



Media Information
26th July 2015

Eventful opener to the 35th America's Cup in Portsmouth.
130,000 spectators witness exciting racing – ORACLE TEAM USA sails into third place.

Portsmouth. For the first time since the first regatta for the 'Auld Mug' around the Isle of Wight back in 1851, an America's Cup event took place off the English coast once again, just a few miles down the road in Portsmouth. At the opener of the Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series (LVACWS), more than 130,000 yachting enthusiasts braved unsavoury weather conditions to visit the four-day regatta, which finished with British challenge team Ben Ainslie Racing scooping the victory. The event was also BMW's debut as Global Partner of the 35th America's Cup.

BMW showcased the new BMW 7 Series to visitors in a private room, deployed a fleet of fully electric BMW i3 vehicles as VIP shuttle transport, and invited all children into the BMW Yacht Club. BMW customers were also invited into the BMW Owners' Club, which has a terrace and boasts the finest views over the water. In addition, fans also had an hour-long opportunity every day to have their photograph taken with the sports car of the future – the plug-in hybrid BMW i8 – and the America's Cup trophy.

The importance of this event was highlighted by the visit of His Royal Highness Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, and his wife Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge. The Royal couple visited each of the teams on Sunday and presented the trophies and medals at the prize-giving ceremony.

James "Jimmy" Spithill (AUS), Skipper of ORACLE TEAM USA and twice winner of the America's Cup, was nonetheless excited and underlined the quality of the competition: "The racing was great. We had some good sailing out there. Lots of lead changes, six competitive teams, the level is really, really high. There was some serious interest here – you look at the estimated spectator numbers on and off the water, it was as if the actual America's Cup was being raced in terms of crowd size, it was really comparable." With 16 points, ORACLE TEAM USA occupied third spot, behind Ben Ainslie Racing (19) and Emirates Team New Zealand (18).

In the LVACWS, defenders ORACLE TEAM USA and the five challengers sail on slightly smaller catamarans than the ones they use in the America's Cup. They are One Design yachts that are equipped with a wing sail and foils, meaning that they can sail with both hulls above water level. The delighted fans were able to follow the close



races on these high-tech racing machines from the coast. Due to stormy winds, the sailing on Sunday had to be cancelled on safety grounds.

Points have already been picked up in the Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series, with which the challengers will enter the 2017 competition. This year, after the opener in Portsmouth, the series will stop off in Gothenburg, Sweden (28th to 30th August) and Hamilton, Bermuda (16th to 18th October), which is also where the 35th America's Cup will be held in 2017.

Note to editors: You can find the latest press releases, media folders and copyright-free images for editorial purposes regarding BMW's sporting commitments online at: **www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com**

BMW Sport Communications

Nicole Stempinsky

Tel.: +49 89 382 51584

E-mail: nicole.stempinsky@bmw.de

Internet: www.bmw-yachtsport.com

The BMW Group

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2014, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.118 million cars and 123,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2014 was approximately € 8.71 billion on revenues amounting to € 80.40 billion. As of 31 December 2014, the BMW Group had a workforce of 116,324 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based 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.

www.bmwgroup.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/BMWGroup>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/BMWGroup>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/BMWGroupview>

Google+: <http://googleplus.bmwgroup.com>