



Media Information

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BMW sports stars get centenary of the BMW Group and BMW brand up and running at Centenary Event.

Sportsmen and women from various fields attend start of centenary activities in Munich.

Munich. 2016 sees the BMW Group celebrate its centenary under the motto THE NEXT 100 YEARS. The official celebrations started on 7th March in Munich with the big Centenary Event in the Olympic Hall. Among the 2,000 invited guests were many athletes, who have enjoyed success around the world in sports supported by BMW. They were there in person when BMW's pioneering vision vehicle, the BMW VISION NEXT 100, was unveiled. Prior to this, a multimedia show had taken guests through the key moments in the BMW Group's history and presented the company's interpretations of future premium mobility.

Among those representing BMW Motorsport were the eight DTM drivers Marco Wittmann (GER), Timo Glock (GER), Bruno Spengler (CAN), Augusto Farfus (BRA), Maxime Martin (BEL), Tom Blomqvist (GBR), António Félix da Costa (POR) and Martin Tomczyk (GER), as well as BMW Brand Ambassador Alex Zanardi (ITA). As well as many other works drivers and team principals, BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt and his predecessors Mario Theissen and Jochen Neerpasch, the first managing director of BMW Motorsport GmbH, also witnessed the Centenary Event at first hand. The same went for many other well-known protagonists from BMW's successful motorsport history – including Gerhard Berger (AUT), Pierluigi Martini (ITA), Harald Grohs (GER), Johnny Cecotto (VEN), Roberto Ravaglia (ITA) and Paul Rosche (GER).

The world of winter sports was represented in Munich by BMW Group Classic Ambassador Katarina Witt (GER), as well as by Olympic luge gold medallists Natalie Geisenberger (GER) and Georg Hackl (GER). Five-time America's Cup winner Russell Coutts (NZL) and BMW Outdoor Ambassador Stefan Glowacz (GER) were also thrilled by the captivating programme in the Olympic Hall.

The BMW Group employs more than 122,000 staff, who were invited to follow the show at the Olympic Hall via live streaming or at many local events at locations around the world. One special highlight for employees in Munich was the live broadcast to the Allianz Arena, where over 30,000 employees watched the launch event unfold. Among those at the event were Spengler and Tomczyk, who met BMW employees as part of the preliminary programme. In the evening, their fellow DTM driver Farfus met



international employees at the BMW Pavillon in Munich city centre, where he spoke about his ties with BMW. He has raced for BMW Motorsport since 2007.

Quotes on the Centenary Event in Munich:

Jens Marquardt (BMW Motorsport Director):

“It is a great honour for me to experience the centenary of the BMW Group and BMW brand as Motorsport Director. All the employees at BMW Motorsport are proud to be able to represent BMW at the racetracks of this world. Motorsport is quite simply in BMW’s DNA. Motor racing continues to play a key role when it comes to the company’s innovative strength. Race outings have allowed us to test new technologies many times in the toughest possible conditions, before that technology is then incorporated in production development. In this special year, we will do our utmost in all the racing series around the world to present BMW with as many victories as possible to mark the centenary.”

Alex Zanardi (BMW Brand Ambassador):

“I am proud to have been a member of the BMW family for many years, and it is a great privilege for me to represent BMW around the globe as Brand Ambassador. As a physically impaired racing driver, I benefit greatly from the innovative ideas, technological expertise and the courage to take new and unusual paths. When it comes to making the impossible possible, for example, me competing in a 24-hour race, there are no limits to the creativity at BMW. BMW always takes on new challenges successfully – but this is only possible, when you are driven by passion. And this passion is characterizing everyone within the BMW family. The future is exciting.”

Martin Tomczyk (BMW DTM driver):

“Like many of the 30,000 employees watching the broadcast of the Centenary Event, I also learned my craft at BMW. To a certain degree, I did my training to become a racing driver in the BMW ADAC Formula Junior Cup in 1998. Today, I wear the BMW colours in the DTM. For me, it is really special to be able to compete with the number 100 on my car in this centenary year. My team, the other BMW drivers in the DTM, and I will do everything in our powers to give the employees plenty of reason to celebrate in BMW’s centenary year.”



Bruno Spengler (BMW DTM driver):

“Many people just see me as Bruno Spengler the racing driver – the driver who was champion when BMW returned to the DTM. In principle, however, I am also a BMW employee and, of course, a big fan of the brand. I was one of many in the Allianz Arena when the Centenary Event was broadcast. The atmosphere among the 30,000 employees was fantastic. We are all one big family and are celebrating a big occasion this year – 100 years of BMW. It is going to be a fantastic party.”

Augusto Farfus (BMW DTM driver):

“When BMW signed me up for the 2007 season, I was still rather wet behind the ears. But I was full of pride to represent BMW as a racing driver. Since then, BMW has become like a family to me. We have enjoyed great success together – in the FIA WTCC and with the historic victory at the 24-hour race at the iconic Nürburgring. The evening event in the BMW Pavilion showed me once again how strong the bond is between the employees and BMW. If I could sign a 100-year contract at BMW, I would not hesitate a second.”

Timo Glock (BMW DTM driver):

“BMW is 100 years old today – and this day belongs to all the BMW drivers, employees and fans. I am just like them: BMW also plays a major role in my life. My first car was a BMW 318ti. I enjoyed my first successes in motor racing in the BMW ADAC Formula Junior Cup. When, after five years in Formula One, I was given the chance to race for BMW again, I did not hesitate for a second and switched to the DTM. That move brought me home again. I hope for BMW that the brand maintains its innovation and pioneering spirit for the next 100 years – and that it continues to build such beautiful and fast racing cars.”

Marco Wittmann (BMW DTM driver):

“It is incredible that BMW has been successful for 100 years already. For me personally, the company has played a very special role in my career. I was sponsored in my youth, and in 2014 we celebrated the greatest success of my racing career so far together when I won the DTM title. I am sure that maximum performance, coupled with the constant drive to use innovation to redefine the limits, will continue to be a feature of BMW for the next 100 years. I am proud to be a part of this motorsport success story.”



Charly Lamm (Team Principal, BMW Team Schnitzer):

“The history of Schnitzer Motorsport is intrinsically tied to BMW. Our team has been racing since the 1960s and has always had a magnificent partner in BMW, one that builds fantastic GT and touring cars. My fondest memories are obviously of the greatest successes we have enjoyed together: victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1999, winning the DTM title in 1989 and 2012 on BMW’s return to the series, the world touring car title in 1987, the title in the 2001 American Le Mans Series and, of course, the total of ten victories at the 24-hour classics at the Nürburgring and in Spa-Francorchamps. And there were many more great moments. Hopefully we will have many more in the future.”

Dirk Werner (BMW works driver):

“In 2010, BMW made my dream of taking to the track as a professional racing driver come true. The moment I heard that I was to be given a contract as a BMW works driver was one of the best of my career. I have an awful lot to thank BMW for and am proud, in every race, to fly the BMW flag and drive such fantastic racing cars.”

Jörg Müller (BMW works driver):

“BMW is the best thing to happen to me in my career as a racing driver. We have had great times together. It goes without saying that the big wins at the 24-hour races and the title in the American Le Mans Series stand out, but I have enjoyed every single year. I am also proud to be so deeply involved in the development of the new BMW M6 GT3.”

Roberto Ravaglia (former BMW works driver):

“I associate BMW with the greatest successes of my motorsport career. I will never forget the 1980s, when I claimed countless fantastic victories together with BMW and Schnitzer Motorsport in the BMW M3. That was a great time. Today, I am proud still to be able to represent BMW as team principal of ROAL Motorsport.”

Mario Theissen (former BMW Motorsport Director):

“I had a very exciting and wonderful time with BMW. One particular highlight was Nelson Piquet’s triumph in the world championship in 1983. Back then I was a young engineer at BMW – and was absolutely thrilled, just as the entire company was. The subsequent Formula One project was certainly the greatest challenge we faced together. However, I obviously also remember the many fantastic successes in GT and touring car racing fondly. Above all, I must mention the wins at the 24-hour races in Le Mans and at the Nürburgring, as well as the titles in the European Touring Car Championship and World Touring Car Championship. Motorsport and BMW belong together. That was always the case, and it will remain that way.”



Jochen Neerpasch (first managing director of BMW Motorsport GmbH):

“It was an exciting time when we founded BMW Motorsport GmbH in 1972. Every one of us brought the same passion for racing to the project. Today, nothing has changed in that regard. Since then, BMW racing cars have celebrated countless victories and titles all over the world. I am certain that will remain the case for the next 100 years.”

Katarina Witt (BMW Group Classic Ambassador):

“As BMW Group Classic Ambassador, I have been fortunate enough often to have the opportunity to drive fascinating cars from throughout the 100-year history of BMW. The looks and charm of these cars never fail to thrill me, but the technology is also impressive. You can feel that BMW has always been ahead of its time, and it will surely remain that way. I am proud to be part of a team that represents this global group.”

Russell Coutts (five-time America's Cup winner):

“In our sport there is no competition that relies on innovation and creative thinking as much as the America's Cup. In its history spanning more than 160 years, visionary technologies have continuously pushed the boundaries of what is possible. BMW also represents this combination of tradition and innovation – which makes the company the perfect 'Global Partner' for the America's Cup.”

Georg Hackl (Olympic luge champion):

“Even during my time as an active luger I was a tinkler. It was always clear to me that you can only achieve great success if you leave no stone unturned and never stop looking for ways to improve – no matter how small. This approach, never to be satisfied with what you have achieved and always to think a little bit ahead, is what makes BMW so special. We at the German Bobsleigh, Luge, and Skeleton Federation are very proud to have BMW on our side as technology partner and are looking forward to a successful and innovative future together – one that can happily last another 100 years as far as I'm concerned.”

Natalie Geisenberger (Olympic luge champion):

“In the ice channel, you not only have to be quick but also efficient. After the start, we athletes can no longer actively accelerate. The intelligent use of existing resources and, at the same time, maximum dynamics is also something that drives BMW. The results, such as the BMW i3 and the BMW i8, show emphatically that the future began long ago at BMW.”



Stefan Glowacz (BMW Outdoor Ambassador):

“People are rediscovering their love of nature. Outdoor sports are fashionable and millions of people are spending their leisure time outside. They want to be out amid nature, and also to protect it. The key words are activity and sustainability – and these are also issues, to which BMW is dedicated. BMW is intensely involved in the topic of sustainability. The pioneering role in electric mobility is the best example, but not the only one.”

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