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Points	10	8	6	5	4	3	2	1



Formula BMW ADAC Championship 2003.

Title duel in Germany, international expansion.

Munich. A large field of starters, breathtaking racing scenes and a hard-fought battle for the title were the hallmarks of the 2003 German Formula BMW ADAC Championship. International interest in this comprehensive talent promotion scheme involving the most innovative formula car of its class is considerable: in Germany, 30 aspiring drivers from 14 countries battled for points, while Formula BMW Asia marks its debut season and series have been set in train for 2004 in England and the USA.

In the German Formula BMW ADAC Championship of 2003, 20 races saw a total of seven drivers making it into the winners' ranks. The international makeup of this championship reflects a growing global interest in this series: drivers from Austria, Belgium, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia and Switzerland were seen lining up on the grid.

BMW and the ADAC have been jointly involved in promoting promising young racing drivers since 1991. "The concept behind our talent promotion programme is directed at successful kart drivers who want to move into Formula racing", says BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen of the scheme's target group. "BMW's aim in this is to familiarize the young drivers with all the demands of professional racing." The tremendous resonance and density of talent in this series show it to be a winning concept.

Götz and Vettel dominate in Germany.

Maximilian Götz (Uffenheim/ADAC Berlin -Brandenburg) and Sebastian Vettel (Heppenheim/Eifeland Racing) took the lion's share of the season's wins in the 2003 Formula BMW ADAC Championship. Götz, just 17 and runner-up in last year's championship, won six of the 20 rounds. His strongest rival was a newcomer – Vettel, a year younger and one of the eight sponsorship candidates selected by BMW and the ADAC during scholarship qualifying. He claimed five wins and ended the season in second place behind Götz, besides securing an impressive title in the Rookie Championship.

Third in the rankings was Robert Kath (Plauen/ADAC Sachsen), who took away two trophies. Michael Devaney of Ireland won three races to come fourth in the championship. Dominik Jackson (GBR) won two races, while Michael Vorba (CZE) and Christopher Wassermann (AUT) each claimed one first-placed finish.

Kath won the season opener on 26th April at Hockenheim. Götz finished second in the first race and declared his intentions for the championship battle: "I want to make it onto the podium in every race, I want to be champion." No sooner said than done: he won the second round of the championship.

On the first race weekend Götz not only had to face competition from Kath, but also from his Finnish teammate Aki Rask, as well as from Vettel, then still 15 years old. On Sunday the rookie finished as runner-up behind Götz, and the duel of the season was under way: Götz versus Vettel, Vettel versus Götz. Vettel also made his ambitions clear from the start of the season: "My favourite place is at the top of the podium."

Two weeks later, at the new Adria International Raceway in Italy, Vettel caused a sensation: the school pupil took two brilliant victories, relegating Götz to sixth and second places respectively.

From 23rd to 25th May, "Germany's fastest classroom" gathered in the Eifel. On the Nürburgring the tide turned in favour of Götz once again – he was twice able to indulge in a champagne shower on the victory podium. Devaney was delighted with his two second places, while Vettel came third on both days to collect more valuable points.

During the next event at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz, the youngsters delivered two sweltering races at temperatures of around 35 degrees Celsius. In the seventh round of the championship Götz took victory, but had to defer to Kath and Timo Lienemann (Schorndorf/ADAC Berlin-Brandenburg) in the eighth round.

On the narrow city circuit at Nuremberg's Norisring, the talented young drivers again provided some exciting duels for the spectators, who included BMW Motorsport Directors Gerhard Berger and Mario Theissen. In the ninth championship round on Saturday, Devaney won ahead of Götz and Lienemann. The tenth race saw Vettel uphold his title ambitions with a start-to-finish victory. Local hero Götz finished in second place ahead of rookie Atila Abreu (BRA/Team Rosberg). Natacha Gachnang secured a much-acclaimed success – the 15-year-old driver from Aigle in Switzerland, the only girl in the pack, finished in fourth place.

The engines roared into action again just a week later. As part of the supporting events for the Formula One Grand Prix at the Nürburgring (27th – 29th June) the aspiring young racers performed against an imposing backdrop. Dominik Jackson from Scampton, England, won the eleventh race of the championship, ahead of the two Irish contestants Robby Coleman and Devaney. There was a spectacular incident on the eighth lap of the race when the wheels of the cars driven by Andreas Wirth (Waghäusel/ADAC Berlin-Brandenburg) and Natacha Gachnang got snagged on the home turn. Wirth's Formula BMW reared up, flipped over and skidded headlong into the gravel trap. To everyone's relief, the 18-year-old emerged from his car totally unscathed.

The fact that he was unhurt was not just down to good fortune, but largely to the high safety standards of his single-seater powered by a 140 bhp BMW motorcycle engine. The Formula racer achieves speeds of up to 230 km/h and meets the safety standards of the considerably more powerful Formula 3 cars. With its specially designed BMW Formula Rescue Seat (Fors) it even features a further evolution of a Formula One safety feature. On Sunday, championship round number twelve ran more smoothly, with Götz beating Vettel and Kath.

After a seven-week summer break, the series was resumed on 16th August at the Nürburgring. On the Saturday, Vettel managed to win his laurels ahead of Lienemann and Adrian Sutil (Gräfelfing/HBR Motorsport). On Sunday it was Austrian driver Christopher Wassermann (Josef Kaufmann Racing) who won out in a hard-fought race, leaving Vettel and Sutil in second and third places. The delighted rookie entered the season's statistics as the sixth race winner.

With this success under his belt, Wassermann approached his home race on the A1-Ring with high hopes. But the 17-year-old wasn't quite up to the pressure he had put himself under. After a scrap during the final lap of the first race, Wassermann ended up in eighth place, and on Sunday he had to retire after a collision. That's weekend's happy winner was Irishman Devaney, who won both races. On Sunday he swept across the finishing line ahead of Götz and Abreu, while on Saturday he won out against Götz once more, with Michael Vorba (American Bull Racing) from the Czech Republic taking third place. In the title duel between Götz and Vettel, the latter lost valuable points in Austria. Qualifying saw Vettel struggling with major setup problems (18th and 16th on the grid) and in both races he had to plough his way through the pack to the front again.

At Zandvoort in Holland more troubles lay ahead for Vettel. He was banned from the first race for an overtaking manoeuvre during a yellow flag phase in free practice and had to watch passively as Götz won the race to secure his title in the 2003 Formula BMW ADAC Championship. "It hurt just being a spectator", said Vettel, who on Sunday took third place to become Rookie Champion in the special classification for newcomers to this Formula series. The surprise winner of the 18th round of the championship was Vorba.

Champion Götz earned fulsome praise from his fellow-drivers. "Maxi always drives in a very measured way", said teammate Lienemann. "I take my hat off to his achievement", added Kath. Vettel also took a positive view of the season's hard-fought duel: "It's always fun driving against Maxi. He's a tough fighter, but he's always fair."

Ahead of the finale at Hockenheim, then, the battle for the two championship titles had been decided between Götz and Vettel, but there was more suspense to come regarding who would occupy the following positions. Kath and Devaney were competing for third place, while Abreu and Vorba in second and third positions in the rookie rankings were separated by a single point. After two exciting races which included a retirement by Kath, a technical fault in Vorba's car and an accident by Devaney, the final order placed Kath ahead of Devaney and Abreu ahead of Vorba.

Abreu, as the runner-up rookie behind Vettel, secured one of the scholarships on offer from BMW and ADAC for the 2004 season, worth 50,000 euros each. These scholarships not only include a generous cash injection but also provide courses covering subjects such as Driving Skills and Tactics, Vehicle Dynamics and Chassis Setup, Fitness Training and Nutrition, Media Training and Public Relations, as well as Sponsorship and Sports Management.

Apart from the two top-finishing young drivers of the 2003 season, a further eight promising youngsters will benefit from this comprehensive sponsorship package. They had to qualify in a three-stage selection course at the Formula BMW Racing Center in Valencia, Spain. The new sponsorship candidates include Michael Ammermüller (Poching), Marcel Jeleniowski (Bornheim), Dennis Nägele (Lauterstein) and André Sander (Marburg/Lahn) from Germany, Sébastien Buemi (Aigle) and Adrian Zaugg (Lotzwil) from Switzerland, Carl Söderblom (Anderstorp) of Sweden, and New Zealander Chris Van der Drift, who has moved to Hummello in Holland in the interests of his career. These 15- to 17-year olds can take advantage of their scholarships if they compete in the Formula BMW ADAC Championship next year.

The internationalisation of the Formula BMW ADAC Championship continues its steady advance on a structural level as well. The Formula BMW ADAC Championship began in Germany in 2002 with the development of a new racing car. In 2003, Formula BMW Asia was inaugurated. 14 races took place in five countries on seven race weekends. China was host to the event twice, and in Malaysia one of two events was held in Sepang in conjunction with the Formula One Grand Prix. Japan, Korea and Thailand also hosted the championship. 2004 will see the inception of Formula BMW UK and Formula BMW USA.

Formula BMW ADAC Championship 2003.

Champion Maximilian Götz.

Maximilian Götz from Uffenheim is the Formula BMW ADAC Champion of 2003. A Mücke Team driver, he claimed six wins in 20 races, climbed onto the podium 13 times in all, and made it into the first ten in every single race. As last year's runner-up, the pressure weighed heavily on the Bavarian. "The bar was raised very high", he summed up, "but I worked professionally."

At Zandvoort in Holland, with another three races to go, Götz had already clinched the title. He is one of the scholarship candidates backed by BMW and the ADAC and can look back on a good season. Amid the field of 30 contestants, he repeatedly drew attention to himself by his well-calculated passing manoeuvres. If in doubt, he always opted for safe points. "Sometimes it looked easier than it was", says Götz. "I had to fight for it – the concentration of talent was huge."

He won a round each at Hockenheim, the EuroSpeedway Lausitz and the Circuit Park Zandvoort, and three times on the Nürburgring. These successes were also down to his sporting activities. The 17-year-old does training at least five times a week: "I go jogging and build up my muscle power in the fitness studio", explains the youngster. He also watches what he eats. Mother Heike frequently prepares rice dishes with fresh vegetables for the up-and-coming young racing driver. "Unfortunately I've got a sweet tooth", Götz confesses. "I love pancakes and sweet dumplings and really have to hold back there."

On race weekends he has the support of the whole family: his father "Addy", mother Heike and brothers Sebastian and Moritz always accompany him. They all sleep in a mobile home next to the track. "It isn't always easy to find peace and quiet", admits the champ. Götz Senior is especially thrilled with his son's title victory: "After my wedding day and the birth of my sons, Maxi winning the championship title was the best day of my life."

The teenager who is affectionately known as "Maxi" has his sights firmly set on a racing career. This year he gained his intermediate high school certificate, and has devoted himself fully to sport ever since. "But next year I would like to attend a language school on the side", he says. "I could do with expanding my English skills, and I'd also like to learn Spanish." After two years in the Formula BMW ADAC Championship, Götz plans to continue his career in the Formula 3 Euro Series.

Formula BMW ADAC Championship 2003.

Top rookie Sebastian Vettel.

He's 16 years of age, still goes to high school in his birthplace of Heppenheim, wears a dental brace and already ranks as one of the major talents among Germany's up-and-coming young racing drivers. Sebastian Vettel won the Rookie classification in the 2003 Formula BMW ADAC Championship. The newcomer won five out of 20 races and took a further seven podium places. His role models, Michael and Ralf Schumacher, have long since been watching this promising young driver.

Vettel also dreams of Formula One, but he is realistic about it. "It's a rocky path getting up there", says the blond-haired youngster. "Motor racing is unpredictable. Good health is the most important thing, then school and finally motor sport." He works hard. Long cycle rides or jogging are part of his daily routine. Amid the numerous trophies stacked up in his bedroom between his loft bed and school satchel, a quotation by Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong hangs on the wall. It says: "When other kids were swimming at the country club, I was biking for miles after school. There were gallons of sweat all over every trophy and dollar I had ever earned."

To keep good fortune on his side at all times, Vettel always carries a small metal good-luck pig inside his racing overalls. "I always had it with me during my karting days", notes the somewhat reserved teenager. At the age of three and a half, he sat in his father's go-kart for the first time and carved around cones put up in front of the house: "Sometimes we would pour water onto the ground to make the tail break away so I could do better drifts", he recalls.

He has another three siblings and enjoys the care and support of his parents. A photo going back to his karting days shows him holding his father's hand before the start of a race. "It's the same today – like a ritual. It's important to me to feel that I'm not alone when I'm racing."

In 2003, the newcomer to the Eifeland Racing Team occasionally had to contend with decisions by the race stewards. At the Nürburgring he was given an false start penalty in front of the imposing Formula One backdrop. Though it was revoked after the video recordings were replayed, the race result remained: tenth place, despite his pole position. At Zandvoort the stewards caught him overtaking in free practice during a yellow flag phase. Vettel felt he had been penalized too severely when he was disqualified from the race. But this ambitious young driving talent soon won his way back into the limelight.

As the Rookie Champion, Vettel will receive backing for the 2004 season as long as he returns to contest the Formula BMW ADAC Championship next year. BMW and the ADAC are supporting the young driver with a race scholarship to the value of 50,000 euros.

Formula BMW ADAC Championship 2003 – Rookie Points.

Drivers	Hockenheim		Adria Int. Raceway		Nürburgring		EuroSpeedway Lausitz		Norisring		Nürburgring F1		Nürburgring		A1 Ring		Zandvoort		Hockenheim		Total
1 Sebastian Vettel (GER)	-	20	20	20	20	20	20	12	-	20	12	20	20	15	15	12	-	15	20	20	301
2 Atila Abreu (BRA)	10	10	8	8	15	15	12	10	20	15	15	-	8	6	20	15	15	12	15	12	241
3 Michael Vorba (CZE)	15	15	10	15	6	-	10	20	12	-	20	-	10	10	10	20	20	20	-	-	213
4 Christopher Wassermann (AUT)	20	8	1	10	12	12	15	15	15	10	-	-	15	20	12	-	12	8	4	3	192
5 Rene Rast (GER)	12	6	15	12	10	10	8	6	-	-	-	6	4	8	6	8	10	2	10	-	133
6 Davide Rigon (ITA)	8	12	6	4	1	6	4	8	6	8	-	10	6	12	3	3	6	4	1	8	116
7 Mario Josten (GER)	3	-	-	6	3	4	6	3	10	6	4	15	-	3	8	10	-	10	8	10	109
8 Andreas Ciecior (GER)	6	-	4	1	8	3	-	4	-	-	-	12	2	-	2	6	8	-	3	6	65
9 Natacha Gachnang (SUI)	4	4	2	-	4	8	3	-	1	12	-	-	12	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	55
10 Erik Janis (CZE)	-	-	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	4	4	6	12	15	53
11 Jan Charouz (CZE)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	8	8	1	4	4	2	-	3	6	4	44
12 Erez Liven (ISR)	-	3	12	-	-	2	-	2	8	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
13 Heinrich Ostertag (GER)	-	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	3	3	10	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
14 Salvatore Gangarossa (GER)	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	4	2	6	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	22

Position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Points	20	15	12	10	8	6	4	3	2	1

Nürburgring 24 Hour Race.

Record winner BMW runs out of luck in the Eifel in 2003.

Munich. After 16 overall victories in this Eifel classic, BMW once again lined up on the grid for the Nürburgring 24 Hour Race on the weekend of 31st May/ 1st June 2003. But luck was not on their side this time. The two beefy BMW M3 GTRs with their four-litre V8 engines providing over 400 horsepower had turned up as victory contenders, prepared by Team BMW Motorsport and Schnitzer Motorsport under the direction of Charly Lamm. But the driving threesomes of John Nielsen (DNK)/Boris Said (USA)/Hans-Joachim Stuck (GER) and Claudia Hürtgen (GER)/Dirk Müller (GER)/Jörg Müller (GER), along with reserve driver Marc Duez (BEL), had to bid an early farewell to any hopes of winning.

The first two drivers, Stuck and Jörg Müller, broke down on the very first lap with gearbox problems. For the slow, 25.947-kilometre installation lap, dry ice had been used to cool the transmission, which led to leakage in the oil supply lines.

After the gearboxes were replaced in both cars – completed in record time, one in 22 minutes, the other in 29 – the drivers set about catching up. Nielsen/Said/Stuck were in fifth position when a night-time accident by Said at 3.18 a.m. took the first BMW M3 GTR out of the race.

After 126 laps, as the race was already drawing to a close, the second M3 GTR with Dirk Müller at the wheel had to retire from sixth place after a collision.

BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen, who was commuting between the Monaco Grand Prix and the Eifel that weekend, commented as follows: “This double retirement is naturally a disappointment for us. The team fought tirelessly until the end. But for the spectators it was an impressive event. The enthusiasm of the fans was indescribable. Despite our failure we are happy to have been a part of it.”

The BMW M3 GTR had originally been developed for deployment in the American Le Mans Series. It made its debut in that event in 2001 and swept the board: Jörg Müller won the Drivers’ Championship, BMW Motorsport won in the Team classifications, and BMW won the Manufacturers’ title.