The Nürburgring 24-Hour Race - Final Results June 2, 2003

So Near Yet So Far

Dirk Müller, one of the three drivers of the BMW M3 GTR number 43, who was in sixth until lap 126, had to retire from the race after a collision with only a little over an hour to go. Several hours earlier, car number 42 also retired when it was in fifth position due to a collision.

Dirk Müller: "Right after the accident the first thing I did was to call my wife and tell her that I was fine. The realization that we lost the car so close to the end of the race in such a position is not describable. The reason for the accident was an overtaking maneuver on a slower car. I waited until I saw his indicator, went to pass him and was pushed off when I was halfway by. My rear tire was in contact with his front tire, making my car take off."

On lap 122, Jörg Müller had a collision with another competitor. In the pit stop following that incident, some body panels had to be changed and the power steering was checked.

Jörg Müller explaining his race incident said: "We suddenly had problems with the power steering. On a bump the steering wheel was forced out of my hands and unfortunately my car touched Christin Behling's M3. I am really sorry that this caused him to retire."

Charly Lamm, Team Manager Team BMW Motorsport: "The result in such an important race counts very much and for me to be here with nothing to show makes me upset. The accidents that caused our retirements are classic ones here at the Nordschleife. I am glad our drivers did not take too many risks. We were able to show that our BMW M3 GTRs are very competitive. The potential of the cars, the fantastic drive through the field by the drivers and the team's fighting spirit all deserve respect. When you look back to the start we had bad luck as such a small thing can have such a huge effect on the race. It is an interesting event and a good challenge. It is a big motor race, it is always spectacular and there are lots of elements that make this a good race. I want to thank everyone in the team who contributed so much this weekend."

Mario Theissen, BMW Motorsport Director: "Despite the hardships for the team that had fought until the end it was a very good race for fans and spectators. We are now going to analyse the happenings in the race and the technical defects very precisely. This has been a weekend of highs and lows, with a pole position and a win in Formula 1, as well as a race with neither car finishing."

Car Number 42 – BMW M3 GTR (Retired after 69 laps while in fifth)

Hans-Joachim Stuck (GER)/Boris Said (USA)/John Nielsen (DNK)/Marc Duez (BEL)

Car Number 43 – BMW M3 GTR

Jörg Müller (GER)/Dirk Müller (GER)/Claudia Hürtgen (GER)/Marc Duez (BEL)

Final Results:

1. Reuter/Scheider/Tiemann/Strycek (Opel Astra V8 Coupe) 24h 07m 49.2s 143 laps.

2. Wendlinger/Abt/Nissen/Werner (Audi Abt Audi TT-R) 24h 03m 19.7s 138 laps.

3. Luhr/Collard/Bernhard (Porsch 996) 24h 07m 50.3s 137 laps.

4. Grohs/Scharmach/Fischer/Reisert (Porsche 996) 24h 04m 15.6s 135 laps.

5. Zakowski/Lamy/Lechner (Dodge Viper) 24h 01m 34.7s 134 laps.

6. Scheid/Kainz/Merten (BMW) 24h 07m 49.4s 133 laps.

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