

Media Information

27 October 2023

**Biathlon world champions and athletes with disabilities experience safety training course at the BMW M Driving Experience.**

+++ BMW Group invites persons with physical disabilities to a safety training course +++ Maren Hammerschmidt and Vanessa Hinz experience sheer driving pleasure from a new perspective +++ Athletes from the Bavarian disabled and rehabilitation sports association (Behinderten- und Rehabilitations-Sportverband Bayern e.V.) train at the BMW M Driving Experience +++

**Maisach/Munich.** At the Biathlon World Championships in Oberhof in February 2023, the German team won a gold medal and two silver medals and achieved six further top-six rankings. As Mobility Partner of the German National Biathlon Team, the BMW Group offered three safety training courses for people with physical disabilities as a reward for each medal won and one training course for each finish in the top six. A group of athletes from the Bavarian disabled and rehabilitation sports association (BVS Bayern) was invited to the BMW M Driving Experience in Maisach to take part in a safety training course with biathlon world champions Maren Hammerschmidt and Vanessa Hinz, an event that was as much about knowledge as it was about driving pleasure.

The BMW M Driving Experience offers a special safety training course designed by Tina Schmidt-Kiendl, who is an instructor and head of project management at BMW M GmbH. The training course uses specially modified vehicles with hand-controlled equipment (electronic accelerator ring on the steering wheel or thumb accelerator with separate brake) that can be controlled by paraplegic persons and also persons with use of their feet. There is also a vehicle that can be operated by people who are paralysed on one side, for example, after a stroke. In addition to a theory section, the training content includes driving using hand controls, braking and evasion exercises, as well as the correct way to respond when oversteering or understeering the vehicle.

## Media Information

Date 27 October 2023

Subject Biathlon world champions and athletes with disabilities experience safety training course at the BMW M Driving Experience.

Page 2

"People being able to drive a car themselves and safely despite a disability is self-sufficiency – and that is very important," said Schmidt-Kiendl, who has been paraplegic since an operation, describing the inclusive value of this safety training course. "You can decide for yourself when you want to drive from A to B, and which route you take. You don't have to simply go along with decisions that other people want to make for you. This independence, combined with autonomy and safety on the road is what we want to convey to the participants."

The safety training course with modified cars is also open to persons without physical limitations, for example, those who work with people with disabilities. The 2017 biathlon world champions, Maren Hammerschmidt and Vanessa Hinz, experienced this in Maisach and were impressed by the encounters and experiences at the BMW M Driving Experience.

"It is definitely exciting to try it out and have this opportunity. This was our first safety training course – and it was one with special requirements," said Hammerschmidt. "It was a lot of fun, including the exchange with the other athletes and finding out a little bit about their history."

Hinz was also impressed by the insights: "It is interesting to see the challenges that these people face. Neither of us were aware of this because we just get into the car, push a button, and go. Neither of us could have imagined previously how it would work if you were unable to use your feet."

The BVS Bayern athletes have long since learned how to work around their disabilities. The biggest sports association for people with disabilities in Bavaria covers a wide sporting range: from preparing and mentoring young athletes as they train for the Paralympics, to recreational sport and the promotion of inclusion in sport, to rehabilitation sport.

## Media Information

Date 27 October 2023

Subject Biathlon world champions and athletes with disabilities experience safety training course at the BMW M Driving Experience.

Page 3

Representing all the participants, Svenja Mayer, who finished fourth with the German national wheelchair basketball team at the 2021 Paralympic Games, said: "I would like to thank BMW and the national biathlon team for the amazing experience. You feel a rush of endorphins when you can accelerate. We also learned a lot of important things that will come in useful in everyday life and on the road. It was a fantastic day."

This feedback is the motivation that drives Schmidt-Kiendl because she is convinced that everyone has the right to enjoy sheer driving pleasure, whether with or without a handicap. People who feel safe at the wheel, can rely on their abilities, and master the technology are the people who enjoy driving. She has also incorporated exercises that are fun into her driver safety training and can definitely be seen as a sporting challenge, such as completing a timed slalom course. These were the exercises that were very well received by a group made up of athletes. "It was exciting to watch how athletes handle this kind of situation," said Schmidt-Kiendl. "Because they all want to be the best, naturally."

The BMW M Driving Experience is a division of BMW M GmbH. Founded as BMW Fahrertraining (driver training) in 1977, across all sectors on offer, from safety training for novice drivers to the highly dynamic racetrack experience for experienced drivers, the goal is improving the driving skills of participants. Anyone interested in booking the driver safety training course for people with physical limitations or any of the many other attractive offers available can do so online here:

<https://www.bmw-m.com/en/fastlane/driving-experience/trainings/academy-experience.html>

**Consumption data.**

**BMW 430i Coupé:** Combined fuel consumption: 7.4–6.6 l/100 km according to WLTP; CO2 emissions combined: 167-149 g/km according to WLTP; figures according to NEFZ: -

## Media Information

Date 27 October 2023

Subject Biathlon world champions and athletes with disabilities experience safety training course at the BMW M Driving Experience.

Page 4

**BMW M4 Competition Coupé:** Combined fuel consumption: 9.8 l/100 km according to WLTP; CO2 emissions combined: 224-223 g/km according to WLTP; figures according to NEFZ: -

**BMW M440i Coupé:** Combined fuel consumption: 8.1–7.4 l/100 km according to WLTP; CO2 emissions combined: 184-167 g/km according to WLTP; figures according to NEFZ: -

**BMW M2 Coupé:** Combined fuel consumption: 10.2–9.6 l/100 km according to WLTP; CO2 emissions combined: 231-218 g/km according to WLTP; figures according to NEFZ: -

**MINI John Cooper Works:** Combined fuel consumption: 6.8–6.6 l/100 km according to WLTP; CO2 emissions combined: 157-151 g/km according to WLTP; figures according to NEFZ: -

If you have any questions, please contact:

**Corporate communications**

Tim Holzmüller

Press Spokesperson BMW Group Sport Engagement, Real Estate

Telephone: +49 151 601 33309

E-Mail: [tim.holzmueller@bmwgroup.com](mailto:tim.holzmueller@bmwgroup.com)Internet: [www.press.bmwgroup.com/global](http://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global)E-Mail: [presse@bmw.de](mailto:presse@bmw.de)**The BMW Group**

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2022, the BMW Group sold nearly 2.4 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2022 was € 23.5 billion on revenues amounting to € 142.6 billion. As of 31 December 2022, the BMW Group had a workforce of 149,475 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

## Media Information

Date 27 October 2023

Subject Biathlon world champions and athletes with disabilities experience safety training course at the BMW M Driving Experience.

Page 5

[www.bmwgroup.com](http://www.bmwgroup.com)

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

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

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

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bmwgroup>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/bmw-group/>