



BMW Motorsport News – Issue 08/16  
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## **Alexander Sims and Philipp Eng start in the Blancpain GT Series – Victory for the BMW M235i Racing on its North America debut.**

Whether in the DTM, the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, or countless other championships: week after week BMW teams and drivers around the world do battle for points, victories and titles. Away from the track too, members of the large BMW Motorsport family around the world are also creating headlines. The “BMW Motorsport News” allows us to regularly summarise all the action for you in a compact and informative manner. This way, you are always up to speed.

### **Blancpain GT Series: Two BMW works drivers share the cockpit of the BMW M6 GT3.**

The ROWE Racing team is receiving prominent support in the Blancpain GT Series: BMW works drivers Alexander Sims (GB) and Philipp Eng (AT) will compete with the new BMW M6 GT3 in both the Sprint and Endurance Cup in 2016. Sims is a true GT specialist. In recent years, he has been in action for BMW at the prestigious 24-hour races at Spa-Francorchamps (BE) and the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (DE). In 2015, he finished runner-up in the drivers' standings in the British GT Championship at the wheel of a BMW Z4 GT3 with Ecurie Ecosse. Eng emphatically showed his class in 2014 and 2015 with two titles in the Porsche Carrera Cup and one in the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup. Before Eng and Sims launch their campaign at the opening round of the Blancpain GT Series, the Sprint Cup race in Misano (IT) on the second weekend in April, the BMW M6 GT3's pre-season preparations include two days of testing at the Circuit Paul Ricard (FR) on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Three questions for ... Philipp Eng.**

#### **You are returning to the BMW family after almost ten years – with what memories and emotions?**

Philipp Eng: “It is a very cool story. I am really looking forward to driving for BMW again after all these years – especially in a top-class racing car like the BMW M6 GT3. I look back incredibly fondly on the time I spent with BMW before. I more or less learned to walk with BMW Motorsport. I finished third in Formula BMW Germany and enjoyed my first major success in the Formula BMW FB02 when I won the Formula BMW World Final in Valencia in 2007 – and I was one of the last people to drive a Formula One car for the BMW Sauber F1 Team. That was my prize for winning in Valencia. I will never forget that experience.”

#### **How good was the basis that BMW gave you for the rest of your motorsport career?**

Eng: “Very good. Back then I was a BMW Junior and received extensive coaching from the BMW works drivers at the time. They were my heroes. From them I not only learned how to handle a racing car at the limit, but how to prepare properly for a race. Through this, BMW Motorsport laid the foundation for the rest of my career, which has been a successful one. I am back now, and hope we can reap the rewards for that outstanding training together.”



**You start for ROWE Racing in the Blancpain GT Series. What are your expectations for the season?**

Eng: "As a racing driver, you obviously always want to win. However, the bottom line is we will have to wait and see how things pan out. I have raced in the Blancpain Endurance Series before, so I know how incredibly high the standard of drivers, teams and cars is. It is the first year of racing for the BMW M6 GT3 and the challenge we face in the Blancpain GT Series is a big one. However, I feel comfortable in the car, have fantastic team-mates by my side, and an extremely professional and experienced team behind me in ROWE Racing. When you meet the people, you notice immediately that they have been working together for a long time and are perfectly coordinated. I think we have all the ingredients for a successful season."

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**Pirelli World Challenge: TC class victory for the BMW M235i Racing.**

The BMW M235i Racing made a very successful North American competition debut with a Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) Touring Car (TC) class victory in Race 2 for Toby Grahovec (US), driving the number 26 Classic BMW Motorsports M235iR. The day before Grahovec finished second in Race 1 as the 2016 PWC season began at "Circuit of the Americas" (US). Grahovec drives the first two US-specification M235iR cars for Classic BMW Motorsports, Classic BMW's racing team. "It is awesome to win close to home," said Grahovec. "We have about 60 family members and friends here today and to win is fantastic." Another BMW privateer driver was in action over the weekend. In the GTA class, Michael Mills (US) raced in the number 46 BMW Z4 GT3. He finished second in the opening race. Race two was not completed before the editorial deadline.

**Australian GT Championship: Start to the comeback season.**

BMW is back on the Australian motor racing scene – and had an eventful first race weekend in the Australian GT Championship. More than 200,000 spectators followed the BMW M6 GT3's first outing down under at the Clipsal 500 in Adelaide (AU). In three action-packed races, Steve Richards (NZ) and Max Twigg (AU) came home 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> in the car run by BMW Team SRM. The next round of the Australian GT Championship takes place in Melbourne (AU) from 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March, when fans will be able to check out the BMW M6 GT3 on the same bill as the Formula One Grand Prix at Albert Park (AU).

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