



Media Information

IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship

26th June 2018

Watkins Glen and Canadian Tire Motorsport Park up next for BMW Team RLL.

- **Back-to-back IMSA races on two classic North American races tracks.**
- **Bill Auberlen and Tom Blomqvist bolster BMW Team RLL line-up.**
- **Fond memories of last year's GTLM victories for BMW.**

Munich. The 2018 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship continues with back-to-back races at Watkins Glen International (USA) and Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (CAN). Last year, the two races resulted in two wins for BMW Team RLL – the first two of four victories for the BMW M6 GLTM racing programme. This year, the team is looking to repeat those results with the new BMW M8 GTE.

During the first four races of the 2018 season, the BMW M8 GTE scored a second place finish at the 12 Hours of Sebring (USA) with the #25 car of Bill Auberlen (USA), Connor De Phillippi (USA) and Alexander Sims (GBR) after starting from De Phillippi's first GTLM class pole. A second pole by Edwards in the #24 BMW M8 GTE and De Phillippi and Sims' second place finish in the #25 BMW M8 GTE at the most recent race at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course (USA) in early May showed the programme's continuing competitiveness.

De Phillippi and Sims are sixth in GTLM driver points, while Edwards and his team-mate Jesse Krohn (FIN) stand eighth. BMW holds the fourth spot in GTLM manufacturer points. BMW NA Ambassador Auberlen will rejoin the #25 team for the six-hour race at Watkins Glen and BMW works driver Tom Blomqvist (GBR) will co-drive the #24 BMW M8 GTE. The 24-year old is making his first start in the United States. He drove the #82 BMW M8 GTE at Spa-Francorchamps in the opening round of the 2018 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

Bobby Rahal (BMW Team RLL, Team Principal): "In general we have had good qualifying performances over the years at Watkins Glen whether it was the BMW M3, Z4 or M6. Our finishing positions are kind of inconsistent although we won last year for the first time after a good qualifying performance. It's an extremely fast circuit and it really





comes down to handling on fast corners and I think the M8 GTE is quite good at that so that could certainly help. Mosport is another one where we have qualified reasonably well year in and year out but have had difficulty in finishing. If you think Watkins Glen has fast corners, then Mosport really has a lot of fast corners. I think the new car's long wheel base is made for that kind of a corner. We will just hope we have as good a performance as we did last year at both tracks."

Connor De Phillippi (#25 BMW M8 GTE): "Watkins Glen is one of those great American tracks that every driver loves. It will be my first taste of 'The Glen' and the last new track for me to learn on this year's calendar. In recent years it has been a strong track for our BMW race cars, which means a win is most definitely possible with our new BMW M8 GTE. Mosport is one of the events I've been most excited for on our calendar. It will be my first experience driving a GT car around this high commitment circuit which requires strong aerodynamics and engine power. With the M8 GTE delivering both of those things, I believe we are in a strong position to battle at the front."

Alexander Sims (#25 BMW M8 GTE): "I'm extremely motivated for our return to both the Watkins Glen and CTMP races. It was a real highlight for us last year and I sincerely hope we can recreate some of those performances. Both circuits are unbelievably good to drive and I'm just eager to get the BMW M8 GTE out on track and get our teeth into the weekend."

Bill Auberlen (#25 BMW M8 GTE): "I can't wait to get started with the Watkins Glen six hour race. We are coming off a victory last year and knowing how amazing the all-new BMW M8 GTE is I hope we can hit the ground running and start the drive to Victory Lane."

John Edwards (#24 BMW M8 GTE): "Watkins Glen and CTMP are two of my favourite tracks in North America, and IMSA schedules them back to back, so I guess you could say these are two of my favourite weekends in the year. Watkins Glen always suited the BMW M6 GTLM so I expect the new BMW M8 GTE will adapt quickly. After being quick at Mid-Ohio, we weren't able to capitalise on a result so Jesse and I are hungry for redemption over the next couple of weeks."





Jesse Krohn (#24 BMW M8 GTE): “I am looking forward to getting back in the car after a long summer break. Both tracks will be new for me but I have already done a few laps in the simulator to be as well prepared as possible. In the past Watkins and Mosport seemed to have suited BMW well so I am hoping the same will continue this year with the new and improved BMW M8 GTE.”

Tom Blomqvist (#24 BMW M8 GTE): “I have never raced in the States before and I am very excited that Watkins Glen will be my first track. My teammates have told me about this old-school type circuit and I look forward to seeing it myself.”

Media Contact.

BMW Sports Communications

Jörg Kottmeier

Phone: +49 (0)170 – 566 6112

E-mail: joerg.kottmeier@bmw.de

Ingo Lehbrink

Phone: +49 (0)176 – 203 40224

E-mail: ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

Media Website.

<http://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global>

BMW Motorsport on the web.

Website: www.bmw-motorsport.com

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