



Media Information  
08 February 2020

### **BMW MOTORRAD INTERNATIONAL GS TROPHY OCEANIA 2020: 22 International teams ready to go on a ride of a lifetime**

**Rotorua, New Zealand.** Here in Rotorua, among the natural thermal springs, the teams have all arrived, the bikes are waiting, tents have been pitched, riding kit unpacked and everyone is ready for the start of the seventh BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy.

With the exception of the Australian team, arriving here has been a matter of long haul flights for all participants so there's been the matter of coming to terms with jet lag. As well there's the sorting of event registration, taking possession of the BMW F 850 GS motorcycles (and making personal adjustments) then, to embrace New Zealand life, being treated to an introduction to the culture of the indigenous Maori people, including the traditional challenge to newcomers – the world famous haka.

This year there are 22 teams from 25 nations competing, including four new teams, and as in Mongolia (2018) including two International Female Teams, all of whom are extremely keen to join the Int. GS Trophy brother- and sister-hood. The teams from the Netherlands, Malaysia, North Africa and the Middle East are all first-time entrants and their finalists are naturally very excited by what lies ahead.

#### **A road less travelled.**

What lies ahead is eight days and around 2400km of adventure riding traversing both the North and South Islands. Some 60% of the route will be off-road, the remaining 40%, while sealed, will look not unlike European alpine roads, this is a country of barely five million people – and most of those are concentrated in the urban centres – so these are quiet roads that lead through incredible landscapes, nearly always hilly often mountainous.

The route starts in Rotorua, close to the centre of the North Island, an area of active volcanic activity, and will end in the alpine ski-resort of Queenstown deep in the South Island. Along the way the participants will get to enjoy the nature and culture of these remote islands while facing



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daily challenges that count toward the competition, whether it's riding skills, machine knowledge or wilderness understanding – but as always with the Int. GS Trophy expect the unexpected, every time a new experience!

Chris Zimmerman is the course director: “New Zealand is the perfect off-road destination, it's not only about the roads and trails, but the people here, with everyone you meet you discuss the off-road riding and they love it, you see it in their eyes. Everyone here is so supportive. So we have a great route awaiting and as ever we have that unique Int. GS trophy mix of riding and special stages, it's going to be a brilliant ride.”

Overall director of the Int. GS Trophy, Ralf Rodepeter (head of brand and product at BMW Motorrad) is delighted with the venue and format of this year's competition: “I love the Int. GS Trophy, it's a wonderful ride and so much fun, but what I like most is seeing the people connect. Every day the teams are mixed so they ride every time with new nationalities and they'll have an adventurous experience together, which creates this bond and understanding. Bringing in teams from North Africa and the Middle East this year is especially exciting, so we can honestly say we have riders from all over the world and all walks of life. And this is the spirit of the GS, bringing diverse peoples and cultures together, learning about each other and discovering and enjoying the nature, playing and adventuring. And all this is set in this most beautiful of countries – I know I'm looking forward to this as much as the participants!”

## **Meet the teams.**

It's time to meet the GS Trophy riders. Below is a full list of the participants, with a little comment from each about their lives as GS riders and the excitement of attending the most prestigious GS event in the world:

### **Team Argentina:**

No. 101, Rider: Diego Noras, Age: 30, Hometown: Mendoza, Occupation: Civil engineer.



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Quote: "I'm looking forward to the challenge of the nature and obstacles in the event, competing each day in the best possible position."

No. 102, Rider: Augustin Salanueva, Age: 43, Hometown: Tandil, Occupation: Owner of a shoe shop, grocery and fitness studio

Quote: "The GS Trophy is great, it's a chance to go out and play, to see new places and meet new people."

No. 103, Rider: Lucas Estuardo, Age: 24, Hometown: Esquel, Occupation: Student

Quote: "My passion comes from my father. I grew up seeing him riding his bike and from the very first time he took me with him I never wanted to stop."

### **Team Australia:**

No: 111, Rider: Shaun Terblanche, Age: 31, Hometown: Perth, Occupation: Building maintenance contractor

Quote: "The Spirit of GS is all about the joy that these bikes bring to people who may not even have crossed paths otherwise. Watching others overcome obstacles, challenges and fear, building trust in fellow riders and sharing some of the most spectacular sights around the world."

No: 112, Rider: Wesley Bygate, Age: 35, Hometown: Glass House Mountains, Queensland, Occupation: Certified welder

Quote: "I have ridden many bikes over the years but my R 1150 GS is the only bike that when I push the button, it really asks me how far I want to go. I love to get out and ride it as much as possible."

No: 113, Rider: Tysen Haley, Age: 26, Hometown: Yackandandah, Occupation: Builder



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Quote: "The Spirit of GS would be best described as being part of a group that shares your passion and enthusiasm towards exploring the wonders of this country and world."

### **Team Brazil:**

No: 121, Rider: Pedro Marchioretto, Age: 22, Hometown: Itapira,  
Occupation: Tradesman

Quote: "For me, a week without my motorbike is a week without a part of me, because the bike completes me!"

No: 122, Rider: Filipe Hawerth, Age: 26, Hometown: Santa Catarina,  
Occupation: Self employed

Quote: "The place where I was born and raised gave me the opportunity to practice sports in contact with nature. As a child, I felt free riding my bike. Over time the desire for the motorcycle was inevitable."

No: 123, Rider: Claudinei Costa Silva, Age: 34, Hometown: Sao Paulo,  
Occupation: Motorcycle mechanic

Quote: "The "Spirit of GS" is all about a mix of freedom and passion in a two-wheeled world. At the GS Trophy I'm looking to overcome my limits."

### **Team France:**

No: 141, Rider: Aurelien Szulek, Age: 32, Hometown: Bordeaux,  
Occupation: International director for motorcycle accessories

Quote: "For me, a week without my motorbike is impossible. I always have some motorbikes around me. And I ride as much as I can."

No: 142, Rider: Vincent Debitte, Age: 32, Hometown: Rethel, Occupation:  
Heavy truck mechanic

Quote: "I look forward to meeting a lot of people and sharing beautiful sceneries on board of a GS and especially a maximum of fun."



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No: 143, Rider: Nicloas Bastin, Age: 41, Hometown: French Alps,  
Occupation: Software engineer

Quote: “Since I was a child, I have always wanted to ride motorcycles! I had to wait to be 21 years old for my first motorcycle. After turning 37, four years ago, I discovered a passion of off-road riding with my R 1200 GS Adventure!”

### **Team India:**

No: 161, Rider: Sathyananth Vasudevan, Age: 36, Hometown: Tiruppur,  
Occupation: Civil engineer

Quote: “I always wanted to be a biker. I loved riding and I loved the original boxer twins and the smell from the carburetors and the sense of adventure that came with it. I think that spirit still influences everything I do today.”

No: 162, Rider: Rickiey Naik, Age: 43, Hometown: Bangalore, Occupation:  
Businessman

Quote: “The “Spirit of GS” is ‘One for all, all for one’. ‘One for all’ – each person contributes to the whole. ‘All for one’ – nobody is left behind.”

No: 163, Rider: Shakeel Basha, Age: 30, Hometown: Coimbatore,  
Occupation: Businessman

Quote: “The passion that I have towards any motorbike. The happiness you get while cruising through the wind and dirt is something which will never go away. So why will our team win? Because we have fallen and learnt a lot of things in the hard way from every fall. This has helped us grow and given us more confidence.”

### **Team Italy:**

No: 161, Rider: Michele Pradelli, Age: 39, Hometown: Modena,  
Occupation: Bank manager



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Quote: “Open terrain is the road that leads you to the adventure ... Why would our team win? We will win because we are a complete, tenacious team and we know how to have fun!”

No: 162, Rider: Alberto Ballardin, Age: 27, Hometown: Padova,  
Occupation: CNC machinist

Quote: “My favourite trail is the one I don’t know, because every time I ride an unknown trail is a wonderful discovery. The GS Trophy will be a wonderful experience in one of the most beautiful places on earth with bikes and adventure, which are some of my biggest interests.”

No: 163, Rider: Frederico de Angelis, Age: 42, Hometown: Terni,  
Occupation: Trade agent

Quote: “My favourite trails are curvy roads in the mountains and everything off-road! For me, a week without my motorbike... is a bad week!”

### **Team Japan:**

No: 171, Rider: Shinichi Kimijima, Age: 44, Hometown: Nikkō, Occupation:  
Mechanical engineer

Quote: “The Spirit of GS is confronting any difficulty with courage and overcoming it with a team. And enjoying it.”

No: 172, Rider: Yoshiaki Terao, Age: 42, Hometown: Ishikawa,  
Occupation: Road marker

Quote: “For me the “Spirit of GS” means a never-ending journey. If we win it is because I believe in my power, in the power of my friends, in the power of my GS.”

No: 173, Rider: Sunao Ueda, Age: 47, Hometown: Minaminosaka,  
Occupation: Sheet metal worker



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Quote: "I bring to my team Japanese teamwork and years of experience in many parts of the world. But we are going to New Zealand just for fun, so we won't feel any stress."

### **Team Latin America:**

No: 181, Rider: Freddy Kehler, Age: 39, Hometown: Paraguay,  
Occupation: Business owner

Quote: "I'm looking forward to the GS Trophy, I expect to make a lot of new friends from all over the world and see new landscapes I have never seen before."

No: 182, Rider: Diego Penagos, Age: 37, Hometown: Colombia,  
Occupation: Doctor

Quote: "Nothing made me want learn to ride a motorcycle, it's just something that I've been passionate about since I was a kid. It makes me feel like nothing else in the world."

No: 183, Rider: Luis Arturo Palmieri Núñez, Age: 26, Hometown:  
Guatemala, Occupation: Lawyer & Notary public

Quote: "The qualifier was tough; really good people were left behind, so in the name of all those good riders when we get to the GS Trophy we must fight for the best result possible. We probably won't be able to train together, but we will surely compensate it with passion, preparation and desire."

### **Team Malaysia:**

No: 191, Rider: Norizuan Abdullah, Age: 31, Hometown: Ipoh Perak,  
Occupation: Businessman-Engineer

Quote: "Living life on two wheels, I can move faster and go wherever I want. This is my personal freedom."



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No: 192, Rider: Kiang Wei Chan, Age: 38, Hometown: Srawak,  
Occupation: Engineer

Quote: “For me the Spirit of GS is about making new friends, discovering new places, the heart of adventure.”

No: 193, Rider: Mohd Zulfakar bin Mohd Alghaus, Age: 31, Hometown: Kuala Lumpur  
Occupation: Driver

Quote: “I learnt to ride the motorcycle for the fantastic experience, to meet more like-minded friends and because I admire the nature.”

### **Team Mexico:**

No: 201, Rider: Manuel Enrique Montalvo Febres, Age: 19, Hometown: Mexico City,  
Occupation: Student

Quote: “As a child, I always looked up to my father, who rode motorcycles since he was 13 years old. I remember that every time I heard the sound of his motorcycle, I got really excited. When I finally started riding, the feeling of putting myself each time into bigger challenges really made me fall in love with motorcycles.”

No: 202, Rider: Antonio Sanchez Aldana Cusi, Age: 45, Hometown: Mexico City,  
Occupation: Sales manager

Quote: “For me the Spirit of GS means freedom, going to places nobody has ever gone before, it means natural life, living outdoor, it’s living different from all the others, meeting different people and cultures.”

No: 203, Rider: Angel Ernesto Vazquez Ramos, Age: 47, Hometown: Mexico City,  
Occupation: Businessman

Quote: “My favourite trail: the one we just did near Jalcomulco, Veracruz – with rain! The GS Trophy will be a great adventure, and we’ll be meeting awesome new friends.”





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### **Team Middle East:**

No: 211, Rider: Elias Abi Antoun, Age: 33, Hometown: Lebanon,  
Occupation: Electrician

Quote: “The Spirit of GS is to discover the world with fellow riders in an adventurous way, to go to unreachable places with our GS, it’s a lifestyle, and brotherhood.”

No: 212, Rider: Martin Victor Alva, Age: 32, Hometown: United Arab Emirates, Occupation: Business owner

Quote: “For me the Spirit of GS means freedom, adventure and camaraderie. It’s a lifestyle and I love it.”

No: 213, Rider: Jorge Osorio Restrepo, Age: 32, Hometown: United Arab Emirates, Occupation: IT engineer

Quote: “My favourite riding is to adventure off-road, that mix between moto travels and off-road. It is important to know your machine and enjoy the moto adventure in all terrain and waters.”

### **Team Nordics:**

No: 221, Rider: Ronnie Lundberg, Age: 39, Hometown: Trollhättan, Sweden, Occupation: Teacher for car and bike traffic

Quote: “My first ride on a motorcycle was on an 80cc motocrosser at Skara summer land when I was 10 years old, then I was hooked to motorbikes!”

No: 222, Rider: Ole Christian Kristiansen, Age: 34, Hometown: Stange, Norway, Occupation: Electrician

Quote: “The Spirit of GS means to see the world! I think the GS Trophy is going to be hard, challenging and a great adventure.”



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No: 223, Rider: Arto Kallionen, Age: 41, Hometown: Finland, Occupation: Engineer

Quote: "My favourite riding is on narrow enduro trails. The GS Trophy will be a once in a lifetime experience."

### **Team North Africa:**

No: 231, Rider: Hicham Lahlou-Kitane, Age: 45, Hometown: Casablanca, Morocco, Occupation: Trader

Quote: "My favourite trail is difficult to choose, Morocco is a huge playground for the GS, the Moroccan Sahara is breathtaking."

No: 232, Rider: Majd Berrada, Age: 42, Hometown: Casablanca, Morocco Occupation: Architect

Quote: "I want to discover New Zealand, the F 850 GS and to live a beautiful adventure with my team and all the other GS trophy finalists. I'm sure I will encounter very interesting bikers. It's a dream that is coming true."

No: 233, Rider: Hicham Malti, Age: 52, Hometown: Casablanca, Morocco Occupation: Architect

Quote: "For me, the GS spirit represents adventure, mutual help and solidarity between riders. My challenge at the GS Trophy will be to be at the same level with my teammates and enjoy every moment of the event."

### **Team Russia:**

No: 241, Rider: Grigory Biryukov, Age: 39, Hometown: Moscow, Occupation: Specialist in watch services

Quote: "I'm riding motorcycles since 2006. Mostly roadsters, no big trips. After ten years my friend invited me to a journey in the mountains, then I realized that I'm not such a good rider as I thought! But the views on that trip were worth the trainings, so I started to master my off-road skills!"



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No: 242, Rider: Ruslan Karimov, Age: 40, Hometown: Moscow,  
Occupation: CEO

Quote: "I started riding motorcycles about eight years ago. First, I preferred sports bikes, but then in 2014 I tried a GS. My friend advised me that I should try. I felt in love with the GS instantly and couldn't return back to my sports bike. Then I visited a GS Day event in Russia and was so excited that I decided I must learn how to ride my GS off-road."

No: 243, Rider: Aleksey Abroskin, Age: 36, Hometown: Moscow,  
Occupation: Associate director

Quote: "My first bike was a R 1200 RT back in 2014. Once we had a long journey with my friends, they all were riding a GS. There were a lot of trails on our route: RT survived them, but I realized that I need a GS for that kind of adventures. During the national qualifier 2017 in Russia I was ranked first place among the rookies, then I realized that everything is possible, and I can do more. I started trainings and finally I'm here, a part of Russian team for the Int. GS Trophy 2020!"

### **Team South Africa:**

No: 251, Rider: Cobus Theron, Age: 28, Hometown: Tulbagh,  
Occupation: Farmer

Quote: "A few years ago, the Spirit of GS didn't have the meaning that it does today after getting involved with the Trophy and the closer GS community. For me, in the true spirit we share our passion for GS and allow it to take us places new and old and Make Life a Ride!"

No: 252, Rider: BJ Vosloo, Age: 34, Hometown: Cape Town, Occupation:  
Industrial architect

Quote: "I believe the greatest challenge will be not to forget to enjoy the moment. The Int. GS Trophy journey is most definitely not easy. It takes hard work, massive determination and an attitude not to forget about your goals set to yourself. You have to be willing to sacrifice some things in life



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to achieve great things. Every rider that has qualified in the past will know this.”

No: 253, Rider: Brandon Jason Grimsted, Age: 20, Hometown: Fouriesburg, Occupation: Commercial driver

Quote: “I look forward to completely submerging myself in a new culture and being able to challenge myself and push my skills and abilities to new heights, all whilst exploring the incredibly beautiful and diverse terrain that New Zealand has to offer.”

### **Team South Korea:**

No: 261, Rider: Yeonsoo Yun, Age: 23, Hometown: Seoul, South Korea, Occupation: Magazine editor

Quote: “My first rising experience came when my dad gave me a little dirt bike when I was young. And then he asked me: “Can you ride this?” The “Spirit of GS” is about endurance, passion, the spirit of never giving up.”

No: 262, Rider: Hyukyong Kwon, Age: 46, Hometown: Seoul, South Korea, Occupation: News cameraman

Quote: “The trail (I want to ride the most) is from Mount Halla at the southern end of the Korean peninsula to Mount Baektu at the northern end of the Korean peninsula. But now I can't go. Because my country is divided into South and North Korea. I want to ride my GS someday on that trail. At that time, I would like to ride through the beautiful Korean peninsula during the Int. GS Trophy with my international friends.”

No: 263, Rider: Hyunwook Kim, Age: 32, Hometown: Seoul, South Korea, Occupation: Businessman

Quote: “My introduction to motorcycling came when I was hanging out with my friend at his family's restaurant. I had the chance to deliver food by riding the motorcycle. I have been crazy about riding motorcycles since then.”



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### **Team Thailand:**

No: 271, Rider: Patompog Laboonta, Age: 33, Hometown: Chiangmai,  
Occupation: Businessm

Quote: “The “Spirit of GS” means we have the same goal and same passion, so we will always be united and help each other. Unity and team spirit will drive us to success.”

No: 272, Rider: Siam Keawwatchan, Age: 37, Hometown: Chiangmai,  
Occupation: Motorcycle tour guide

Quote: “I am looking forward to making new friendships at the Int. GS Trophy. The GS Spirit is about team spirit, sharing and caring.”

No: 273, Rider: Phaisan Hunthai, Age: 36, Hometown: Rayong,  
Occupation: Engineer

Quote: “I think I have all the required skills, and I’m ready to be part of Team Thailand in the Int. GS Trophy 2020. Because of our team spirit, we all have the GS spirit.”

### **Team United Kingdom:**

No: 281, Rider: Tim Mitchell, Age: 25, Hometown: Warrington,  
Occupation: Car technician

Quote: “My dad has always owned BMW bikes for as long as I can remember, I've been brought up around boxer engines so riding bikes was inevitable! It's hard for me to pick a favourite trail but Snowdonia is great for twisty roads or challenging off-road sections and both offer breathtaking views!”

No. 282, Rider: Roy Prescott, Age: 46, Hometown: Barton, Occupation:  
Farmer



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Quote: "I expect to get a 'Big Smile' from the International GS Trophy 2020, and the chance to make new friends that share my interest in GS adventure riding."

No: 283, Rider: Richard Cox, Age: 47, Hometown: Clutton, Occupation: Civil engineer

Quote: "My favourite trail is the Napiers trail to Magdala in Ethiopia. You've asked me what a week without my bike would feel like? Sorry, I don't even want to think about it!"

### **Team Netherlands:**

No: 291, Rider: Peet Gerards, Age: 30, Hometown: Cujik, Occupation: International account manager

Quote: "It all started with a broken moped when I was eight years old. I took it apart and build it back together 100 times just for fun. At ten years old biking was already in my blood and I got my first trail bike. Addiction."

No: 292, Rider: Xavier Tobé, Age: 22, Hometown: Oostvoorne, Occupation: Project assistant

Quote: "What made me want to learn to ride a motorcycle? There was no escape, I'm doing things on two wheels since I was three years old! So a week for me with out my motorcycle is a major disaster!"

No: 293, Rider: Jaap van Hoofwegen, Age: 35, Hometown: Den Bosch, Occupation: Sales director, wind turbines

Quote: "For me, a week without my motorbike makes me restless. My GS allows me to recharge my batteries, restructure my thoughts and put things into perspective."

### **Team USA:**

No: 301, Rider: Chris Johns, Age: 34, Hometown: Temecula, CA, Occupation: Motorcycle mechanic



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Quote: “The “Spirit of GS” is a symbol of freedom to go everywhere without hesitation. The greatest challenge at the Int. GS Trophy 2020 is going to be going back home!”

No: 302, Rider: Harrison Kendrick, Age: 22, Hometown: Charlotte, NC,  
Occupation: Sales engineer

Quote: “My dad got me into riding at an early age. It became a great way to spend time with him and also explore. The more I rode, the more I enjoyed the challenge of taking big bikes places where many people said they could not go.”

No: 303, Rider: Kevin Jones, Age: 41, Hometown: Pasadena, CA,  
Occupation: Real estate

Quote: “It is such an honour to have earned a spot on the trophy for team USA. There were so many determined and amazing competitors at the qualifier, I am lucky to be here. The greatest challenge that I face is to honour those other competitors and contribute to my team and ensure that team USA has a strong and respectable finish while making new friends and having fun!”

### **International Female Team 1:**

No: 311, Rider: Isabela Londono Rivas, Age: 26, Hometown: Manizales,  
Columbia, Occupation: Architect

Quote: “The greatest challenge at the Int. GS Trophy 2020 will be the amount of riding, and sleeping in tents seven days in a row won't be easy!”

No: 312, Rider: Nikki van der Spek, Age: 31, Hometown: Hoek of Holland,  
Netherlands, Occupation: Motorcycle instructor

Quote: “Will our team win? Just being in New Zealand and seeing the beautiful country. That's already winning for me.”



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No: 313, Rider: Claire Bichard, Age: 32, Hometown: L'isle Adam, France,  
Occupation: Office manager

Quote: "For me the 'Spirit of GS' is a big family. If our teams wins it is because we never give up! We are a family now."

### **International Female Team 2:**

No: 321, Rider: Lisa Taylor, Age: 47, Hometown: Scottsdale, AZ, USA,  
Occupation: Policewoman

Quote: "The 'Spirit of GS' is a sense of adventure, riding off the beaten path into the heart of the land and culture. Making new friends and lasting memories."

No: 322, Rider: Andrea Box, Age: 28, Hometown: Carboor, Victoria,  
Occupation: Trauma nurse

Quote: "The 'Spirit of GS' is about the friendship and camaraderie in this event. It's the support and help we provide to each other. I'm not sure what to expect when we get to New Zealand but that's all part of the adventure."

No: 323, Rider: Klara Finklele, Age: 54, Hometown: Dublin, Ireland,  
Occupation: Scientist

Quote: "I learned to ride a motorcycle for the freedom and adventure to go anywhere. When we get to the GS Trophy I expect hard work, challenge, and a lot of fun."

The event's excitement will also be relayed with much more information of a more informal kind via BMW Motorrad's social media sources:

BMW Motorrad Facebook [www.facebook.com/bmwmotorrad](http://www.facebook.com/bmwmotorrad)

Twitter [www.twitter.com/bmwmotorrad](http://www.twitter.com/bmwmotorrad) (#gstrophy)





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YouTube [www.youtube.com/bmwmotorrad](http://www.youtube.com/bmwmotorrad)

Instagram [www.instagram.com/bmwmotorrad](http://www.instagram.com/bmwmotorrad)

“RIDE AND TALK – The BMW Motorrad Podcast”

Watch out for more information on the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2020 – brought to you directly from New Zealand!

In case of queries, please contact:

Tim Diehl-Thiele, Head of Communications BMW Motorrad  
Tel.: +49 151 601 57505, [Tim.Diehl-Thiele@bmw.de](mailto:Tim.Diehl-Thiele@bmw.de)

Ingo Wirth, Head of Communications MINI and BMW Motorrad  
Tel.: +49 89 382 25814, [Ingo.Wirth@bmw.de](mailto:Ingo.Wirth@bmw.de)

## **The BMW Group**

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2019, the BMW Group sold over 2,520,000 passenger vehicles and more than 175,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2018 was € 9.815 billion on revenues amounting to € 97.480 billion. As of 31 December 2018, the BMW Group had a workforce of 134,682 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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