



BMW Motorsport Junior Programme

**Review of the 2015 BMW Motorsport Junior programme – “Junior of the Year” to be announced on 4<sup>th</sup> December.**

Munich (DE), 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015. What started in March with a showdown between many talented young drivers in the BMW M235i Racing in Monteblanco (ES) is now heading towards its thrilling climax. The winner of the 2015 BMW Motorsport Junior programme will be announced on 4<sup>th</sup> December at the BMW Sports Trophy Award Ceremony in Munich (DE). Under the guidance of chief instructor Dirk Adorf (DE), Victor Bouveng (SE), Nick Cassidy (NZ), Louis Delétraz (CH) and Trent Hindman (US) have undergone an intense training programme, during which they have demonstrated and improved their skills as racing drivers on numerous occasions.

Back in April, a welcome event offered the young drivers in the class of 2015 a first opportunity to get to know each other. Right at the start of their comprehensive training programme a climbing session with BMW Outdoor Ambassador Stefan Glowacz (DE) showed the young racing drivers just what it means to work as a team – an important lesson for the individual athletes, and one that prepared them perfectly for their subsequent race outings on the endurance circuit.

After eight months together, a jury consisting of BMW Motorsport management and engineers must now decide who will be named “BMW Motorsport Junior of the Year 2015” and succeed Jesse Krohn (FI), who was the top participant in the first class to go through the new BMW Motorsport Junior programme in 2014.

Krohn stepped up into GT racing in his second year as a BMW Motorsport Junior, and has achieved a number of successes of note. He contested the entire series in the European Le Mans Series (ELMS) for the Marc VDS Racing team, sharing the cockpit of the BMW Z4 GTE with the likes of BMW works driver Andy Priaulx (GB). Krohn and his team-mates claimed victory in the LMGTE class at the season finale in Estoril (PT). He finished runner-up in the Drivers’ Championship. In addition, Krohn also appeared regularly at the wheel of a BMW Z4 GT3 in the second half of the VLN Endurance Championship on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (DE). He won one race with the Walkenhorst Motorsport team and claimed pole position at the final round of the season. “That was the best year of my motorsport career so far,” said Krohn. “I did not expect BMW Motorsport to arrange such a fantastic programme for me. In the ELMS, I learned an incredible amount from Andy Priaulx and the Marc VDS Racing team. Every time I climbed into a GT car I learned something new. On top of that, I had the VLN races on the best racetrack in the world – I could not be happier with the way this season has panned out.”

Bouveng raced alongside Krohn in the BMW Z4 GT3 in the final VLN race of the season. After regular outings on the Nordschleife at the wheel of the BMW M235i Racing in the first half of the season – including a start in the BMW M235i Racing Media Car run by BMW Motorsport at the Nürburgring 24 Hours – the Swede was given his first opportunity to gain experience in the BMW Z4 GT3 at the final races of the year. Together with the other 2015 BMW Motorsport Juniors, Bouveng raced at the 24 Hours of Zolder (BE) and the 12 Hours of Brno (CZ), where the BMW M235i



Racing won its class. “My goal for this year was to get as much driving in on the Nordschleife as possible, and to learn as much as possible about the BMW M235i Racing,” said Bouveng. “I never expected it to work out so well, or to be given the chance to drive the BMW Z4 GT3 in the second half of the season. It has been a very steep learning curve this year. I gained an awful lot from the races and our mental training in Silverstone.”

Like Bouveng, Cassidy was also a member of the team that took its place on the podium in Brno. The highlight of the New Zealander’s year as a BMW Motorsport Junior came when he was offered the chance to test drive the new BMW M6 GT3. He also gained his first race experience on the Nordschleife in a BMW M235i Racing at the finale of the VLN season. Cassidy also dominated proceedings in the Japanese Formula 3 Championship, where he won seven races en route to the Drivers’ title. “I really enjoyed the year,” said Cassidy. “BMW Motorsport put together a great programme for me, and I was also very successful in Formula 3 in Japan. My highlight with BMW was obviously the test in the BMW M6 GT3. I am new to GT racing, but was still given the opportunity to drive such a fantastic car. This experience will certainly help me on the way to becoming a professional racing driver. On top of all that, I also made my debut on the Nordschleife and competed in the Formula 3 race in Macau in the very same month – it doesn’t get any better than that.”

Delétraz, like Cassidy, enjoyed success in single-seater racing in 2015, as well as participating in the BMW Motorsport Junior programme. He comfortably won the Drivers’ title in the Formula Renault 2.0 Northern European Cup and finished runner-up overall in the Eurocup Formula Renault 2.0. Delétraz was in action for BMW Motorsport at the wheel of the BMW M235i Racing at the 24 Hours of Zolder. “It has been a fantastic year with BMW Motorsport. I have learned an awful lot, both on and off the track. I also had a successful year in the single-seater series I raced in – fantastic,” said Delétraz.

Hindman focussed on his outings in the BMW M235i Racing and the BMW M3 in 2015. Within the BMW Motorsport Junior programme, he started at both the 24 Hours of Zolder and the 12 Hours of Brno, and also gained valuable race experience in the BMW M235i Racing throughout Europe. In addition, he also contested the entire season in the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge in North America, where he shared the cockpit of his BMW M3 with Ashley Freiberg (US). The duo won the season finale in Road Atlanta (US). Hindman, who won the Drivers’ title in the series in 2014, finished eighth overall this time around. “Thank you very much to BMW Motorsport for the opportunity to be a part of this programme,” said Hindman. “I have really learned a lot about racing in Europe. After all, pretty much everything was new to me here. I head back to America with a lot of valuable experience, which will definitely make me a better racing driver.”

As well as the intense race schedule, the BMW Motorsport Juniors also benefitted from much more training. They twice visited the iZone Driver Performance Centre in Silverstone (GB), where they underwent intense mental and simulator training under the guidance of renowned sports psychiatrist Prof. Dr. Dieter Hackfort (DE). Dunlop, exclusive tyre partner for the BMW M235i Racing, gave the Juniors a glimpse behind the scenes of its production site in Hanau (DE).



Having seen the youngsters share many valuable experiences together, Adorf can look back positively on the second year of the BMW Motorsport Junior programme: “The BMW Motorsport Juniors in the class of 2015 were extremely strong. They all knew how to be quick in a racing car before they came to us. As such, our main task was, through their outings in the BMW M235i Racing and GT cars, to make them into more rounded racing drivers who are at home in any kind of racing car, whether in sprint or endurance races. We also had the goal of forming the Juniors into a team, which would work well together at an endurance race and set the car up as well as possible together. That is often what makes the difference in GT racing. I am proud of the huge progress they have made over the course of the year.”

You can find a video with scenes from the 2015 BMW Motorsport Junior Programme here: <https://youtu.be/TEk5qz4uf2U>

**Press contact:** Jörg Kottmeier, Tel.: +49 (0) 170 566 6112, [joerg.kottmeier@bmw.de](mailto:joerg.kottmeier@bmw.de)  
Ingo Lehbrink, Tel.: +49 (0) 176 203 40224, [ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de](mailto:ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de)  
Daniela Maier, Tel.: +49 (0) 151 601 24545, [daniela.maier@bmw.de](mailto:daniela.maier@bmw.de)

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