



Media Information  
24 October 2013

## **The BMW i3: Pioneer of the present and “Classic of the Future”.**

**Classic car magazine Auto Bild Klassik crowns the winners of its latest readers’ survey: Awards for two BMW models from 1979 and 2013, and for BMW brand ambassador Prince Leopold of Bavaria.**

**Munich.** The BMW i3 represents a milestone in personal mobility. The world’s first premium model designed from the outset to be powered by an all-electric drive system can be assured of a place in the automotive history books. And it seems the readers of German motoring magazine Auto Bild Klassik agree, having anointed the BMW i3 a “Classic of the Future”. Another groundbreaking BMW model also came out on top in the voting for the 2013 “Goldenes Klassik-Lenkrad” (Golden Classic Steering Wheel) awards after Auto Bild Klassik readers named a flawlessly maintained BMW 323i first registered in 1979 as their “Find of the Year”. The winners of the Golden Classic Steering Wheel awards – which span five categories – will be presented with their accolades on 24 October 2013. This BMW Museum in Munich provides the backdrop for this year’s prize-giving ceremony.

Racing driver of many years and current BMW brand ambassador Prince Leopold of Bavaria will be the recipient of a special Golden Classic Steering Wheel award. The motor sport enthusiast made his name with more than 120 victories in touring car, sports car and vintage car racing. But as well as his success on the track, the award also recognises his many years of service on the jury for Auto Bild’s Golden Steering Wheel awards. Indeed, his expert contribution played a key role in establishing this award in the motor industry. Prince Leopold of Bavaria will receive his Golden Classic Steering Wheel from another legend of the motor racing world – ex-Formula One driver Hans-Joachim Stuck.

The annual Golden Classic Steering Wheel awards see Auto Bild Klassik honouring vehicles and personalities judged to have made a

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distinctive mark on automotive culture and history. Singled out alongside the “Classic Car of the Year” and “Classic of the Future” will be the “Find of the Year”, “Restoration of the Year” and “Personality of the Year”. This year marked the fourth occasion that this public vote has been held, with almost 27,000 readers of the German vintage and classic car magazine taking part in the 2013 poll.

With 7,493 votes, the BMW i3 rose head and shoulders above its nine rivals in the “Classic of the Future” category. The result represented a vote of confidence from Auto Bild Klassik readers in the considerable potential of the BMW Group’s first volume-produced all-electric model – not only as a zero-emission purveyor of BMW’s hallmark driving pleasure but also as a future collector’s item for automotive aficionados. The BMW i3 is built around a passenger cell made from carbon-fibre-reinforced plastic (CFRP) and an aluminium chassis, which means that rust – the bane of so many vintage and classic car fans – is destined not to be an issue.

The voting for the “Find of the Year” award was even clearer, a BMW 323i proposed by Auto Bild Klassik garnering 9,984 votes. 34 years after its initial registration and with under 60,000 kilometres (approx. 37,000 miles) on the clock, this example of the first-generation BMW 3 Series could barely have been in better condition when it rolled off the assembly line. The Golden Classic Steering Wheel award therefore also represents special recognition for its owner, who has cared for the two-door model so attentively over the decades and has it regularly serviced at a specialist workshop.

One of the reasons her BMW 323i is deemed by connoisseurs to be particularly worthy of preservation is because this was the model variant which saw BMW first introduce a six-cylinder in-line engine with fuel injection into its “small” model series. From the moment it was launched, the 105 kW/143 hp BMW 323i was seen as the standard-bearer for driving pleasure in its class and was not only the fastest but also the most economical member of the BMW 3 Series at the time. The motoring press lavished enthusiastic praise on “the



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small BMW with the greatest sprinting ability”. “Six of the best” was one of the headlines at the time, while another publication led with “Six cylinders and not a drop thirstier”. In keeping with its elevated engine output, the BMW 323i was also the first member of its model series to gain disc brakes on all four wheels and a new five-speed gearbox. The strapline accompanying the presentation of the flagship 3 Series model captured the mood: “Better one gear more than two cylinders less.”

An example of the BMW 3 Series’ ability to consistently set new benchmarks for driving pleasure and economy over the years that followed is provided by another model under the spotlight at the 2013 Golden Classic Steering Wheel awards. All participants in the Auto Bild Klassik readers’ survey were entered into a prize draw, with the winner once again taking delivery of a very special – and rare – piece of automotive history. This year’s main prize is a BMW 325e from the BMW Group Classic collection. The BMW 325e is a member of the second-generation BMW 3 Series, which was presented for the first time 30 years ago and has therefore reached the minimum age to qualify for classic car registration in Germany.

The BMW 325e provides evidence that the minimisation of fuel consumption and emissions in BMW engine development played a pivotal role well before the introduction of BMW EfficientDynamics. The “e” in the model designation represents the Greek letter eta, used in physics as the symbol of efficiency. The 2.7-litre straight-six engine with 90 kW/122 hp delivered its performance – headlined by impressive torque at low revs – while burning remarkably little fuel. The BMW 325e was also the brand’s first model of which every example was fitted with a three-way catalytic converter with electronically controlled oxygen sensor.

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**BMW Group Classic**

BMW Group Classic is responsible for all activities within the BMW Group associated with the history of the company and its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce. This ranges from the Group Archives, which are available to anyone as a centre of expertise for all the facts and figures surrounding the history of the company, the brands and the products, through the BMW Museum, which receives more than 400,000 visitors each year, to the BMW Classic Centre where all the facilities are provided that drivers require to satisfy their passion for classic BMW vehicles from spare parts to full restoration. Another aspect is planning and implementation of participation in all the classic events attended, and administration and expansion of the vehicle collection with more than 1,000 exhibits.

**The BMW Group**

The BMW Group is the leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 28 production and assembly facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2012, the BMW Group sold about 1.85 million cars and more than 117,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2012 was euro 7.82 billion on revenues amounting to euro 76.85 billion. At 31 December 2012, the BMW Group had a workforce of 105,876 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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