BMW Motorsport News – Issue 02/15
18th January 2015

Spengler meets biathlon legends – DTM champion Wittmann honoured in Nürnberg.

Whether in the DTM, the United 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.

DTM: Bruno Spengler meets biathlon legends.

BMW DTM driver Bruno Spengler (CA) took his opportunity at the BMW IBU Biathlon World Cup in Ruhpolding (DE) to pursue his passion for biathlon and cross-country skiing – and under the guidance of an Olympic champion, no less. Fritz Fischer (DE), one of the top German biathletes until his retirement in 1993, gave Spengler a training session on how to get the most out of his cross-country skis, before heading to the shooting range, which was in magnificent condition in preparation for the World Cup. Fischer, who won gold in the relay in Albertville (FR) back in 1992, said: "Bruno is talented, and I genuinely believe he would have made a good biathlete. However, he has had an impressive career as a racing driver. He is a great sportsman and a nice guy, and I had a lot of fun with him." Spengler's biathlon day concluded with a barbecue, which was also attended by the Norwegian biathlon team, which includes the most successful biathlete and Olympic icon in the history of the sport, Ole Einar Bjørndalen (NO). Like Fischer, Bjørndalen is a BMW Biathlon Ambassador.

Three questions for… Bruno Spengler.

How did you enjoy your day as a biathlete?
Bruno Spengler: "Although I have been taking part in biathlon in my free time for a number of years, I had never actually watched a race live. However, I have to say that the World Cup in Ruhpolding was a superb event. Meeting Ole Einar Bjørndalen, in particular, made the day an amazing experience for me. I am a big fan of his, and regularly watch his races on television. It is impossible to describe in words what he has achieved. I also had the opportunity to train with Fritz Fischer in Ruhpolding. I have been skiing since I was ten years old, but he was still able to show me a few new tricks on skis. Biathlon is the perfect sport for me to keep fit in the winter, ahead of the forthcoming DTM season. Skiing uses every muscle and improves your stamina. The shooting helps you to maintain your concentration, even when your pulse is going crazy. Both stamina and concentration are vitally important when it comes to getting through an energy-sapping DTM race."

You are back behind the wheel in the USA this week. What are your hopes for the 24 Hours of Daytona, where you will be driving the BMW Z4 GTLM for BMW Team RLL?
Spengler: "It all kicks off on Tuesday, when I fly to the USA. I have never driven in a 24-hour race – except in a kart. The preparation test a week ago gave me the opportunity to tackle the Daytona International Speedway at the wheel of the BMW Z4 GTLM for the first time. It was great fun, but is very different to sitting in a DTM car. However, the guys at BMW Team RLL made it easy for me to find my feet quickly in the BMW Z4 GTLM. I am now very comfortable with the car. The amount of traffic at a 24-hour race is also new to me. Furthermore, I have never raced at night. All this makes Daytona a real challenge for me. However, we are well prepared and have a great squad of drivers. Despite this, it is hard for me to say what to expect. Maybe we can discuss that 20 hours into the race."

There will be two races per weekend in the DTM in the future. How do you like this change?
Spengler: "That is also something new for me. In the eleven years I have been racing in the DTM, I have never contested two races on one weekend. It is fantastic for the fans. We are offering them even more action and twice the show. I can well imagine, that the races will be even more competitive. And it goes without saying that we drivers are always happy to spend more time in the car."

--

DTM: Marco Wittmann honoured in Nürnberg.
DTM champion Marco Wittmann (DE) received another award on Friday. The city of Nürnberg (DE) honoured the BMW DTM driver's success in the 2014 season. The celebratory event in the historic town hall acknowledges people and athletes from Nürnberg-based clubs who have earned special recognition. Wittmann is a member of the Motorsport Club Nürnberg. "I am very pleased with this award," said Wittmann. "My home race at the Norisring, which is organised with a lot of effort and commitment by the Motorsport Club Nürnberg, is always a highlight of the year for me. It is great to take part in a race in my home city, which many of my friends are able to visit."

Press contact:
Jörg Kottmeier, Phone: +49 (0) 170 566 6112, joerg.kottmeier@bmw.de
Ingo Lehbrink, Phone: +49 (0) 176 203 40224, ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

You can find the latest BMW Motorsport media information and copyright-free images for editorial purposes online at: www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com