



Media Information  
BMW M Customer Racing  
11<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## **BMW M Customer Racing teams' preparations in unusual times: Stephen Cameron Racing.**

- **In a new series, we report on what the BMW M Customer Racing teams have been up to in the extended winter break.**
- **Part 2: Stephen Cameron Racing from the USA.**
- **2019 SprintX champions Sean Quinlan and Greg Liefoghe want to win the GT4 America title again.**

**Munich. BMW M Customer Racing teams should actually have been in action around the world for a number of weeks already. However, the global coronavirus pandemic has meant a longer winter break than anticipated. In a new series, we report on how the BMW M Customer Racing teams have spent this enforced break and how they have prepared for the start of their racing series in these unusual times. Today we take a look at Stephen Cameron Racing from Sonoma (USA).**

The team was founded in 1987 and is led by team owner Stephen 'Steve' Cameron. Stephen Cameron Racing is located at Sonoma Raceway in California (USA) and competes with a BMW M4 GT4 in the GT4 America with Sean Quinlan (USA) in Sprint and with pro driver Greg Liefoghe (USA) as Pro-Am team in SprintX. Henry Schmitt (USA) and Liefoghe race with a BMW M6 GT3 in the Pro-Am category of the GT World Challenge America. In August a programme may start with the BMW M4 GT4 in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge. In an interview, team owner Cameron discusses the past few weeks, preparations, and the goals for this season.

**Mr Cameron, first and most important question: how are you and the team doing in these times?**

Stephen Cameron: "So far everybody on our team has been healthy. Actually as a precaution for this race weekend some of our team are staying in Sonoma and working remotely. I also made the decision to stay here just to be sure."

**What effect, apart from the fact that you could not go racing, did the corona pandemic and associated restrictions have on your preparation work over the past months?**



Cameron: “We are based at Sonoma County at the racetrack Sonoma Raceway. They stopped I think in March when the Governor locked-down and placed an order for California. As Sonoma falls under that order we were not able to use the track here. Two tracks opened up before Sonoma: Thunder Hill which is north of us and Buttonwillow south of us opened about a month ago for limited testing so we were able to start a test programme with the BMW M4 GT4. We had done a few days testing at both tracks with the car.”

### **Did you start any new activities beside your usual racework?**

Cameron: “I did start a couple of new things still within racing. There was a group at Sonoma Raceway called The Turn 1 Club, a private driving club for members at Sonoma Raceway. That lockdown primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic and there was a change of ownership of the school and club at Sonoma Raceway. The members of the club started a new organisation at Thunder Hill Raceway and we were lucky to take over operating and maintaining and servicing a large group for those drivers. There are primarily a lot of Formula 3 cars and our Radicals. That allowed us to do something outside of the pro racing. That has been really valuable for us because it generated a new group of people to work with and a new income source.”

### **The GT4 America and the GT World Challenge America will resume this weekend at the Virginia International Raceway. How much are you looking forward to finally go racing?**

Cameron: “We obviously are excited to go racing. It will be interesting with the new challenges of how things are done. For us, we won the championship last year in SprintX with Sean and Greg. We are excited to go out there and try to win that title again. Obviously for us that is the main goal.”

### **Your home races at Sonoma Raceway are scheduled from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> August. What is on your preparation schedule for those races and the weeks until then?**

Cameron: “Obviously there is still a concern in the county that something doesn't change and we will go into lockdown. I know Sonoma is very nervous. For us, to be honest, the most difficult thing is trying to plan and make sure that we can do some testing and have these races. But unfortunately it's not necessarily about what we are doing. It's more about hoping that things get better and that the racetrack is able to maintain operations.”



**You race the BMW M4 GT4 and the BMW M6 GT3 – what are the strong points of these BMW M Customer Racing cars?**

Cameron: “The BMW M4 GT4 is a very driver friendly car. Greg is a Pro and Sean is the Am in our driver line-up, and the BMW M4 GT4 is still easy for the drivers to get confidence in the car. It doesn’t have a lot of characteristics to make it nervous; and is excellently balanced. There are some tracks where it’s particularly strong and where the BoP favours it. It definitely likes the bigger and faster tracks and is very strong at Watkins Glen and Road America. VIR is a really good track for it. BMW has done a good job in parts supply for the car. It’s good the way the system works with that. There are regular BMW dealers or motorsport dealers which are sourcing parts and having parts available. The BMW M6 GT3 – again I think it’s a relatively comfortable car to drive. Henry Schmitt has driven a lot of BMW race cars. The interesting thing he finds in driving the BMW M6 GT3 is that it is even better suited to his driving style than the BMW M4 GT4 because the downforce of the car is very, very good.”

**And let’s speak about your driver line-up: what are the strong points of your drivers?**

Cameron: “A lot comes down to the way they work. Greg is a very fast Pro and does a great job but he is an excellent driver coach as well. He is very skilled at working with his co-drivers. We work a lot with the data. All the drivers are very good at spending time analysing how they drive. They use the data a lot as far as trying to make sure they are optimising what they are doing in the car. One of the reasons for their performance level is that they are quite good for their experience. They are putting a lot of effort into the details of how they drive and how that impacts the way the car handles.”

**What makes the GT4 America and the GT World Challenge America special, attractive championships to compete in?**

Cameron: “At the GT4 America series the venues are very good and one of the things that attract the drivers. There is a good level of competition and quite a high number of cars in the series. That is attractive. At race weekends one of the things which is attractive for our drivers is that there is a lot of seat time. Especially in the BMW M4 GT4 Sean actually can run GT4 Sprint and GT4 SprintX on the same weekend. On an average weekend that’s giving him four races. In the situation now with some catch up events he can perhaps do six races at VIR. That is pretty attractive because realistically it doesn’t add that much to your budget but allows you a lot of racing and a



lot of experience in a short period of time. I think in the GT3 series it's the same thing with a lot of track time for the drivers."

### **So what are your goals for the season?**

Cameron: "In the GT4 we want to win the title, for sure. I think last year, with a tough championship, we had some breaks that were favourable for us. Last year the series was basically won on the last lap of the last race. It was an exciting championship. I think this year Sean is more experienced now but there is a lot of pressure on him. In his second year in GT4 he will handle the pressure and the stress of trying to win the championship a lot better. I'm hopeful after we had a little bit of an up and down last season that we will have more consistency in our results this year and a good chance of the title."

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