

Media Information
30.09.2025

Nelson Piquet tribute: BMW Group Classic brought legendary BMW race cars to the "Circuito Estoril" in honour of the three-time Formula 1 world champion

Brabham BMW BT 52 Turbo and BMW M1 Procar in action +++ Nelson Piquet at the wheel of his legendary BMW race cars +++ Honourary event at the former Formula 1 race track in Estoril/Portugal organized by Dener Motorsports

Munich. As part of a racing weekend organized by Dener Motorsports at the former Formula 1 circuit "Circuito Estoril" near Lisbon/Portugal, a tribute event for the three-time Formula 1 world champion took place on the last weekend in August. The participation of BMW Group Classic occurred in close cooperation with Dener Pires, a close friend of Nelson Piquet.

BMW Group Classic brought two of Nelson Piquet's legendary racing cars to the event. A Brabham BMW BT 52 Turbo, in which he became the first turbo world champion in Formula 1 in 1983, and a BMW M1 Procar, in which he became BMW Procar champion in 1980.

Nelson Piquet grabbed the steering wheel on two days, first completing a shake-down in both cars and then doing a few laps of honour in the Brabham BMW BT 52 Turbo the following day. Bernie Ecclestone, then Brabham team owner, Gordon Murray, then vehicle designer, and former Brabham racing mechanics travelled to Estoril especially for the event.

The last time Nelson Piquet drove his BMW Formula 1 car was 2015 at a Formula 1 Legends event in Spielberg, Austria. Ten years later, he travelled all the way from Brazil to Europe to take the wheel of his two legendary BMW racing cars himself, probably for the last time.

The racing mechanics from BMW Group Classic ensured that the vehicles were provided in perfect condition and also accompanied the event on site.

After the Festival of Speed in Goodwood, the Brabham BMW BT 52 Turbo completed its second drive this year.

Four questions for Nelson Piquet:

What do you think when you see the Brabham BMW BT52 Turbo today, after so many years?

The car was and is beautiful. It is a work of art. It was the best time of my life.

What is your most vivid memory of the 1983 Formula 1 season?

I remember the many test drives. I spent around 33,000 kilometres in the Brabham BMW BT52 Turbo during test drives. In addition, there were around 7,000 kilometres during the 15 Formula 1 race weekends, including the training and qualifying sessions. We had a racing team, a Brabham test team and a BMW test team. We drove a lot. Back then, it was perhaps more personal and more like a family within the team.

What was decisive for the Formula 1 world championship title in 1983?

The BMW turbo engine, although it was developed later than the competition. We developed the car and the engine in 1982 and won the championship in 1983. That was fantastic.

BMW also used telemetry data transmission systems for the first time. These were not intended for driving or tuning the car, but only for the engine. But they were still very helpful.

We were able to solve technical problems quickly. For example, we had problems with fuel consumption that could be solved immediately after the race weekend during test drives. And we also had an extremely strong gearbox.

How difficult was it to handle the Brabham BMW BT52 Turbo with its enormous power?

Back then, it was normal to deal with the power. Today it is very difficult and I brake much earlier than I did in the past.

Formula 1 career of Nelson Piquet:

1978-1991: 204 GPs, 23 GP victories (including 7 for BMW), 485.5 GP points

20x second, 17x third

3x world champion: 1981, 1983 (on BMW) and 1987

1980 runner-up world champion

BMW entries/successes of Nelson Piquet:

1980: Winner of the Procar series in a BMW M1

1981: Winner of the 1000km race at the Nürburgring in a BMW M1 Group 5
(with H.J. Stuck)

1982-85: Formula 1 in a Brabham-BMW Turbo:

1982: 11th in the Formula 1 overall standings in a Brabham-BMW BT 50
Turbo

1983: Formula 1 World Champion in a Brabham-BMW BT 52 Turbo

1984: 5th in the Formula 1 overall standings in a Brabham-BMW BT 53 Turbo

1985: 8th in the Formula 1 overall standings in a Brabham-BMW BT 54 Turbo

Please find corresponding press photos for editorial use at: https://bmw-groupclassic-downloads.com/Events/2025/Nelson_Piquet_Estoril_2025/

Datum 30.09.2025

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The BMW Group

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In 2024, the BMW Group sold 2.45 million passenger cars and more than 210,000 motorcycles worldwide. Profit before tax in the financial year 2024 was €11.0 billion, and revenue €142.4 billion. As at 31 December 2024, the BMW Group had a workforce of 159,104 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of BMW Group's corporate strategy covering supply chains and production of all products until they reach the end of their use phases.

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