

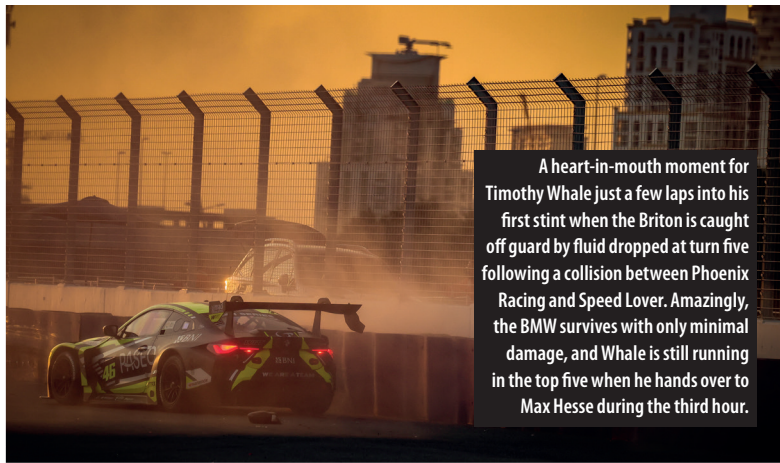


SNAPSHOT!

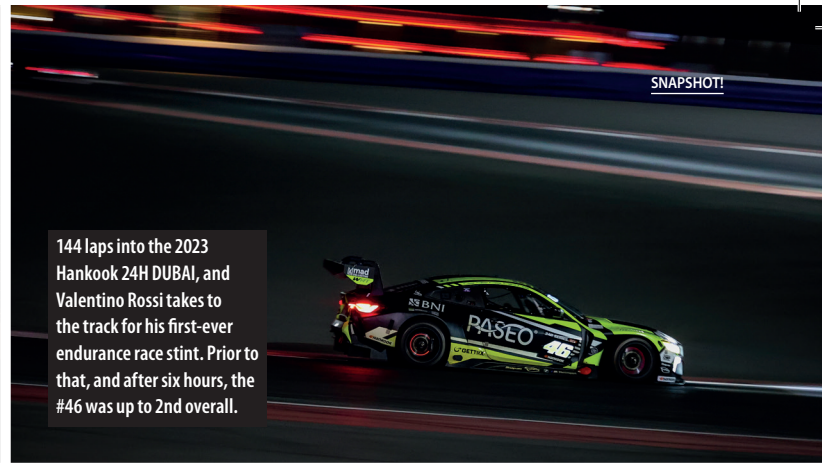
The most famous number in MotoGP history officially makes the jump to GT3 competition in December 2022 when Valentino Rossi is confirmed as a BMW M Motorsport works driver. The nine-time motorcycle world champion will team up with then-two-time Hankook 24H DUBAI winner Team WRT for his first 24-hour motor race in January 2023.



And here we go! After familiarizing himself with the Dubai Autodrome during Free Practice, Rossi takes over the #46 BMW M4 GT3 from teammate Timothy Whale for his first official qualifying session for a 24-hour motor race.



A heart-in-mouth moment for Timothy Whale just a few laps into his first stint when the Briton is caught off guard by fluid dropped at turn five following a collision between Phoenix Racing and Speed Lover. Amazingly, the BMW survives with only minimal damage, and Whale is still running in the top five when he hands over to Max Hesse during the third hour.

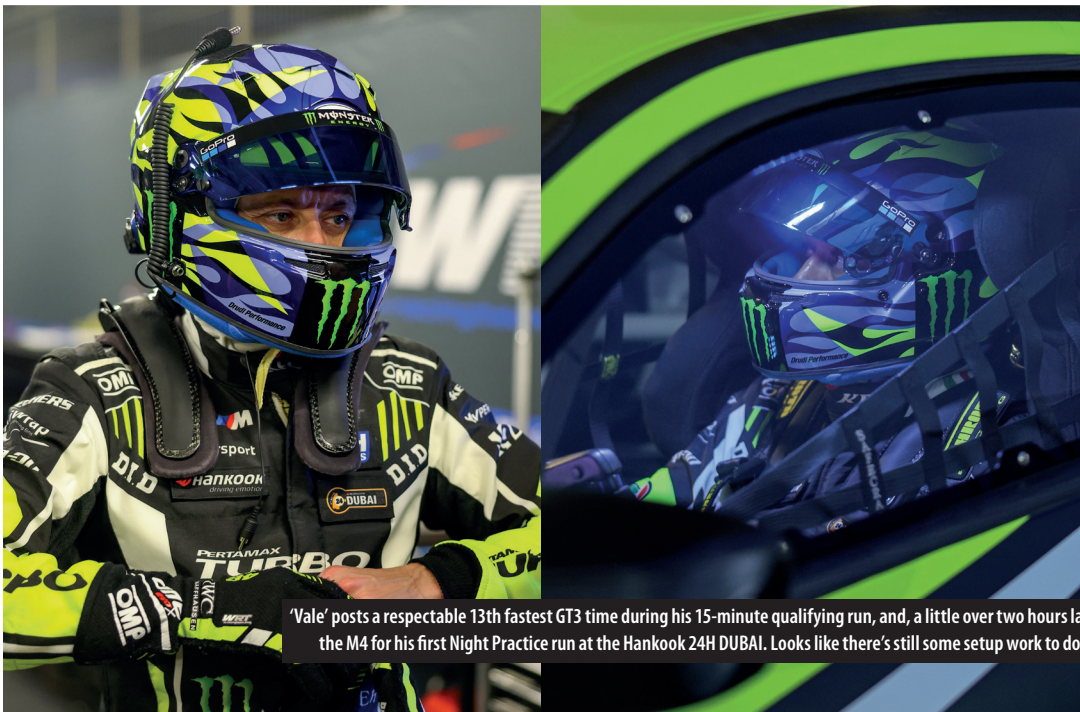


SNAPSHOT!

144 laps into the 2023 Hankook 24H DUBAI, and Valentino Rossi takes to the track for his first-ever endurance race stint. Prior to that, and after six hours, the #46 was up to 2nd overall.

# SNAPSHOT!

## Valentino Rossi's 24H SERIES debut



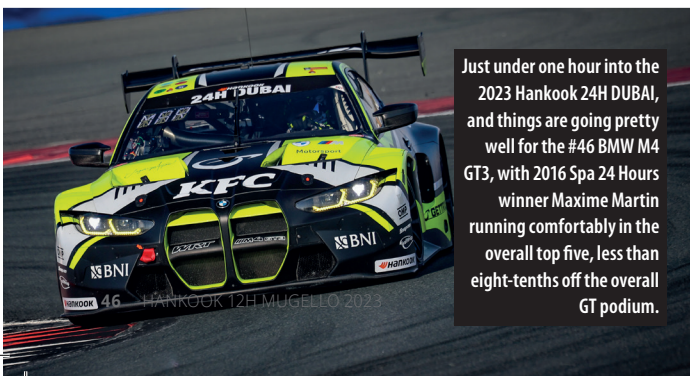
'Vale' posts a respectable 13th fastest GT3 time during his 15-minute qualifying run, and, a little over two hours later, the MotoGP legend is back in the M4 for his first Night Practice run at the Hankook 24H DUBAI. Looks like there's still some setup work to do ahead of tomorrow's race...



One of the most unorthodox journeys to the podium will also be one of the most memorable for Rossi as he enjoys the Hankook 24H DUBAI's traditional camel ride down pitlane.



The most popular man on the Hankook 24H DUBAI grid is swamped by fans and photographers alike, all looking for a quick shot of 'The Doctor.' After 20 seasons on the MotoGP grid, as well as six more on 125cc, 250cc and 500cc machinery, this level of attention is nothing new.



Just under one hour into the 2023 Hankook 24H DUBAI, and things are going pretty well for the #46 BMW M4 GT3, with 2016 Spa 24 Hours winner Maxime Martin running comfortably in the overall top five, less than eight-tenths off the overall GT podium.



Having started on the fourth row, the #46 is already up to 7th, behind the sister #7 BMW, as the 51-car field barrels into turn one. Looks like polesitter Al Manar Racing has kept the 'sister' HRT Abu Dhabi Racing Mercedes at bay for now...



Team WRT's tenure as an official BMW M Motorsport partner begins in stunning fashion as the Belgian team's #7 M4 GT3 sweeps to overall victory. There's euphoria on the other side of the garage too, as Rossi brings the sister #46 home to secure 3rd overall and his first podium at a 24-hour motor race.



As Rossi celebrates with teammates Whale, Martin, Hesse and Sean Gelael, across on the top step, Mohammed Bin Saud Al Saud and Dries Vanthoor celebrate their second Hankook 24H DUBAI win in as many years alongside teammates (and first-time winners) Jens Klingmann, Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer and Diego Menchaca. 2017 winners Alfred and Robert Renauer, Daniel Allemann and Ralf Bohn meanwhile celebrate a hard-fought 2nd place.