

Press Release
07 September 2018

Successful sports cars from three eras come together on the route between the River Weser, the North Sea and the River Elbe.

The eleventh “Hamburg-Berlin Classic” rally will start in Bremen. – BMW Group Classic is nominating a BMW 328, a BMW 3.0 CSL and a BMW M1 for the journey through northern Germany.

Munich. BMW Group Classic will compete in the eleventh “Hamburg-Berlin Classic” rally (HBK) with legendary sports cars from three eras of automobile history, confronting “Blanker Hans” or Bare John, which is the name for storm surges in the turbulent North Sea. It is to be hoped that the ocean waves will not be this high on the rally days between 13 and 15 September 2018 – conversely, the waves of enthusiasm among the crowd of spectators lining the roads are famously awesome. BMW Group Classic is adopting a particularly sporting approach to the challenges and entering a BMW 328 from the 1930s, a BMW 3.0 CSL from the early 1970s and a BMW M1 from the latter end of the 1970s in the regularity race organised by auto magazine “Auto Bild Klassik”.

The three-day tour under the slogan of “Classics on the North Sea Route” will begin on Thursday 13 September 2018 at “Schuppen Eins” – Centre for Automotive Heritage and Motoring – on the River Weser in Bremen. This is the location for Hamburg’s classic-car centre with exhibition, workshops, and trade and rental of classic cars. The race first passes through the Hanseatic city and then takes a route through the surrounding area motoring onto the towns of Syke, Verden an der Aller and Thedinghausen, before heading back to Bremen. On the Friday, the convoy will roll across the Schlossplatz square in Oldenburg, run through Bad Zwischenahn and drive past the airfield at Westerstede-Felde, motoring directly by the North Sea at Neuharlingersiel. The route then makes for Jever before going inland to the palace of Schloss Gödens in Sande and back to Bremen.

On the Saturday, the first stop is at Worpswede. The rally then drives through Zeven and Rothenburg on the River Wümme before heading for Heidepark Soltau, when the convoy continues through Egestorf and Winsen an der Luhe to the final destination of Hamburg. The eleventh “Hamburg-Berlin Classic” will then celebrate the end of the rally in the Fish Auction Hall. As they drive through East Frisia, along the coast of the North Sea and through Lüneburg Heath, the rally drivers will not just see picturesque villages and small towns, windmills, palaces and dykes. They will also be put through their paces as

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they take part in various time trials to test their driving skills and sense of timing.

This means that the requirements differ markedly from those mastered by the BMW 328 during the 1930s and 1940s. At the time, the two-seater was above all fast with its powerful inline six-cylinder engine – at its first appearance on the Nürburgring in 1936 and at the Mille Miglia in 1940, which it won with a new personal best time. The BMW 328 was superior to the competition, primarily on account of its low weight, its streamlined body and its agile driving characteristics. Quite simply, it embodied a new design principle for sports cars. Today, the elegant roadster is a coveted rarity. Only 464 BMW 328 cars were produced between 1937 and 1941. Two-times Olympic Champion in ice skating, Katarina Witt, will take the wheel in one of the rare gems alongside Head of BMW Group Classic, Ulrich Knieps, on the classic rally across northern Germany.

Muscular power generated by six cylinders and a low weight were also the success factors featured in the BMW 3.0 CSL. The two-door bearing the abbreviation for “Coupé, Sport, Lightweight” in the model designation was specially developed for motor sport at the beginning of the 1970s and exceeded all expectations. BMW won the European Touring Car Championship six times with this model, the final win being in 1979.

At this point, BMW had already ushered in a new era of motor sport – triggered by the BMW M1. In 1978, the mid-engined coupé was the first model designed from scratch by BMW Motorsport GmbH. In 1979 and 1980, the BMW M1 captivated the fans at Procar races in warm-ups for Formula 1 races in Europe, while the roadable version of the wedge-shape racing car was impressive as the fastest German series sports car. On the occasion celebrating the M1’s 40th birthday, the anniversary car is likely to adopt a much more sedate pace at the “Hamburg-Berlin Classic” even though its celebrity driver has lots of competition experience with the racing version of the BMW M1. Leopold Prinz von Bayern has a long track record as a racing driver with touring cars and today he is a brand ambassador for BMW Group Classic. He is dedicated to precision and perfect timing in the race to place the BMW M1 as far forward as possible among the leaders of the field of more than 180 rally competitors.



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For questions please contact:**BMW Group Communication and Governmental Affairs**

Benjamin Voß
BMW Group Classic, Marketing and PR
Phone: +49-89-382-16362
mailto: benjamin.voss@bmw.de
Internet: www.press.bmw.de

BMW Group Corporate and Governmental Affairs

Stefan Behr
Head of Marketing and PR BMW Group Classic
Phone: +49-89-382-51376
mailto: Stefan.Behr@bmw.de
Internet: www.press.bmwgroup.com

The BMW Group

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In 2017, the BMW Group sold over 2,463,500 passenger vehicles and more than 164,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2017 was € 10.655 billion on revenues amounting to € 98.678 billion. As of 31 December 2017, the BMW Group had a workforce of 129,932 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.

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