



BMW Motorsport News – 01/2012
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A new regular on the starting grid: BMW Motorsport News.

Whether in the DTM, the American Le Mans Series, or countless other championships: week after week BMW teams and drivers do battle for points, victories and titles. In addition, members of the huge BMW Motorsport family around the world produce plenty of headlines away from the track. 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.

Over the last week, one man in particular has dominated the news: Alessandro Zanardi (IT). As well as the three Paralympic gold medals for the former BMW driver, the first edition of “BMW Motorsport News” reports on what else has been going on in the world of BMW Motorsport.

Double Gold.

In 2007 Alessandro Zanardi, at that time still enjoying success with BMW in the FIA World Touring Car Championship, set off on his first ride on a handbike. Five years later, the 45-year-old is sitting pretty at the top of the sport. Zanardi won the Paralympic gold medal in the time trial on Wednesday, a success he repeated two days later in the road race, thanks to a magnificent finishing sprint. In the mixed competition on Saturday, he and his Italian team-mates won the silver medal. The odd coincidence is that the paracycling competitions have been held at and around the “Brands Hatch Circuit” near London – and Zanardi took full advantage of his prior knowledge of the circuit. Between 2005 and 2009, the double gold medallist completed 105 FIA WTCC races – winning four. At the games’ closing ceremony this evening, Zanardi will carry the Italian flag as his country’s most successful athlete.

Three questions for... Alessandro Zanardi.

Alessandro, your Paralympic adventure is over. Has what you have achieved in London sunk in yet?

“I am slowly realising what has happened to me over the past few days. Up until now I have felt a bit like a ping pong ball, being hustled from one appointment to the next. This morning I did an interview for a major American TV station. It took an eternity. In the end I asked: ‘How much of this interview will you actually broadcast?’ They answered: ‘All of it, of course. You are the top story!’ I never thought there would be such a reaction from all around the world. All I can say is: Cool! But that is not what it was all about for me. These games have been magical. I have two years behind me, during which I threw myself into the preparations for this event with a huge amount of passion. I am obviously proud of the way it has turned out.”



How much do the gold medals mean compared to the success you have enjoyed in motorsport?

"The most recent success in any athlete's career is always the nicest. However, I can't really say that I am any happier today than I was a few days ago. You do not always need to be achieving great things in life. Anyone who is driven purely by his ambition is making things unnecessarily difficult for himself. It is more about the passion. Then the road to the big goal also makes you happy. The three medals will always remind me of the long and exciting road I have behind me – at the end of which I once again crossed the finish line in front of all my competitors."

What is next for Alessandro Zanardi?

"I don't know yet. The situation is exactly the same as two years ago. Back then I had no idea that I would be competing at this level here in London. The key is that I will continue to be curious. My curiosity will find a new passion in me for something, and that will open up new opportunities. I will once again be in the unique situation of being able to choose. I will make the best choice for myself and will let my passion sway me."

A brace of birthdays.

On Monday, both BMW DTM driver Augusto Farfus (BR) and BMW ALMS driver Jörg Müller (DE) had reason to celebrate: Farfus turned 29 and fellow BMW driver Müller celebrated his 43rd birthday. While Müller was in action with BMW Team RLL in Baltimore (US) two days previous, Farfus and his family used the weekend off from the DTM to take a short trip to the Mediterranean island of Corsica. "It rained on two of the four days, but I still had a very nice birthday," said the Brazilian.

Hand experiences "Driving Pleasure".

BMW DTM and ALMS driver Joey Hand (US) paid the BMW Championship in Indianapolis (US) a visit on Tuesday. Ahead of the start of the tournament, which is one of the most prestigious in the world, the reigning GT champion in the American Le Mans Series joined professional golfer Bo van Pelt (US) and former Colts star Ken Dilger (US) for a special challenge in the Indiana Colts' stadium. All three were attempting to hit a golf ball the length of the field and through a target hung between the uprights. Hand also took part in the traditional Pro-Am tournament at the "Crooked Stick Golf Course". "There is no such thing as a perfect lap in motor racing – and no such thing as a perfect round in golf," said the 33-year-old. "That is why they are both such fun. There is always room for improvement. I was much more nervous about the shots in the Colts' stadium than I am ahead of a race. I have huge respect for professional golfers."

Priaulx drives the latest BMW engine technology.

Andy Priaulx (GB) was given a special honour during a TV recording at the BMW Driving Experience in Maisach (DE) on Thursday: he became one of the very first drivers to experience a prototype of the new 1.5-litre, three-cylinder BMW TwinPower turbo engine at the wheel of a BMW 1 Series. The three-time world touring car champion was impressed by the innovative engine. "Smoothness, responsiveness, free-revving performance and torque characteristics: you can sense



straight away that this engine is closely related to the six-cylinder,” said Priaux. “I also love the sporty and unmistakable sound of the engine.”

Werner flies flag for BMW in Braunschweig.

The eighth DTM race of the season on 16th September at the “Motorsport Arena Oschersleben” (DE) is looming large. Dirk Werner (DE) of BMW Team Schnitzer visited Braunschweig (DE) on Saturday. The 31-year-old gave interviews, signed autographs and spent time chatting to the fans. This was a home event for Werner: he lived in Kissenbrück (DE), just 20 kilometres away, for many years. “I am sure that a lot of fans – including friends and acquaintances from days gone by – will be in Oschersleben this weekend,” said Werner. “The event on Schlossplatz was certainly a good advertisement.”

A special kind of fitness training.

Augusto Farfus entered the “Course du Trophée” in his adopted home of Monte Carlo (MC) on Sunday. The Brazilian not only used the 16-kilometre course to work on his fitness, but also joined the other runners in enjoying the picturesque scenery around “La Turbie”. The route took the participants over the 550-metre high “Plateau de la Justice”.

BMW Z4 GT3 in the top ten at Mount Fuji.

In the sixth round of the Japanese Super GT Championship, Nobuteru Taniguchi (JP) and Tatsuya Kataoka (JP) finished eighth in the GT300 race at the wheel of their BMW Z4 GT3. The second BMW Z4 GT3, driven by Taku Bamba (JP) and Masahiro Sasaki (JP) came 11th at the “Fuji International Speedway”.

Podium in California.

The Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge was at Laguna Seca (US) at the weekend. Mark Boden (US) and Bryan Sellers (US) of the Fall-Line Motorsports team finished second in their BMW M3 to make it onto the podium. In the penultimate race of the season in the GRAND-AM Championship, Scott Pruett (US) and Memo Rojas (MX) had to settle for sixth place on the same track in a BMW Riley run by Team Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates.

Guest start for Schubert.

The Schubert Motorsport team made a guest appearance with the BMW Z4 GT3 at the sixth race weekend in the International GT Open. The Swedish pair of Lars Stugemo and Daniel Roos finished ninth and fourth in the GTS class in the two rounds held at Hungaroring, near Budapest (HU).

Ecurie Ecosse scores a podium in Silverstone.

In the British GT Championship, Ecurie Ecosse claimed second place with the BMW Z4 GT3 in Silverstone (GB). Ollie Hancock (GB) and Alasdair McCaig (GB) completed a total of 81 laps over the course of the three-hour race, finishing 20.597 seconds behind the winning McLaren.



BMW M3 GT4 shows its stamina in Barcelona.

A total of 12 BMW racing cars lined up at the 24-hour race in Barcelona (ES) this weekend. After 586 laps, the Team Partl Motorsport BMW M3 GT4 – driven by Max Partl (DE), Jörg Weidinger (DE) and Hermann Bock (DE) – crossed the finish line as the best-placed BMW in ninth, claiming victory in the SP3 class.

Misfortune for Marc VDS Racing in Zolder.

Bas Leinders (BE), Nicky Catsburg (NL), Henri Moser (CH) and Markus Palttala (FI) left the 24-hour race in Zolder (BE) without the top result they had hoped for. After second place in qualifying and an impressive start, the team's BMW Z4 GT3 retired with a technical fault while leading the race. The four remaining BMWs in the field were not able to challenge for victory. The best-placed representative was the number 5 BMW M3 of Team Euro Formula Racing, which came home after 24 hours in 11th.

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