EWC: BMW Motorrad HP RaceSupport ready for Le Mans.

Partner BMW Motorrad France Team Thevent has high expectations for the legendary 24-hour race – The Penz13.com Franks Autowelt Racing Team aims to defend the title in the Superstock class.

Le Mans/Munich, 19th September 2013. BMW Motorrad HP RaceSupport is ready for the big finale of the 2013 FIM Endurance World Championship, the legendary "24 Heures Moto" at Le Mans this weekend. The specialists from Munich are on site at the French track to directly support their partners. BMW Motorrad France Team Thevent aims for a top result in the Superbike class, ideally to take its first 24-hour race win with the #99 BMW S 1000 RR. The Penz13.com Franks Autowelt Racing Team meanwhile firmly sets its sights on defending the FIM World Endurance Superstock Cup title. The "24 Heures Moto" has been a highlight of the Le Mans calendar since the first running of the event back in 1978. The race will be contested by 56 teams and watched by an enthusiastic crowd more than 100,000 strong.

After a strong podium finish at the last round at Oschersleben (GER), BMW Motorrad France Team Thevent wants to finish the season in style at Le Mans. Experienced endurance campaigner, Sébastien Gimbert, will lead the charge this weekend, with the Frenchman joined on the #99 RR by fellow countryman Sylvain Barrier, Australian Josh Waters and American Jake Zemke. Gimbert, Barrier and Zemke all have experience of the RR, but this weekend will be a baptism of fire for Waters, who will race the bike for the first time at Le Mans. However, the Australian has plenty of endurance experience, most of which was gained on the same Michelin tyres he will race this weekend.

"It is important to finish this season in the best way, and the best way for the team, for BMW, for Michelin and for my teammates and me is with a win", said Gimbert. "The bike is certainly up to the job. We have a new engine for this weekend, revised electronics and the team has made a lot of progress with the chassis since Oschersleben. We are as well prepared as we can be, and that brings confidence, but we can't forget that this is 24-hour racing and anything can happen. Our job as riders is to race hard, stay out of trouble, manage the changing weather conditions that are always a feature here at Le Mans and finish in the best position possible, preferably on the podium and, hopefully, on the top step."

"Our bike, our tyres and our riders are all capable of pushing for the win here this weekend", confirmed Team Principal Michael Bartholemy. "Sébastien and Sylvain know the bike and tyres well, while Jake's familiarity with both is increasing. Josh is new to the team and to our BMW S 1000 RR, but he has the all-important experience on Michelin tyres, so I'm confident he'll be up to speed quickly. A win in the biggest race of the season, our first in a 24-hour race, would be a great season finish for the team, for BMW and for Michelin."

In the FIM World Endurance Superstock Cup, the Penz13.com Franks Autowelt Racing Team is well positioned to achieve its target of defending the title. The German squad of former racer Rico Penzkofer is leading the championship with 68 points and is having an advantage of 11 points. But it's going to be a hard task during those 24 hours as the rivals are regular podium contenders and hard to beat. A quartet of international well-known riders will share duties on the #13 RR at Le Mans: Jason Pridmore (USA), Pedro Vallcaneras (ESP), Steve Mercer (GBR) and James Rispoli (USA/reserve rider).

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"I think we can head confident into this weekend", said Penzkofer. "Gordon Unger once more prepared the bike perfectly, the morale is high and also our four riders are feeling good. We are leading the championship by 11 points, but 24 hours are a quite long distance."

"We all are looking forward to this weekend. Le Mans is always a great race, a real classic with grandstands full of enthusiastic fans", commented Berthold Hauser, General Manager BMW Motorrad HP RaceSupport. "The BMW teams supported by our specialists did everything to be best prepared for the final round of the season. After the success we celebrated at Oschersleben, with BMW Motorrad France Team Thevent finishing on the overall podium and the Penz13.com Team winning the Superstock class, we kept working hard with the teams in order to further improve our strong package and to find the perfect solutions for the requirements of Le Mans. We are more than ready but we all know that 24-hour racing has its own rules. Everything can happen, especially if weather conditions play their part, too. We cross our fingers for our teams and hope that we all have reason to celebrate on Sunday afternoon."

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