



FIA World Touring Car Championship (WTCC) 2005

Rounds 19 & 20, Macau (China) – 18th/20th November 2005 – Races

Andy Priaulx wins the World Touring Car Championship in a BMW 320i – BMW takes Manufacturers' title – One-two win in final race.

Macau (China), 20th November 2005. In a gripping final to the FIA World Touring Car Championship in Macau, Andy Priaulx (GBR) of BMW Team UK has claimed the World Championship title. The 31-year-old finished runner-up in both races on the Guia Circuit to oust BMW Team Deutschland driver Dirk Müller (GER) – who had arrived in China as the World Championship leader – from the top of the drivers' rankings. After 20 races Priaulx had a tally of 101 points, followed by Dirk Müller in second place with 86.

In the Manufacturers' World Championship, too, the drivers of the BMW national teams made the victory complete. In that classification, BMW scored 273 to carve out a lead of 37 points, relegating Alfa Romeo into second place. Among the private entrants, it was a BMW driver again who came out on top: all Marc Hennerici (GER) needed was a third-placed finish in the first race to defend his lead in the Independents Trophy. After 1987, when Roberto Ravaglia (ITA) driving a BMW M3 won the first World Championship title in touring car racing, BMW has now also triumphed in the new edition of the World Championship.

The first race on the 6.2-kilometre city circuit was won by Augusto Farfus jr. (BRA) ahead of Priaulx and Rickard Rydell (SWE). Dirk Müller was unlucky on the last lap, when a damaged drive shaft set him back from fourth to tenth place. The winner of the second race was Duncan Huisman (NLD) of BMW Team Holland, who beat Priaulx and Alain Menu (SUI). As Dirk Müller had already been forced to retire from lap three after an accident, Priaulx was able to secure an early claim to the World Championship title. Alfa Romeo driver Fabrizio Giovanardi (ITA), who had also come to the event in the former Portuguese colony with title chances, had to retire after an accident in the first race.

In winning the World Championship, BMW has further boosted its impressive record in touring car racing. Apart from the two World Championship titles, it has a total of 24 European Championship wins under its belt. In 2005, the BMW 320i dominated the scene. In its farewell season it helped BMW drivers to claim a total of nine wins, four poles and eleven fastest laps. 2006 will see the new BMW 320si, the race version of the special model of the same name, being fielded in the WTCC. It is set to continue the success story of the BMW 3 Series in touring car racing.

In Priaulx' case, it was consistency that proved the key to success. He made it onto the podium eleven times and used every opportunity to collect valuable World Championship points. In Oschersleben he managed to take a race win. While Dirk Müller long led the drivers' rankings, the racing driver from Guernsey in the Channel Islands remained hot on his tail. In Istanbul, Priaulx managed to overtake his fellow BMW driver, but he fought back in Valencia to reclaim the lead. Thus the winner wasn't decided until the 52nd Macau Grand Prix.



Reactions:

Mario Theissen (BMW Motorsport Director): “Congratulations to Andy Priaulx on winning the World Championship title. Duncan Huisman has also achieved a great result by winning the second race. For BMW it has been a fantastic weekend in which we have not only won the Drivers’ title but also taken victory in the Manufacturers’ Championship and the privateer classification. I am delighted that, with Roberto Ravaglia and Andy Priaulx, we have the old and the new World Touring Car Champion with us.”

Andy Priaulx (BMW Team UK): “At last the pressure’s off. After winning pole on Friday, I knew that I had achieved ten percent of the task at most. The first race was tough. Rickard Rydell behind me was pushing hard, and I had a duel with Augusto Farfus. When I found out in the second race that Dirk had retired, I was free to fight Duncan. Overall, this season has been even more difficult than the 2004 ETCC. I had the feeling that I was better on my bad days than last year, but not as good as I could have been on my good days. Even so, I’ve made it. I’d like to thank BMW and the RBM team, who have once again done a perfect job of preparing my car today.”

Bart Mampaey (Team Manager, BMW Team UK): “Andy has put in an incredible season. Pole position here in Macau is the safest place to be as a driver. After a second-placed finish in the first race, it put him in a position to pave the way for the title win. But Duncan’s success has also shown that he is among the best drivers here in Macau. The one-two win and Andy’s title are a tremendous result for BMW and RBM – and the reward for our hard work.”

Dirk Müller (BMW Team Deutschland): “This result is very disappointing. I lost the World Championship in the first race. My drive shaft broke – and basically that was the end of it. I warmly congratulate Andy, he has put in a great performance. Even so, our team had a great year, but now I’m looking forward to getting back home.”

Duncan Huisman (BMW Team Holland): “In Macau it was my job to support BMW in winning the World Touring Car Championship. Obviously I’m really pleased that I managed to do so by winning a race. It was great fun being involved here again. At the start of the weekend I was very unlucky, and the balance of my car wasn’t ideal. But in time for the second race I managed to exploit the car’s potential to the full.”



Results

BMW Team Deutschland – Schnitzer Motorsport

No. 42 - Jörg Müller (GER) Grid: 10th – Races: DNF and not started
No. 43 - Dirk Müller (GER) Grid: 5th – Races: 10th and DNF

BMW Team UK – RBM

No. 1 - Andy Priaulx (GBR) Grid: 1st – Races: both 2nd

BMW Team Italy-Spain – ROAL Motorsport

No. 4 - Alex Zanardi (ITA) Grid: 24th – Races: 13th and 5th
No. 5 - Antonio Garcia (ESP) Grid: 11th – Races: 9th and DNS

BMW Team Holland – RBM

No. 41 - Duncan Huisman (NLD) Grid: 15th – Races: 6th and 1st

BMW private teams

Crawford Racing – No. 28 – Carl Rosenblad (SWE) Races: 12th and DNF
Proteam Motorsport – No. 30 – Stefano d’Aste (ITA) Races: 11th and DNF
– No. 31 – Giuseppe Ciro (ITA) Races: DNF and 9th
Wiechers-Sport – No. 32 – Marc Hennerici (GER) Races: 14th and DNF
Engstler Motorsport – No. 64 – Peter Scharmach (GER) Races: 16th and DNF

Results Race 1: 1st Augusto Farfus jr. (BRA/Alfa Romeo), 2nd Andy Priaulx (GBR/BMW 320i) +0.496 seconds, 3rd Rickard Rydell (SWE/SEAT) +1.202, 4th Nicola Larini (ITA/Chevrolet) +2.729, 5th Alain Menu (SUI/Chevrolet) +13.706, 6th Duncan Huisman (NLD/BMW 320i) +14.287, 7th James Thompson (GBR/Alfa Romeo) +14.440, 8th Peter Terting (GER/SEAT) +15.172

Results Race 2: 1st Duncan Huisman (NLD/BMW 320i), 2nd Andy Priaulx (GBR/BMW 320i) +0.257 seconds, 3rd Alain Menu (SUI/Chevrolet) +1.253, 4th Augusto Farfus jr. (BRA/Alfa Romeo) +2.428, 5th Alessandro Zanardi (ITA/BMW 320i) +3.179, 6th Jordi Gene (ESP/SEAT) +3.575, 7th Peter Terting (GER/SEAT) +4.193, 8th Rickard Rydell (SWE/SEAT) +4.969

2005 Drivers’ Championship: 1st Andy Priaulx 101 points, 2nd Dirk Müller 86, 3rd Fabrizio Giovanardi 81, 4th Augusto Farfus jr. 64, 5th Jörg Müller 59, 6th Rickard Rydell 56, 7th Gabriele Tarquini 55, 8th James Thompson 53, 9th Antonio Garcia 51, 10th Alessandro Zanardi 35

2005 Manufacturers’ Championship:

1st BMW 273 points
2nd Alfa Romeo 236
3rd SEAT 183
4th Chevrolet 73
5th Ford 13



Interview with BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen.

The 2005 World Touring Car Championship is over. Are you happy with the way the season has turned out?

BMW Motorsport Director Mario Theissen: "The FIA WTCC has celebrated a successful comeback. The fact that the championship wasn't decided until the season final and three drivers were in contention for the title up to the end is impressive testimony to the balanced nature of the series. Compared to the European Touring Car Championship over recent years, the standard has improved considerably, which also resulted in a better show for the spectators."

What pleases you more, winning the Drivers' or the Manufacturers' title?

Theissen: "For BMW it's a fantastic result to have claimed victory in both World Championship classifications. Also, we should not forget Marc Hennerici, who managed to secure the Independents Trophy in a BMW 320i. Naturally the Drivers' title is paramount for the racers. I am all the more delighted that Andy Priaulx as one of our drivers has made it. Of course the Manufacturers' title is also very important for us. In the 2003 and 2004 ETCC we already came top in this category. The fact that we have been able to claim the same success in the World Championship reflects the strength of the BMW 320i."

How would you assess Andy Priaulx' performance?

Theissen: "Since his ETCC debut in 2003, Andy has persuaded us with his consistently good performance. Last year he claimed the European Championship title where, just as he did this year, he managed to keep the upper hand in the contest with Dirk Müller. He has great technical understanding and works tirelessly with his engineers to improve his car. That's what marks him out. Along with his driving prowess, his consistency and the support of the RBM Team, that quality has earned him a well-deserved title."

The FIA World Touring Car Championship has been held twice, and on both occasions a BMW driver took the title...

Theissen: "Yes, in 1987 Roberto Ravaglia won the championship in a BMW M3. Since then there have been a lot of changes in touring car racing, but Roberto continues his successful involvement as team manager of BMW Team Italy-Spain. He can be proud of what his drivers Alessandro Zanardi and Antonio Garcia have achieved this year. Alessandro won his first World Championship race in Oschersleben, which was one of the highlights of the year."

What are your expectations for the FIA WTCC in the coming year?

Theissen: "We await the first race outing of the new BMW 320si with keen anticipation. I'm convinced that this car will continue the longstanding success story of the BMW 3 Series in touring car racing. From an organisational point of view there will be a number of changes. The 2006 WTCC, for example, will no longer be held jointly with the FIA GT Championship. We'll have to wait and see what impact this change has. Overall, the championship has tremendous potential which must continue to be exploited."



Profile: World Touring Car Champion Andy Priaulx.

After winning the title in the 2004 FIA ETCC, Andy Priaulx has proved again this season that he ranks among the world's best touring car drivers. The BMW Team UK driver kept his nerve in a gripping season final in Macau to secure the World Championship title. In doing so, Priaulx becomes the heir of Roberto Ravaglia, who in 1987 won the last World Touring Car Championship in a BMW M3.

For the 31-year-old the World Championship title represents the current climax of a textbook career in touring car racing. In 2002 Priaulx contested his first complete season in the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) and immediately took a win and three pole positions. The following year he made his debut for BMW Team Great Britain driving a BMW 320i in the European Championship. He was fighting for the title up to the very last and ended the season in third place with three race wins. Then in 2004 he managed to carry off the FIA ETCC title.

The RBM team headed by Bart Mampaey, which also fielded Priaulx' BMW 320i in the season just past, speaks highly of the technical capabilities and motivation of the racing driver based in the Channel Island of Guernsey. Even long after practice or qualifying sessions were over, you could still see him discussing improvements to his car with the engineers. And Priaulx was usually spot-on with his suggestions.

In the course of his career, the family man has competed in virtually every conceivable racing machine – from go-karts all the way to powerboats. Since 2005 Priaulx can also claim to have taken a Formula One car to the limit. Over the year he has carried out several tests for the BMW WilliamsF1 Team and also impressed the engineers with his detailed and precise feedback.

As if the World Championship title and successful outings in the Formula One racer weren't enough, Priaulx also won the Nürburgring 24-Hour Race in May in a BMW M3 GTR. Alongside Duncan Huisman (NLD), Pedro Lamy (PRT) and Boris Said (USA), the new BMW works driver demonstrated his talent on the notorious North Loop as well. It would be no exaggeration to say that Priaulx has just rounded off the perfect motor sport season.

Date/place of birth: 8th August 1974/Guernsey (Channel Islands)
Residence: Guernsey
Marital status: married to Joanne,
one son, Sebastian, one daughter, Daniella
Website: www.andypriaulx.com

1984 kart races in the Channel Islands
1985–1990 Motocross
1990 1st place Motocross 250 cc Channel Islands Championship



1991–1995	hillclimb races
1995	1 st place RAC MSA British Hillclimb Champion with maximum points score and 14 wins over two seasons
1996	races in Formula Renault
1997	British Formula 3 Championship scholarship
1998	races in Renault Spider Cup, one pole position, three podiums; 2 nd place in Formula Palmer Audi Winter series
1999	1 st place Renault Spider Cup, 13 wins from pole; BTCC test driver for Renault Williams, Vauxhall and Ford Awards: BARC President's Cup for Outstanding Achievement, Guernsey Ambassador of the Year
2000	British Formula 3 Championship for Renault UK, three podiums, pole in Silverstone; F3 races in Macau and Korea for Manor Motorsport
2001	British Formula 3 Championship, two wins, two poles, ten podiums; 2 nd place from pole in F3 Super Prix in Korea; F3 Grand Prix in Macau; 2 nd place and pole for Vauxhall in the BTCC
2002	5 th place British Touring Car Championship for Honda; competed in Australia in the Bathurst 1000 and Queensland 500 endurance races (Holden TWR)
2003	3 rd place FIA ETCC (BMW 320i), three wins
2004	1 st place FIA ETCC (BMW 320i), BMW Team Great Britain 2 nd place Macau Grand Prix – Guia Race Spa-Francorchamps 24-Hour Race (BMW M3 GTR)
2005	1 st place FIA WTCC (BMW 320i), BMW Team UK 1 st place Nürburgring 24-Hour Race (BMW M3 GTR)



Profile: BMW Team UK – RBM.

When Andy Priaulx won the 2004 European Touring Car Championship for BMW Team Great Britain, fans and experts alike were amazed. The comparatively small RBM team under the guidance of team manager Bart Mampaey (BEL) had prevailed over far more experienced rivals and celebrated its biggest motor racing success thus far. Under its new name BMW Team UK, Priaulx and his crew have managed to substantiate the brilliant achievement of the previous year by winning the first World Touring Car Championship since 1987 in impressive style.

The RBM team, which is based in Mechelen, Belgium, made its FIA ETCC debut in 2002. At the time, Mampaey's team was responsible for fielding the BMW 320i of Fredrik Ekblom (SWE), which was flying the flag of BMW Team Belgium. A year later Priaulx joined the team, which thenceforward battled for points and victories under the banner of BMW Team Great Britain – and with notable success: in his debut year, Priaulx already managed to claim three European Championship race wins. In 2004 the driver, who lives in Guernsey in the Channel Islands, went on to take the European Touring Car crown.

Within a short space of time, team manager Mampaey had led his racing team to the peak of international touring car racing. The Belgian's success was no accident. His father Julian ran the Juma Racing Team in the 1970s and '80s, among whose achievements were three wins with BMW in the Spa-Francorchamps 24 Hours. Mampaey junior was always there and learnt at an early stage how to run a racing team if you want to succeed. In 1998 he celebrated his first major victory with the RBM team in Spa. After further stints in the FIA GT Championship, the American Le Mans Series, Schnitzer Motorsport and Ravaglia Motorsport, Mampaey eventually sent his own FIA ETCC team out on to the race track in 2002.

But the successful team manager and his team have not only demonstrated their expertise in the ETCC and the World Touring Car Championship. RBM is responsible, among other things, for assembling the cars that are involved in the Belgian MINI Challenge.

The close bond and friendly relations between the team members constitute one of the strengths of RBM. Priaulx and Mampaey form a perfect duo. Both are meticulous at their work and only satisfied when all problems have been resolved and all challenges successfully mastered. This season once again, RBM has shown it is an approach that bears fruit.



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Email: bart.mampaey@juma.net.bmw.be
Team members: 9
Founded: 1994

Major successes:

1994–1997	BMW Compact Cup
1997	1 st and 2 nd place Group N Spa 24-Hour Race (BMW)
1998	1 st place Spa 24-Hour Race (BMW Fina Bastos Team)
1999	4 th place Spa 24-Hour Race (Nissan)
2002	6 th place FIA ETCC (Fredrik Ekblom, BMW 320i)
2003	3 rd place FIA ETCC Team Championship (BMW 320i), 3 rd place Drivers' Championship (Andy Priaulx)
2004	1 st place Drivers' Championship (Andy Priaulx) 3 rd place FIA ETCC Team Championship (BMW 320i)
2005	1 st place FIA WTCC Drivers' Championship (Andy Priaulx) 4 th place FIA WTCC Team Championship (BMW 320i)

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