



Press Release
1 July 2016

The darling buds of May: BMW M1 Procar Race in the warm-up programme before Formula 1.

BMW Group Classic is bringing about a revival of the super sports car at the “Austrian Grand Prix” and recalling the spectacular race series held in 1979 and 1980 – 14 former racing cars and lots of drivers from yesteryear are appearing in the Legends Parade at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg.

Munich/Spielberg. 37 years after its premiere on the race track, the BMW M1 will once again generate a fantastic atmosphere among motorsport fans in the warm-up for the Formula 1 World Championship race. BMW Group Classic is staging a revival with the racing cars in the Procar Series just before the race for the “Austrian Grand Prix” at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg. Races with these cars were enthusiastically received in the supporting programme on Formula 1 weekends in Europe. When the first Procar Race was held at Zolder, Belgium, in May 1979, contemporary Formula 1 racing drivers competed in identical racing versions of the BMW M1 against national sports-car professionals, private drivers and talented upcoming drivers. Some of these drivers are now taking the opportunity to get back into the cockpit of the BMW M1 at the Legends Parade in Spielberg – including the three-time Formula 1 World Champion Niki Lauda, who won three Procar Races in 1979 and also succeeded in claiming the overall placing.

Lauda from Austria will be campaigning against a number of former rivals at his historic home competition, driving the BMW M1. Hans-Joachim Stuck (DE), runner-up in the overall placings in 1979 and in third place in 1980, is returning to the cockpit of his successful car. Jochen Mass (DE), Christian Danner (DE) and Marc Surer (CH) are also behind the wheel of precisely the models of the BMW M1 in which they raced during the Procar Series. Austrians Dieter Quester and Sepp Manhalter, and Markus Hotz from Switzerland will also be rekindling their memories of exciting battles for position in Procar races. Gerhard Berger (AT), Jos Verstappen (NL) and Jan Lammers (NL) are three other former Formula 1 racing drivers who will be taking part in the Legends Parade. The field of celebrity drivers is completed by Harald Grohs (DE), who won races in the German Touring Car Championship (DTM) driving the BMW 635CSi and the BMW M3, and BMW brand ambassador Leopold Prinz von Bayern (DE). Both drivers once lined up on the grid in a BMW M1 for the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and they are being joined by multiple Touring Car Champion Johnny Cecotto from Venezuela.



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The sporting spirit of yesteryear is being reawakened with the comeback of the Procar Racers in Spielberg. Today the focal point will continue to be the BMW M1, as it was then. This was the first vehicle designed from scratch by BMW Motorsport GmbH to compete in racing. The series version generating 204 kW/277 hp was propelled to a top speed of almost 265 km/h and delivered the fastest road-going German sports car of its time. The Procar Series not only provided the perfect stage for the first super sports car from BMW, but at the same time created an entirely new form of competition on the race track. The trial of strength in the racing versions of the BMW M1 constructed in conformity with the Group 4 regulations and each generating 345 kW/470 hp turned into a big success with spectators. And today the drivers, too, continue to eulogise about the handling characteristics of the mid-engined coupé, the sound of the legendary inline six-cylinder engine and the sporty appeal of a race series that was all about the skills and abilities of the drivers.

This is the third time that the Legends Parade staged in the context of the Austrian Formula 1 race has reflected very special chapters of motor-sport history. Last year, the BMW Group took part in a rendezvous of historic Formula 1 racing cars. The Brazilian Nelson Piquet drove the Brabham BMW BT52, which he had previously driven to victory in the Formula 1 World Championship in 1983. This year, BMW is providing the entire starter field in celebration of the centenary anniversary of the company. The 14 former racing cars in the Procar Series which were registered for the Legends Parade are currently almost without exception in the ownership of private aficionados and collectors who are as fascinated by their comeback on the race track as the drivers. Two of them will even enjoy the privilege of being able to race in their own vehicle. Gerhard Berger is the proud owner of a BMW M1 Procar, as is Sepp Manhalter, who owns precisely the vehicle that he drove past the finishing line in seventh place at the Zolder race circuit in May 1979. He will be driving this car on Sunday.

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BMW Museum – Hands-on history

Visitors of all ages can explore the past, present and future of the BMW brand at BMW Welt, the BMW Museum and the BMW plant. The BMW Museum plays an important role in this. Since re-opening in 2008, it has been successfully presenting the history of BMW and offering a glimpse of the future. The museum also explores the theme of mobility for the benefit of younger visitors. The Junior Museum organizes a special program for children and young people, basing its educational concept on learning through play. The museum also has a history of its own: it is one of the oldest automobile museums in Germany, was built in 1973 and declared a historic monument in 1999.

The BMW Group

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 31 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

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 2015 was approximately € 9.22 billion on revenues amounting to € 92.18 billion. As of 31 December 2015, the BMW Group had a workforce of 122,244 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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