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BMW Motorsport News: Tomczyk takes off, double victory for the BMW Z4 GT3 in Italy.

Whether in the DTM, the American Le Mans Series, 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" now allows us to regularly summarise all the action for you in a compact and informative manner. This way, you are always up to speed.

Weightless over New York.

A dream came true for BMW DTM driver Martin Tomczyk (DE) on Saturday, when he took off from "LaGuardia Airport" in New York (US) on board the plane "G-Force One" for a so-called zero gravity flight. Over the next two hours, Tomczyk experienced different degrees of weightlessness 15 times, with each spell lasting up to half a minute. The reigning DTM champion was still overwhelmed long after he landed. "You cannot compare that with anything," he said. "As racing drivers we are used to immense centrifugal forces in the cockpit. Something is constantly pulling on your body, and you are always having to use your muscles to resist it. And then on this flight you are suddenly confronted by: nothing. It is a very strange feeling but an amazing experience. I can now understand why astronauts would prefer to be flying in space every week."

Three questions for… Marco Wittmann.

As BMW Motorsport's test and development driver, Marco Wittmann (DE) has learned an awful lot this season. He is present at every DTM weekend and is closely integrated in the activities of the three BMW teams. Speaking in an interview, he reveals what else he has learned in 2012.

Marco, how would you sum up the season so far as test and development driver after eight DTM races?
Marco Wittmann: "I am very happy with the way the first half of the year has gone. BMW has made a strong comeback in the DTM. I am closely involved at all the races and play a part in the success. I am obviously happier when things are going well. I really feel like part of the team. The great thing is that we still have a lot of room for improvement. The opposition in the DTM has a lot more experience than we do. However, we are learning fast and improving all the time. That really puts you in the mood for the coming races and next season."

You are not only in action at tests, but also at many other events with BMW…
Wittmann: "Yes, and that is also great fun. At the DTM event in Munich, for example, I was at the wheel of a BMW M3 GT4 for the taxi rides in BMW Welt. You don't get to do that kind of thing every day. I also took FIA President Jean Todt for a flying lap in the BMW M3 GT at the Le Mans Classic. That was a real honour for me. The outings with the BMW Z4 GT3 were generally very positive. We did not achieve what

we set out to achieve at the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring, but I enjoyed every lap in the Green Hell and at the wheel of the BMW Z4 GT3. Before then I had only raced in sprints. I learned a lot on the endurance circuit."

What do you get up to on a DTM race weekend?
Wittmann: "I go to all the meetings and learn a lot every weekend. That obviously really helps me pick up as much as possible from the way my fellow drivers and engineers go about their work. We deal with a lot of things, like set-up and strategy. I have a lot of discussions with the guys, who are all very open and willing to share their information with me. The atmosphere among us seven drivers is excellent. I want to learn and prepare as well as possible for my test outings in the BMW M3 DTM."

Spengler meets his fans in the heart of Munich.
To mark the start of Oktoberfest, the BALDESSARINI Store in the "Fünf Höfen" shopping arcade in the centre of Munich (DE) welcomed BMW DTM driver Bruno Spengler (CA) to an exclusive autograph session. Baldessarini supports the drivers as "Official Supplier Formal and Business Wear", ensuring they look good off the track as well as on it. In keeping with the opening of the popular festival, Spengler wore the BALDESSARINI Bavaria Edition. During the autograph session, the band "Da Rocka und da Waitler" entertained the crowds with its latest festival hit "Wenn die Welt heut untergeht".

Perfect start.
"Drive like Bruno" – This is the title of a new series of events set up by BMW Bank, presented to German motorsport fans for the first time at the DTM race in Oschersleben (DE). When the slogan made its first appearance on the BMW Bank M3 DTM and Spengler's cap, the Canadian promptly picked up his third win of the season. On the website www.drivelikebruno.de fans can win one of 200 tickets for a very special BMW driving event. In October, Spengler will join the winners in Oschersleben (DE), Maisach (DE) and Zandvoort (NL) as their personal instructor when they take to the track at the wheel of BMW 1 Series models and a Formula BMW FB02, take part in a BMW Design Workshop, or experience the fascination of BMW at close hand on a BMW Scenic Drive. Each event lasts three days.

At the wheel of a legend.
Bruno Spengler swapped the cockpit of his BMW Bank M3 DTM for that of a historic 1939 BMW 328 on Wednesday and Thursday. He was taking part in the 2012 Classic Rally Hamburg-Berlin, at which BMW Group Classic was involved as Premium Partner, just as it was last year. "I am new to the classic rally business," said Spengler. "Despite this, I coped alright and it was great fun to drive the BMW 328. It is a fascinating car."

Vita4One Racing finishes third in the Eifel Mountains.
Gregory Franchi (BE), Mathias Lauda (AT) and Frank Kechele (DE) topped the field of BMW contenders in their no. 66 BMW Z4 GT3 by finishing third in the Blancpain Endurance Series race at the Nürburgring (DE). After 86 laps the trio crossed the line with a deficit of 18.912 seconds to the winning Porsche. While Bert Longin (BE), Mike Hezemans (NL) and Henri Moser (BE) came eighth with their no. 4 BMW Z4 GT3, the front-runners in the drivers' standings – Bas Leinders (BE), Markus Palttala (FI) and Maxime Martin (BE) from Marc VDS Racing Team – had to retire early. The season will come to a close on 14th October at Navarra (ES).

Exciting FIA GT1 finale looming.
Michael Bartels (DE) and Yelmer Buurman (NL) crossed the line in fourth with their BMW Z4 GT3 in both qualifying and the championship race of the FIA GT1 World Championship round at the Nürburgring (DE) – and will head into the final race weekend of the season, to be held at Donington (GB), still in with a good chance of winning the title. In the drivers' standings, the two Vita4One Racing drivers each have 142 points to their names, just one point behind the leaders. The second BMW Z4 GT3, driven by Mathias Lauda and Nikolaus Mayr-Melnhof (both AT), came ninth and fifth respectively in the Eifel Mountains.

Double victory for ROAL Motorsport in Mugello.
Stefano Colombo (IT) and Thomas Biagi (IT) were able to win both rounds of the Italian GT Championship on Sunday with their BMW Z4 GT3. In the first race at the "Autodromo Internazionale del Mugello", car number 33 took the cheqeured flag with a gap of 6.456 seconds to the second-placed competitor. Michela Cerruti (IT) and Edoardo Liberati (IT) rounded off the strong result for ROAL with the second BMW Z4 GT3 by finishing fourth. In the second race, the squad of team principal Roberto Ravaglia (IT) celebrated a one-two. Biagi/Colombo claimed their second win, Liberati/Cerruti finished second. Thanks to this dream result, Biagi and Colombo now have 139 points to their tally, leading the way in the GT3 drivers' standings. The season finale will be staged in Monza (IT) on 21st October.

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