



Press release  
February 28<sup>th</sup> 2016

## **BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy Southeast Asia 2016, Day 1.** **Team Argentina early leaders!**

**Munich/Pai.** The wait is finally over for the competitors, the organisers and the fans following around the world, because the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2016 is now officially underway! At 08.30 local time on Sunday 28 February, the Rim Doi resort in Chiang Doi came alive to the welcome rumble of over 100 BMW R 1200 GS engines starting up, as 19 multi-national teams of riders, journalists and marshals were waved off in the traditional Trophy way to signify that the 2016 event had well and truly begun.

They had travelled in from across the globe for this unique amateur motorcycling competition, but on this first morning the competitors were all riding 'as one', united as a community by a passion for GS motorcycles and adventure travel. Their first taste of Thailand on two wheels was, for many, the first time that they had ridden on the left side of the road, but in truth that was the least of their worries, as heavy overnight rain had rendered the first off-road section of the Trophy impassable.

Therefore, after a short spell on tarmac the riders were directed along an undulating 4x4 track that led for 50 kilometres to the location for the first special test. Along the way the competitors rode past rice fields and tiny villages, with the occasional glimpses of elephants and water buffaloes, before arriving at the Special Stage, known as 'Broken Bridge'. Here, the task looked simple, yet was anything but... Teams had to walk two bikes (with the engines running) down a track leading to the remains of a bridge, then push the bikes up and over an angled bridge section before lowering them over a metre to the ground below.

What was fantastic to witness was the huge level of support for all the teams, by all the teams. This was especially evident for the trio of female riders (and their female embedded journalist) competing in their first GS Trophy, who were

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overwhelmed by how much cheering and encouragement they received from all the guys representing the 'rest of the world'.

This Special Stage was timed against the clock and the clear victors were Team Germany, displaying ruthless efficiency. There was another Special Stage in store for the teams later in the day, but first they were able to enjoy a 57km section of trail that had for the most part dried out nicely despite the unseasonable rainfall, with only a few tricky wet clay sections to overcome or enjoy, depending on your perspective.

The second Special consisted of a 'slow race', battled out on a sandy roadside layby, with each team lining up three abreast to literally take the longest time to ride from point A to point B, with penalties for feet down or stalling the engine. All three riders' times were then added together to determine the result, which saw a comprehensive victory for Team South Africa, who were considerably 'slower' than their nearest challengers.

On completion of the slow race, the final 63 kilometres liaison treated the participants to some spectacular views, with mountain passes, village markets and the aromas of Thai street food almost as enticing as the wonderful section of twisting, winding asphalt that transported the Trophy competitors into a beautiful valley, bordered by forested mountains, towards their overnight stop at Pai, with big smiles on their faces.

After a delicious dinner catered for by the travelling kitchens of the Shangri-La Chiang Mai, there was a country presentation by the teams themselves before the all-important 'results of the day' were announced. Despite not having won either of the day's two Specials, it is Team Argentina who lead the standings after the first day of competition, with their pair of top-three finishes clearly showing that consistency might well be the key to GS Trophy success.



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Gaston Quiroga, Team Argentina: "This was a good day for us, we really enjoyed the ride in the morning, seeing the elephants was special, and the 4x4 track took us deep into the countryside, this was amazing rural Thailand, far from the tourist trail. We had two good tests too, on Broken Bridge it was important to manage the progress of the bikes logically, we copied the technique Germany used and that was a great help. We were delighted to do so well in the slow race although I was fearing for my bike by the end, with the engine racing and slipping the clutch it's hard on a bike. To be leading is a wonderful surprise. We're going to our sleeping bags tonight with big smiles!"

Tomorrow is another day of course; anything could happen – and probably will. Catch all the latest updates online at [gstrophy.com](http://gstrophy.com) and also via YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

### Results BMW Motorrad Int. GS Trophy 2016, Day 1:

| Position | Team          | Points |
|----------|---------------|--------|
| 1        | Argentina     | 36     |
| 2        | UK            | 34     |
| 3        | South Africa  | 32     |
| 4        | Germany       | 30     |
| 4        | Italy         | 30     |
| 6        | Mexico        | 29     |
| 7        | France        | 27     |
| 8        | Latin America | 26     |
| 9        | CEEU          | 25     |
| 10       | China         | 24     |
| 11       | Canada        | 22     |
| 12       | Brazil        | 18     |
| 13       | USA           | 17     |



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In 2015, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.247 million cars and nearly 137,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2014 was approximately € 8.71 billion on revenues amounting to € 80.40 billion. As of 31 December 2014, the BMW Group had a workforce of 116,324 employees.

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