



Media Information
BMW Motorsport SIM Racing
28th April 2020

BMW M Customer Racing teams take to the virtual track in BMW race cars.

- **BMW M Customer Racing teams adapt to the current situation and discover sim racing.**
- **While Walkenhorst Motorsport conquers the virtual Nordschleife with the BMW Z4 GT3, Turner Motorsport competes in the IMSA iRacing Pro Series with the BMW M8 GTE.**
- **Niclas Königbauer: “Esports has been on our list for a long time. However, for time reasons, it has never made it to the top of the list.”**

Munich. Sim racing highlights are coming thick and fast at the moment. Last weekend, the calendar featured the iRacing 24h Nürburgring powered by VCO. On Thursday it is round three of the IMSA iRacing Pro Series, while the Digital Nürburgring Endurance Series powered by VCO continues returns with race four on Saturday. Several BMW M Customer Racing teams are always at the heart of the action and have recognised the signs of the time and expanded their activities to include the virtual world. We introduce two teams who regularly take to the track in virtual BMW race cars: Walkenhorst Motorsport and Turner Motorsport.

The Nürburgring-Nordschleife (GER) has been the racing home of Walkenhorst Motorsport for many years. While the team from Melle (GER) has enjoyed great success for BMW M Motorsport at the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps (BEL) and in the Intercontinental GT Challenge, the ‘Green Hell’ has a very special appeal for the team. When it became apparent that real motor racing was not going to be possible for the foreseeable future, the decision to enter the world of was a logical one for team manager Niclas Königbauer. “At that moment, when it became clear, we immediately took a good look around and considered what we could do instead. After all, we are all positively mad about motorsport,” said Königbauer. “We very quickly hit upon sim racing on the Nordschleife. Esports has been on our list for a long time. However, for time reasons, it has never made it to the top of the list.”



Without any major preparation or professional help from a sim racing team, Walkenhorst Motorsport assembled two teams within a short time frame. So far, they have fielded two BMW Z4 GT3s in all the races in the DNLS powered by VCO. Many of Walkenhorst Motorsport's regular drivers take their place at the wheel of their racing simulators at home: David Pittard (GBR), Mikkell Jensen (DEN) and Christian Krognnes (NOR). They are supported by sim racers Scott and Sam Michaels (both GBR), but are also investing a huge amount of time in getting up to the standard of the top sim racers who compete on the virtual Nordschleife every week. "It is incredible how much time the guys spend on their simulators and how much detailed work they invest in the set-up," said Königbauer. Pittard added, "I did used to sim race as a hobby, but had to face the fact that I was miles behind the real sim racers when I started to get involved with Walkenhorst Motorsport. I have trained incredibly hard for the last four weeks and spent at least four to five hours a day on the simulator."

Podium already for Walkenhorst Motorsport.

All that effort has paid dividends already. In the latest DNLS race, both Walkenhorst Motorsport BMW Z4 GT3s were in contention at the front of the field. In the end, Pittard, Scott and Sam Michaels made it onto the podium in second place. Jensen and Krognnes were also among the front-runners for much of the race, despite not being supported by a sim racer. "In reality, we have some of the best drivers on the Nordschleife in our team," said Königbauer. "As the simulations are now incredibly close to reality, I was confident that our guys would get up to speed relatively quickly, despite their lack of experience. For us to achieve a podium so soon was not necessarily expected."

One Walkenhorst Motorsport engineer, whose primary role ahead of the race is to discuss the right set-up and strategies with Königbauer and the drivers, has also contributed to the success. That will once again be the case this weekend, and throughout the whole season in the DNLS powered by VCO. It is not yet certain whether this may result in more outings in other racing series and BMW cars. "Our focus, when real motor racing hopefully resumes at some point, is to continue to run what we are starting now on the sim racing scene," said Königbauer. "We are examining other options with great interest, however we must always weigh up whether they are possible without having to hand over the whole project."



Turner Motorsport puts its faith in the virtual BMW M8 GTE.

While Walkenhorst Motorsport is focussing on races on the virtual Nordschleife, Turner Motorsport is taking on the digital racetracks of North America with the BMW M8 GTE. In the real world, Will Turner's team fields the BMW M6 GT3 in the GTD class of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and the BMW M4 GT4 in various racing series. On the sim racing scene, it currently runs a BMW M8 GTE in the team's classic blue and yellow livery in the IMSA iRacing Pro Series, in which the circuit in Mid-Ohio (USA) hosts round three of the season this Thursday.

"At Turner Motorsport, we have always looked for new ways of presenting our passion for racing, our brand and our partners," said Turner. "As such, Esports was already on our radar before the current situation developed, as it offers great marketing opportunities at minimal costs. We have been monitoring the market for years and believe that it has not yet peaked."

Turner Motorsport's driver line-up features youngster Robby Foley (USA) who drives a BMW M8 GTE in the IMSA iRacing Pro Series and caught the eye with pole position at the opening round of the season in Sebring (USA). "Having him on board makes our entry into sim racing both easier and more exciting," said Turner. "He has been actively involved in Esports for years and is an excellent ambassador for Turner Motorsport, our partners and the BMW Motorsport Esports activities."

Youngster Foley working together with BMW works drivers.

Foley's next outing in the BMW M8 GTE is on Thursday. "It is fantastic to compete on equal terms against some well-known drivers and – as is the case with BMW works drivers Bruno Spengler, Philipp Eng, Jesse Krohn, Nick Catsburg, John Edwards and Connor De Phillippi – to work with them on the set-up," said Foley.

Although he is only 23 years old, he is an old-timer on the sim racing scene compared to the majority of other professional racing drivers. "I started with iRacing back in 2011, just for fun," said Foley. "I have been taking sim racing really seriously for about a year. Since then, I have also had professional equipment at home. I approach it exactly the same way as real racing, particularly in the current situation."

In real motorsport, Foley has been working with Turner Motorsport since the 2018 season. Last year, he won the IMSA races in Mosport (CAN) and Road Atlanta (USA) alongside Bill Auberlen (USA), and finished runner-up in the GTD drivers' championship. "The collaboration with Will Turner and his team is fantastic," said



Foley. “Turner Motorsport is always innovative and finding new ways to present itself. You can see that now in sim racing, where the team already has plans for the future. I am looking forward to everything that is still to come, whether it be in virtual or real motor racing.”

Note to editors:

We are aware of the current difficult situation. Despite this, however, we have decided to provide you with regular media information in the coming weeks and months. We will report on our BMW works drivers on the sim racing scene and we will also provide you with interviews and background stories, particularly dealing with technology topics within BMW Group Motorsport.

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