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### Marco Wittmann: “A home win is like winning the title for me”

- **Marco Wittmann looks forward to his tenth race weekend at the Norisring**
- **In an interview, the BMW works driver discusses the excitement ahead of his home outing and his special connection with the DTM**

Munich. Round three of the season involves a trip to the Norisring (7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July), a venue that Marco Wittmann is particularly excited about. His home city of Fürth is just round the corner from Germany’s only street circuit. Wittmann, now 33 years of age, has particularly fond memories of the DTM race weekend at the Norisring in 2018, when he took victory at his home event. In an interview, the BMW driver speaks about that special success, the unique characteristics of the Norisring, and his role as a lone warrior.

#### **The next DTM event takes place in Nuremberg. What makes the legendary Norisring so special?**

It is the only street circuit in Germany and on the DTM calendar. The whole flair around the circuit is unique and is a bit like being in a beer garden. The spectators are closer to the action, everything is even more compact. Plus, the Norisring has often provided a great spectacle and some crashes in the past. Furthermore, the fact that this is my tenth time there makes it special for me personally.

#### **Five years ago you won at the Norisring. How big is a home win like that?**

That victory at the Norisring means just as much to me as my two DTM titles. That is particularly true from an emotional perspective, as I had to wait a few years for that moment. I can still clearly recall the race to this day. Although I started seventh, I was able to make it through to the front. It would obviously be a dream to repeat that success. There is nothing better than celebrating on the podium at your home race.

#### **How much support will you have at the Norisring?**

If I include the fan club, there are more than 100 people on my ticket list. It is fantastic to receive so much support from family, friends and sponsors. That obviously means a busy schedule for me off the track, but I am totally looking forward to the weekend.

#### **What challenges does a street circuit pose?**

As you do not have any opportunity to test there, free practice is the first outing on the track for us drivers. Unlike at permanent racetracks, the Norisring has a lot of bumps. Plus, the grip at a street circuit improves consistently over the course of the race weekend. Furthermore, there is always the question of how much risk to take at the Norisring, as there are no run-off zones or gravel beds. In case of doubt, there is always the wall next to the track.

#### **Which sections of the track do you particularly like?**

One of my favourite sections is the Schöller S. As a driver, you have to perform a balancing act there: you have to get the car through the corners as fast as possible with little downforce, whilst at the same

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time avoiding touching the wall because you are carrying too much speed in the exit from the corner. It is also a unique feeling to pass the many fans and the imposing backdrop of the large stone grandstands on the start/finish straight.

### **You are now in your eleventh season in the DTM. What is it you like so much about this series?**

What makes the DTM special for me is definitely the fact that there is one driver per car. Unlike in other GT3 series and endurance racing, you are on your own and there are no compromises with your team-mates. Among other things, that applies to the seat position in the car, the set-up, and the race strategy. In the DTM, everything is configured to suit you. That does create a bit of pressure, but also makes it all the more appealing. Then you also have the format with the sprint races, which you will rarely find outside of GT racing.

### **How has the DTM changed since your rookie season in 2013?**

In my early years, the field consisted almost entirely of works drivers. Today, you also come up against talented youngsters, who are vying for works contracts in the DTM. That is a super mix, and the results show just how evenly matched the majority of the field is. The DTM is a platform for top drivers. It must remain that way, even though GT drivers, as a rule, no longer race exclusively in on series nowadays.

### **The Project 1 team currently enters one BMW M4 GT3. How are you coping with your role as a lone warrior?**

That is obviously an extra challenge. There are other newcomers as well as us, but we are not able to gain so much data with just one car. For example, if you had a second car you could try out more set-up options. We don't have that opportunity at the moment. Despite that, we are working hard together every day to ensure that we keep improving all the time.

### **As a two-time DTM champion, what advice would you give young drivers?**

Looking back at my career, I would say that you simply have to take a realistic approach from a certain point. After my time in Formula 3, I could have continued towards Formula 1. However, I decided back then to take part in a DTM test with BMW for touring car racing. Looking back, that decision was worth its weight in gold. As a young lad in a kart, you dream of racing in Formula 1. However, I would recommend to anyone to broaden their horizons. Nowadays, there are many opportunities to one day make it into the ADAC GT Masters or the DTM and to be involved in professional motorsport.

### **Your BMW M4 GT3, the "Green Machine", proudly sports the colours of Schaeffler. What is your connection to the company?**

We have been working together since the 2019 season, when I became a brand ambassador for Schaeffler. The relationship runs deeper than a classic partnership. That is all down to the regional proximity – I only live about a quarter of an hour's drive from Schaeffler's headquarters in Herzogenaurach. We are regularly in contact and exchange ideas. I am even often in contact with the Schaeffler board members. It is unusual to have such a close partnership. I am very grateful for the faith they have shown in me.

## Media Information

Tickets for the weekend at the Norisring are available online at dtm.com. Admission is free for children and under 16s when accompanied by a paying adult. ADAC members receive a ten percent discount when booking online in advance.

The two DTM races at the street circuit in Nuremberg both start at 13:30 on the Saturday (8<sup>th</sup> July) and the Sunday (9<sup>th</sup> July). ProSieben is showing all races in the 2023 season live on free-to-air TV in Germany. The qualifying sessions are also streamed live at ran.de. Rounding off the comprehensive TV package is live coverage of the DTM in over 70 countries around the world.

### 2023 DTM calendar

26.05. – 28.05.2023	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
23.06. – 25.06.2023	Circuit Zandvoort / NL
07.07. – 09.07.2023	Norisring
04.08. – 06.08.2023	Nürburgring
18.08. – 20.08.2023	DEKRA Lausitzring
08.09. – 10.09.2023	Sachsenring
22.09. – 24.09.2023	Red Bull Ring / A
20.10. – 22.10.2023	Hockenheimring Baden-Württemberg

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