



Press release

date 14 September 2024

topic BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024, Namibia.

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**BMW Motorrad presents the International GS Trophy 2024 in Namibia. The ninth edition of the event returns to its roots, Africa.**

**Midgard, Namibia.** BMW Motorrad is excited to announce the start of the 9th edition of the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy, set to take place in Namibia's breathtaking landscapes and challenging terrains from the 15th to the 20th of September 2024.

**The Ultimate Off-Road Challenge: An Adventure of a Lifetime**

Over six days, 22 teams from around the globe — 16 men's and 6 women's — will navigate a challenging 1,350-kilometer route through Namibia's incredible landscapes. This event is not a race but a test of skill, endurance, and team spirit, reflecting the true spirit of the GS community as riders tackle everything from vast deserts and towering dunes to rocky trails and dry riverbeds.

To earn their place in this prestigious event, riders first competed in rigorous national qualifying events in their respective countries, where the top three male riders and the top two female riders earned the honor of representing their country as part of a team. For the first time, to ensure everyone could experience this unique adventure, BMW Motorrad organized an international qualifier at the BMW Motorrad Days 2023. This new entry point allowed riders from countries without a dedicated national team to compete and join the global GS Trophy community.

**Introducing the GS Trophy Competition Bikes**

The 2024 GS Trophy features the debut of the BMW R 1300 GS Trophy Competition Bike, a powerful machine developed exclusively for this event. Equipped with a 1,300cc air/liquid-cooled boxer twin



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engine, the R 1300 GS delivers 143 horsepower and 145 Nm of torque, paired with specialized off-road accessories like engine protection bars, adjustable levers, and robust cross-spoke wheels to handle the most challenging terrains.

The BMW F 900 GS Trophy Marshal Bike will guide participants through Namibia's demanding routes. With its 895cc parallel-twin engine, generating 105 horsepower, and enhanced off-road capabilities, the F 900 GS serves as the perfect companion for the dynamic and unpredictable conditions of the GS Trophy.

### **The Route: Six Days of Pure Adventure**

The 2024 GS Trophy route will take riders through Namibia's extraordinary landscapes, offering a mix of sand dunes, rocky mountain passes, riverbeds, and dense bushland. Participants will face "special stages" that test their off-road riding capabilities, mechanical knowledge, navigation skills, intelligence, and teamwork. Each challenge is designed to highlight the versatility and ruggedness of the BMW R 1300 GS Trophy Competition Bike and the riders' resilience.

### **An Event Like No Other**

Along with the 60 participants, 15 journalists, marshals, mechanics, medics, partner representatives, and a film and photo crew will join the event, bringing together nearly 190 people from 32 nations, 120 motorcycles, and 32 support vehicles. It is a global celebration of adventure motorcycling, capturing the very essence of the GS spirit.

### **Returning to the Roots: Africa**

The BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 marks a significant milestone as the event returns to Africa, where it all began. The first GS Trophy was held in 2008 in Tunisia, setting the stage for one of the most celebrated and challenging adventure motorcycling events worldwide. After exploring incredible terrains in Southern

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Africa (South Africa, Swaziland, and Mozambique) in 2010, the GS Trophy is again embracing Africa's rugged landscapes.

Over the years, the GS Trophy has traversed some of the world's most stunning and demanding locations: from the deserts of Tunisia to the wilds of Patagonia (2012), the forests of Canada (2014), the jungles of Thailand (2016), the steppes of Mongolia (2018), and the mountains of New Zealand (2020). Most recently, in 2022, it explored the unspoiled beauty of Albania.

Now, in 2024, the GS Trophy comes full circle, returning to Africa—the birthplace of the event—to challenge a new generation of riders against Namibia's dramatic and diverse landscapes. This return to Africa is an homage to the spirit of adventure and exploration that has defined the GS Trophy since its inception.

### **Meet the Teams: The Faces Behind the Adventure**

The 2024 BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy brings together a diverse group of talented riders from across the globe. These riders represent the spirit of adventure, determination, and camaraderie that define the BMW Motorrad GS Trophy. Here's a look at the teams competing for glory in Namibia:

#### **Team BRAZIL**

No. **101**

Rider: **Igor Rezende**

Age: 33

Hometown: Conselheiro Lafaiete, Minas Gerais, Brazil

Occupation: **Mechanical Engineer**

Why the BMW GS: I was drawn to the BMW GS for its versatility, allowing seamless transitions from on-road to off-road adventures on a single motorcycle.

No. **102**

Rider: **Tomaz Santos**

Age: 35

Hometown: Itapema, Santa Catarina, Brazil

Occupation: Realtor

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Why the BMW GS: I was introduced to the world of Big Trail riding by a family friend, who sparked my passion for adventure on two wheels.

No. **103**

Rider: **Fernando Dias**

Age: 31

Hometown: Paripora de Bom de Jesus, São Paulo, Brazil

Occupation: Personal Trainer

Why the BMW GS: Encouraged by friends familiar with my love for Big Trail and off-road riding, I was inspired to explore the GS competition.

### **Team MEXICO**

No. **111**

Rider: **Juan Carlos Muñiz**

Age: 30

Hometown: Mexico City, Mexico

Occupation: Motorcycle Mechanic

Why the BMW GS: In 2017, I rode an R 1200 GS for the first time, and it captured my heart. Determined to own one, I worked tirelessly to make it happen.

No. **112**

Rider: **Francisco Leyva**

Age: 35

Hometown: Mexico City, Mexico

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Why the BMW GS: I was drawn to BMW Motorrad for its quality and the lifestyle it promotes. The GS model caught my attention for its exceptional capabilities on both asphalt and dirt.

No. **113**

Rider: **Juan Pablo Isaac**

Age: 31

Hometown: Merida, Mexico

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Why the BMW GS: Growing up on the tank of my dad's 1955 R60, I had my first GS adventure to Chiapas at 16, and the GS has been a staple in our family ever since.

### **Team Latin America**

No. **121**

Rider: **Valdor Warkentin**



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Age: 39

Hometown: Loma Plata, Paraguay

Occupation: Veterinarian and Farmer

Why the BMW GS: After buying an F800R in 2015, I quickly realized my love for off-road riding. I transitioned to my first R 1200 GSA in 2018, diving deep into the GS world.

No. **122**

Rider: **Tomas Harrison**

Age: 44

Hometown: Sandiago, Chile

Occupation: Civil Engineer

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by a dream of long motorcycle trips, I bought my first BMW, an R1100GS, in 2006. My passion led to global journeys and a deep love for the GS models.

No. **123**

Rider: **Mathias Eulerich**

Age: 24

Hometown: Asuncion, Paraguay

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Why the BMW GS: Taught by my father from a young age, the first bike I drove was a GS 650 from 1999, and I've been hooked ever since.

## **Team USA**

No. **131**

Rider: **Jacobus de Wet**

Age: 44

Hometown: Crystal Beach, Texas, USA

Occupation: Maintenance

Why the BMW GS: I wanted to compete in the GS Trophy but had the wrong bike, so I got a GS and started training, which made me a better rider and pushed me to join the Namibia event.

No. **132**

Rider: **Kirk Graydon**

Age: 57

Hometown: Simpsonville, South Carolina, USA

Occupation: Mechanical Engineer

Why the BMW GS: I discovered the GS Trophy by chance in 2017, at the BMW Riders Academy, just 15 minutes from home. After taking a class, I've been passionate about GS ever since.



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No. **133**

Rider: **Scott Acheson**

Age: 58

Hometown: Middleburg, Florida, USA

Occupation: Sales Manager

Why the BMW GS: With a lifetime of riding experience, I decided to get a BMW—the original adventure bike. My 2011 BMW R 1200 GSA has taken me across diverse terrains nationwide.

### **Team Benelux**

No. **141**

Rider: **Jeffrey Kiestra**

Age: 29

Hometown: Burgum, The Netherlands

Occupation: Leasing Company / Volunteer Firefighter

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by a family training session on a GS, we fell in love with the experience and have been riding GS bikes ever since, exploring off-road adventures.

No. **142**

Rider: **Stephan Sleeckx**

Age: 40

Hometown: Essen, Belgium

Occupation: Police Force Team Leader

Why the BMW GS: I bought my first BMW R1200 GS in 2012 and was immediately impressed by its versatility, providing comfort for travel and access to places other bikes couldn't reach.

No. **143**

Rider: **Arnaud Allard**

Age: 32

Hometown: Bohan, Belgium

Occupation: Works in the Tourism Business

Why the BMW GS: To me, BMW has always stood for quality and innovation. After two off-road training courses, I fell in love with the BMW GS for its balance between off-road and on-road performance.

### **Team Italy**

No. **151**

Rider: **Andrea Gioia**

Age: 32

Hometown: Piacenza, Italy

Occupation: Ambulance Driver



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Why the BMW GS: I discovered BMW through friends and my father's passion for the brand. After testing the R 1250 GS, I knew it completed my love for adventure riding.

No. **152**

Rider: **Massimo Gioia**

Age: 52

Hometown: Piacenza, Italy

Occupation: Works at a Bank

Why the BMW GS: I entered the BMW Motorrad world after purchasing an F 800 GS, and I've been immersed in the GS culture ever since.

No. **153**

Rider: **Mauro Zucca**

Age: 31

Hometown: Pavia, Italy

Occupation: Freelancer in Insurance

Why the BMW GS: My passion for BMW Motorrad was ignited by the people at the GS Academy in Italy, whose skills and personalities inspired me to explore the world of GS.

## **Team UK**

No. **161**

Rider: **Matt Poole**

Age: 40

Hometown: West Sussex, UK

Occupation: Business Owner/Director

Why the BMW GS: After a long sports bike ride, I noticed that all the other riders were on GS bikes. A test ride later, I knew they couldn't all be wrong—and I've been a GS fan ever since.

No. **162**

Rider: **Steven Ferguson**

Age: 42

Hometown: Perthshire, Scotland

Occupation: Owner/Director of a garage equipment company

Why the BMW GS: I bought an R 1250 RS two years ago but fell in love with the GS after testing it in wet, cold conditions. It's the perfect bike for all my riding experiences.

No. **163**

Rider: **Matt Shields**

Age: 33



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Hometown: Somerset, UK

Occupation: Engineering Project Consultant

Why the BMW GS: Planning a year-long trip with my girlfriend, we chose the R1200GS Adventure, which took us 40,000 km from the UK to South Africa across some of the toughest terrains.

### **Team France**

No. **171**

Rider: **Alexandre Etoile**

Age: 29

Hometown: Dugny, France

Occupation: Military Police Officer

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by my dad's love for BMWs, I saved up and bought a GS to fulfill my travel dreams.

No. **172**

Rider: **Romain Viceriat**

Age: 28

Hometown: Bonneville, France

Occupation: Agricultural Mechanic

Why the BMW GS: I got into the GS world thanks to my father, who sold me his first GS. I have never changed brands since.

No. **173**

Rider: **Philippe Birtele**

Age: 47

Hometown: Esserts-Blay, France

Occupation: Ski Center Maintenance Manager

Why the BMW GS: A friend let me try their GS, and I was immediately hooked on its capabilities and style.

### **Team Germany**

No. **181**

Rider: **Christopher Michi**

Age: 25

Hometown: Oberschleissheim, Munich, Germany

Occupation: Logistics Foreman

Why the BMW GS: With a family full of BMW enthusiasts, I was naturally drawn to the GS, which I find perfect for both long tours and fun off-road riding.

No. **182**

Rider: **Niko Wecker**





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Age: 22

Hometown: Gütersloh, Germany

Occupation: Motorcycle Mechanic

Why the BMW GS: Growing up in a family with a BMW dealership, I fell in love with the boxer engine early on. The GS is simply an unbelievable motorcycle.

No. **183**

Rider: **Jan Stahl**

Age: 33

Hometown: Hoehr-Grenzhausen, Germany

Occupation: Vehicle Slip Control System Developer

Why the BMW GS: The unique shape and character of the boxer engine drew me to BMW, and I've been customizing and riding their bikes ever since.

### **Team China**

No. **191**

Rider: **Dake Xue**

Age: 43

Hometown: Beijing, China

Occupation: Teacher

Why the BMW GS: Encouraged by friends to discover the fun of riding a GS, I quickly became a fan.

No. **192**

Rider: **Yang Liu**

Age: 36

Hometown: Jinan, Shandong, China

Occupation: Motorcycle Instructor

Why the BMW GS: As a long-time BMW fan with a collection of their vehicles, I trust their quality and enjoy the challenges the GS offers on various terrains.

No. **193**

Rider: **Luquan Cai**

Age: 34

Hometown: Xiamen, China

Occupation: Project Engineering

Why the BMW GS: Invited by car enthusiasts, I quickly fell in love with the world of GS motorcycles.



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## **Team India**

No. **201**

Rider: **Anand Dharesan**

Age: 32

Hometown: Trivandrum, India

Occupation: Own a Lighting Consultation Firm

Why the BMW GS: After riding other adventure bikes, I knew I needed the ultimate—the GS.

No. **202**

Rider: **Dev Venkatesh**

Age: 31

Hometown: Bangalore, India

Occupation: Event Management

Why the BMW GS: Always wanted an adventure motorcycle, and riding a friend's GS led me to buy one and connect with the GS community.

No. **203**

Rider: **Sardar Shahan Khan**

Age: 21

Hometown: Bangalore, India

Occupation: Student of Political Science

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by my dad's purchase of the first BMW GSA in India, I've been riding GS bikes since I was 14, and I'm now on my fifth.

## **Team Japan**

No. **211**

Rider: **Hirokuni Kitagawa**

Age: 41

Hometown: Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan

Occupation: Architectural Engineer

Why the BMW GS: After meeting GS riders in Morocco 20 years ago, I knew I wanted to be one of them.

No. **212**

Rider: **Yasuhiro Maehara**

Age: 47

Hometown: Okegawa, Saitama, Japan

Occupation: Mechanical Sales Engineer

Why the BMW GS: I admired the R1200GSA's styling in a magazine, which started my journey with BMW.



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**No. 213**

Rider: **Kazuyuki Shimada**

Age: 46

Hometown: Hidaka, Saitama, Japan

Occupation: Architect

Why the BMW GS: Started with an F800GS for touring, then got into the GS Trophy through a friend who is a GS rider and runs a BMW Motorrad shop.

**Team South Korea**

**No. 221**

Rider: **BK Choi**

Age: 38

Hometown: Gimpo-si, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea

Occupation: Works for an e-Commerce Company

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by 'Ewan McGregor's Long Way Down,' I bought a GS and discovered the GS Trophy—an adventure I'm thrilled to join in Namibia.

**No. 222**

Rider: **Jinsoo Lee**

Age: 46

Hometown: Dae-gu, Republic of Korea

Occupation: Works for an Electronics Company

Why the BMW GS: Looking for a motorcycle that excels on both roads and trails, I found the R1250GS to be the perfect match.

**No. 223**

Rider: **Younglong Eum**

Age: 41

Hometown: Uijeongbu-si, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea

Occupation: Firefighter

Why the BMW GS: Fascinated by the BMW R1200GS for travel and camping, I learned about the GS Trophy and worked hard to qualify.

**Team South Africa**

**No. 231**

Rider: **Marthinus van Rooyen**

Age: 24

Hometown: Vanderbijlpark Gauteng, South Africa

Occupation: Works for an Industrial Refrigeration Company

Why the BMW GS: Advised by a guide during a trip to Lesotho to get a BMW GS and participate in the GS Trophy.



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No. **232**

Rider: **JP Boer**

Age: 27

Hometown: Pretoria, South Africa

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Why the BMW GS: After my mom bought me my first motorcycles for every-day use, I started riding off-road more extensively, which led me to purchase a 1200GS and enter the GS Trophy.

No. **233**

Rider: **Ruhan de Villiers**

Age: 48

Hometown: Western Cape in Langebaan, South Africa

Occupation: Financial Adviser

Why the BMW GS: After testing various motorcycles, I chose the F800GS for its versatility and later upgraded to the R1200GS Rallye, which I consider the best bike I've ever owned.

### **Team Middle East**

No. **241**

Rider: **Antoine Saad**

Age: 55

Hometown: Beirut, Lebanon

Occupation: Works for a Steel Constructions Company

Why the BMW GS: Love the GS spirit and riding behavior, which drew me to the brand.

No. **242**

Rider: **Amir Shamsuddin**

Age: 55

Hometown: Dubai, United Arab of Emirates

Occupation: Commercial Airline Pilot

Why the BMW GS: BMW Motorrad represents quality and high performance, and the GS naturally came to mind for off-road adventures.

No. **243**

Rider: **Taher Altayeb**

Age: 46

Hometown: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Occupation: VP of Sales and Marketing

Why the BMW GS: I've always loved BMW, starting with an RT, and soon moved to a GS and never looked back.



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### **International Team**

No. **251**

Rider: **Dmytro Ivanov**

Age: 42

Hometown: Kharkov, Ukraine

Occupation: CEO

Why the BMW GS: Introduced to BMW by a friend, quickly captivated by the GS.

No. **252**

Rider: **Martin Ulreich**

Age: 40

Hometown: Aschau/Burgenland, Austria

Occupation: Managing Director

Why the BMW GS: As a motorcycle mechanic, I always admired the GS. After riding various models, my dream of joining the GS Trophy came true.

No. **253**

Rider: **Michal Wantola**

Age: 42

Hometown: Buczowice, Poland

Occupation: President of a Transportation Company

Why the BMW GS: Introduced to the GS by friends, my first bike was a 1200 GS, and it remains the best motorcycle I've ever owned.

### **Female Team South Korea**

No. **301**

Rider: **Sunghee Kim**

Age: 41

Hometown: Seoul, Republic of Korea

Occupation: Nurse Assistant

Why the BMW GS: Always wanted to ride a GS but initially thought it wasn't for me due to my height. But I challenged myself and after a lot of practice, I was drawn by its power and performance.

No. **302**

Rider: **Hye Eun Choi**

Age: 38

Hometown: Yuseong-gu, Daejeon, Republic of Korea

Occupation: Runs a Tofu Shop

Why the BMW GS: Tried several bikes before realizing that the GS was the perfect fit for my off-road and touring needs.



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### **Female Team France**

No. **311**

Rider: **Chevalier Axelle**

Age: 30

Hometown: Valence in Drôme, France

Occupation: National Police Motorcycle Rider

Why the BMW GS: My husband introduced me to BMW motorcycles, particularly the GS, leading me to challenge myself at the GS Trophy.

No. **312**

Rider: **Laure Arbez**

Age: 29

Hometown: Thonon-les-Bains, France

Occupation: Works for an Advertisement Video Publishing Agency

Why the BMW GS: My dad had several GS models, and after my first ride, I fell in love and spent 14 months exploring South America on it.

### **Female International Team**

No. **321**

Rider: **Małgorzata Jakubiak**

Age: 41

Hometown: Skierniewice, Poland

Occupation: Lawyer

Why the BMW GS: Started riding BMW bikes 10 years ago and have always been particularly fond of the GS models.

No. **322**

Rider: **Anna Cárdoва**

Age: 31

Hometown: Radiměř, Czech Republic

Occupation: Owns an On-road Driving School

Why the BMW GS: After trying various motorcycles, I found the BMW R 1250 GS to be the best option for my off-road passion.

### **Female Team Germany**

No. **331**

Rider: **Marion Linder**

Age: 50

Hometown: Durach, Germany

Occupation: Self-employed Physiotherapist

Why the BMW GS: Decided to get a GS1200 ADV after off-road training at the Enduropark Hechlingen as a birthday gift to myself.

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Rider: **Ulrike Pleissner**

Age: 24

Hometown: Potsdam, Germany

Occupation: Full-time riding her motorcycle around the world

Why the BMW GS: Initially unfamiliar with BMW, I quickly fell in love with my first GS and have been dedicated ever since.

### **Female Team Japan**

No. **341**

Rider: **Yumi Takimoto**

Age: 46

Hometown: Kanagawa, Japan

Occupation: Sales Consultant for a Motorcycle Accessories Company

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by my husband's experience at the GS Trophy Canada, I wanted to join this great community of riders.

No. **342**

Rider: **Miwano Yoshizawa**

Age: 32

Hometown: Osaka, Japan

Occupation: Works at Pharmaceutical Manufacturing

Why the BMW GS: Inspired by my first foreign motorcycle tour in South Africa on a rental GS, which led me to love the GS community.

### **Female Team Benelux**

No. **351**

Rider: **Karen Weckx**

Age: 44

Hometown: Tongeren, Belgium

Occupation: Gynecologist

Why the BMW GS: Introduced to the GS by a friend and fell in love with its capabilities. My journey began with an F 800 GS and led to many off-road adventures.

No. **352**

Rider: **Nadine van de Scheur**

Age: 25

Hometown: Krimpen a/d IJssel, The Netherlands

Occupation: Ambulant Guider for young people

Why the BMW GS: Motivated by my father-in-law and partner's passion for BMW and the GS, I was determined to qualify for the GS Trophy.



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You will find press material on BMW motorcycles in the BMW Group PressClub at [www.press.bmwgroup.com](http://www.press.bmwgroup.com).

In case of queries, please contact:

Damien Cagnart, Spokesperson BMW Motorrad

Tel: +49-151-601-95806, [Damien.Cagnart@bmw.de](mailto:Damien.Cagnart@bmw.de)

Tim Diehl-Thiele, Head of Communications BMW Motorrad

Tel: +49-151-601-57505, [Tim.Diehl-Thiele@bmw.de](mailto:Tim.Diehl-Thiele@bmw.de)

Web: [www.press.bmw.de](http://www.press.bmw.de)

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 2023, the BMW Group sold over 2.55 million passenger vehicles and more than 209,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2023 was € 17.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 155.5 billion. As of 31 December 2023, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,950 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.





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