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Successful Nordschleife debut for BMW Motorsport Juniors – Walkenhorst Motorsport claims landmark win for BMW in the VLN.

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.

VLN: Walkenhorst Motorsport has two reasons to celebrate.

The fifth round of the VLN Endurance Championship at the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (DE) was a great success for the Walkenhorst Motorsport team. Henry Walkenhorst (DE) and Ralf Oeverhaus (DE) came home seventh overall in their BMW Z4 GT3, which equated to second in the SP9 class. Walkenhorst Motorsport had previously finished an excellent eighth overall with the same car at the 24-hour race. As well as the success in the GT3 car, the outfit also triumphed in the BMW M235i Racing Cup class to claim the 1,500th class victory for BMW in the VLN since the series was launched in 1990. In a race shortened to 17 laps after the start was delayed, Michael Schrey (DE) and Emin Akata (DE) crossed the finish line ahead of the Rent2Drive Racing and Adrenalin Motorsport. Rolf Derscheid (DE) and Michael Flehmer (DE) once again won the V4 class in their BMW 325i to retain their lead in the overall VLN standings. In total, BMW cars claimed six class victories at the 54th ADAC Reinoldus Endurance Race.

BMW Juniors: Flawless VLN race for Krohn and Hughes.

The fifth VLN race of the season was also the first touchstone for the BMW Motorsport Juniors. Two of the four Juniors were given the opportunity to prove themselves in the BMW M235i Racing on the Nordschleife. Despite difficult conditions – light rain fell repeatedly throughout the entire race, resulting in a slippery but never completely wet track – Jesse Krohn (FI) and Jake Hughes (GB) produced flawless displays to bring the car home safely in 58th place. The lap times of both drivers were also promising. “I am very proud of the lads,” said instructor Dirk Adorf (DE). “We had two big goals for the weekend: to bring the car back in one piece and not to pick up any penalties for breaches of the rules. They pulled both off perfectly – and despite the extremely difficult conditions.”

Three questions for ... Jake Hughes.

Jake, you have just completed your first race at the Nürburgring-Nordschleife. How was it?

Jake Hughes: “In one word: crazy! That was a completely new experience for me, but one that I really enjoyed. In single-seater racing we were always battling in cars with roughly the same pace. Here, I lined up with a comparatively slow car and spent 80 per cent of the time with my eyes on the mirror and just 20 per cent looking ahead.”



How did you like the Nordschleife?

Hughes: "Everyone who says that it is the best racetrack in the world is right. I cannot imagine there being a better one. The Nordschleife puts both your driving skills and your mental strength to the test. You have all four wheels off the ground on several occasions over the course of a lap. You are constantly battling with understeer and oversteer. This circuit gives you the kind of thrills that we racing drivers really love."

What are your thoughts on the BMW Motorsport Junior programme so far?

Hughes: "It is impressive. I have already learned a lot more than I expected. My learning curve is virtually vertical. Driving a touring car is a completely new experience for me. I have to get used to the greater weight and have to brake earlier – and on top of that, I have to find my feet on a circuit that is completely new to me. There is an awful lot to learn in an extremely short time. Dirk Adorf and the BMW engineers are incredibly helpful. Generally speaking, we BMW Juniors can consider ourselves very lucky that there are manufacturers like BMW around, who give young drivers the chance without it costing the earth. You don't get that very often, so I am very grateful for this opportunity. I hope I can use the next race on the Nordschleife to put into practice what I learned this time, and to continue to improve."

Blancpain Sprint Series: Two BMW Z4 GT3s in the top ten.

An eventful weekend at Circuit Park Zandvoort (NL): rain, wind and a safety car phase transformed the third round of the season into a thriller on the North Sea coast. And it ended well for the BMW Sports Trophy teams: two BMW Z4 GT3s finished in the top ten. BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert enjoyed a successful debut. The team from Oschersleben (DE) was making its first appearance on the grid with the BMW Z4 GT3, and clinched a podium at the first attempt. Dominik Baumann (AT) and Thomas Jäger (AT) finished runner-up in the #76 BMW Z4 GT3. Matheus Dall'Agnol Stumpf (BR) and Nelson Piquet Jr. (BR) of the AutOrlando Sport team came home in eighth place. Stefano Colombo (IT) and David Fumanelli (IT) were twelfth for ROAL Motorsport. Sergio Jimenez (BR) and Caca Bueno (BR) of BMW Sports Trophy Team Brazil crossed the finish line in 14th place.

French GT Tour: Eighth place for Tony Samon and Laurent Cazenave.

Le Vigeant (FR) hosted the fourth round of the French GT Tour this weekend. Tony Samon (FR) and Laurent Cazenave (FR), at the wheel of a BMW Z4 GT3 fielded by GSE by DKR Engineering, finished eighth in race two at the "Circuit du Val de Vienne". Pierre Hirschi (CH) and Thomas Nicolle (FR) came home tenth in the Classic & Modern Racing BMW Z4 GT3 after an hour's racing. They had previously finished 14th in race one, while Samon and Cazenave were tenth.

24h Spa: Reinforcements join BMW contingent in the Ardennes.

Many of the drivers who lined up for BMW Motorsport at the Nürburgring 24 Hours (DE) will also be in action at the second endurance highlight of the year, the 24-hour race in Spa-Francorchamps (BE). The iconic race takes place on 26th and 27th July and once again forms the highlight of this year's Blancpain Endurance Series. BMW works driver Lucas Luhr (DE) joins BMW Sports Trophy Team Marc VDS, replacing Bas Leinders (BE) behind the wheel of the number 77 BMW Z4 GT3. Leinders has opted not to drive in this year's race, but to focus fully on his key role as team principal. Luhr shares the cockpit with fellow BMW works driver Dirk Werner (DE) and Markus Palttala (FI). The second car will be driven by works driver Jörg Müller (DE) and the two BMW DTM drivers Maxime Martin (BE) and Augusto Farfus (BR). BMW works driver Jens Klingmann (DE) will join the TDS Racing team. Another works



driver, Alexander Sims (GB), lines up in the BMW Z4 GT3 for Ecurie Ecosse, and will share the driving duties with his compatriots Oliver Bryant, Andrew Smith and Alasdair McCaig. Like BMW Sports Trophy Team Marc VDS, TDS Racing and Ecurie Ecosse, Roberto Ravaglia's (IT) ROAL Motorsport team also ran a BMW Z4 GT3 at the official test for the Ardennes marathon in Spa-Francorchamps on Wednesday.

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