

BMW Group

Corporate and Governmental Affairs

Media Information
13 May 2009

From the museum to the road: BMW Classic at the 2009 Mille Miglia

Munich. Munich/Brescia. BMW and the Mille Miglia are united by a shared history that goes back a long way. The triumphs of the BMW 328 are as inseparably linked with this 1,000-mile race as the winning appearance of the BMW 507 in the late 1950s. 2009 sees BMW Classic writing a further chapter of this historic narrative. An icon of BMW racing history, normally only on view at the BMW Museum, has been rendered raceworthy again especially for this year's Mille Miglia: the BMW 328 Mille Miglia Touring Coupé, overall winner of the 1940 event. "On the one hand we want to express the high regard in which we hold the Mille Miglia," says Karl Baumer, head of BMW Classic, "and on the other our aim is to show that the BMW Museum is no dead-end street, but that we also put historic vehicles back on the road for special occasions." Visitors to the Museum need not miss out on the legendary racing coupé: during its absence a faithfully reproduced replica will be standing in for the original.

As well as the Touring Coupé, several BMW 328 production models will be sent out onto the roads between Rome and Brescia, along with a range of BMW 328 Mille Miglia Roadsters and a BMW 328 Berlin-Rome Roadster. The youngest BMW to make the journey from Munich to Italy will be a BMW 507 built in 1957. In all, nine works cars will be lining up at the start of this year's Mille Miglia, with seven further teams bearing the blue and white logo also expected in Brescia.

The teams:

No. 71	BMW 328 (Prinz Leopold von Bayern / Peter Lovett)
No. 72	BMW 328 (Ulrich Knieps / Dr. Hans Hamer)
No. 73	BMW 328 (Maximilian Schöberl / Jürgen von Kuczkowski)
No. 74	BMW 328 Mille Miglia Coupé (Andrea Castronovo / Kristian Ghedina)
No. 75	BMW 328 Berlin-Rome Touring Roadster (Ian Robertson / Charles Lord March)
No. 76	BMW 328 (Dr. Friedrich Eichiner / Dieter Pfundt)
No. 77	BMW 328 Mille Miglia Roadster (Heinrich Lingner / Karl Baumer)
No. 78	BMW 328 (Michael Schröder / Daniel Kiess)
No. 365	BMW 507 (Reiner Löslein / Marcel Botterweck)

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BMW 328 Berlin-Rome Touring Roadster.

In the hope of competing in the Berlin-Rome race scheduled for 1941, Germany's National Sports Authority had three existing BMW Roadsters fitted with more advanced aerodynamic roadster bodies by Carrozzeria Touring of Milan. What ultimately emerged were racing cars that boasted an outstandingly good drag coefficient for the time. The events of the Second World War, however, put paid to any further motor racing events with German involvement.

Year of construction	1937 chassis, 1941 body
Engine	6-cylinder in-line
Displacement	1971 cc
Bore x Stroke	66 x 96 mm
Power output	136 bhp at 6000 rpm
Gearbox	4-speed
Brakes	Alfin drums, vented brake back plates
Weight	780 kg
Max. speed	200 km/h (125 mph)

BMW 328.

The 328 Roadster, developed in 1935/36, is one of the legends of automobile history. Although only modest facilities were available, the result was a sports car of most attractive appearance that soon dominated the two-litre class. Modified competition versions won their classes at Le Mans and in the Mille Miglia. Of the 464 cars that were built, 403 had the standard roadster body, the remaining chassis being used for racing versions or special bodywork ordered by customers.

Construction period	1936 - 1940
Quantity	464
Engine	Six-cylinder in-line engine
Displacement	1971 cc
Bore x Stroke	66 x 96 mm
Power output	80 bhp at 4500 rpm
Transmission	Four-speed, central shift
Front brakes	Hydraulic drum brakes
Rear brakes	Hydraulic drum brakes
Dimensions	3900 x 1550 x 1400 mm
Unladen weight	780 kg
Max. speed	155 km/h



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BMW 328 Touring Coupé.

The company Touring in Milan built a particularly light-weight "superleggera" coupé body on the BMW 328 chassis for use in fast long-distance races. The improved aerodynamics were intended to achieve much higher speeds. The car was first used in June 1939 in the 24-hour race at Le Mans. Max Prinz zu Schaumburg-Lippe and Hans Wencher won the 2-litre sports-car class in a new record time and came 5th in the overall placings. In April 1940, the car driven by Fritz Huschke von Hanstein and Walter Bäumer won a commanding overall victory in the Mille Miglia. Successes and the overall concept make this vehicle a unique racing legend.

Year of construction	1939
Engine	Six-cylinder in-line engine
Displacement	1971 cc
Bore x Stroke	66 x 96 mm
Power output	136 bhp at 6000 rpm
Gearbox	Four-speed
Brakes	Alfin drums, vented brake, back plates
Weight	780 kg
Max. speed	220 km/h (137 mph)

BMW 328 Mille Miglia Roadster.

For lack of time, two of the three BMW 328 Roadster models scheduled to compete in the 1st Gran Premio Brescia delle Mille Miglia of 1940 had their bodywork built not in Munich, but by coachbuilders Touring of Milan on the basis of BMW designs. Like the BMW 328 Coupé, this aerodynamically advanced, ultra-lightweight body consisted of a tubular space frame with an aluminium skin. The team behind the wheel of this car comprised Willy Briem and Uli Richter, who propelled it to an outstanding fifth place overall in the 1940 Mille Miglia and thus played a key role in securing the team prize for BMW.

Year of construction	1940
Engine	6-cylinder in-line
Displacement	1971 cc
Bore x Stroke	66 x 96 mm
Power output	130 bhp at 5750 rpm
Gearbox	4-speed
Brakes	Alfin drums, vented brake, back plates
Weight	700 kg
Max. speed	200 km/h (125 mph)



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BMW 507.

The BMW 507 roadster was launched at the 1955 Frankfurt Motor Show. BMW had succeeded in creating one of the most beautiful sports cars of all time. The car was based on the technology of the 3.2 litre 502 saloon but with the power output increased to 150 bhp. The 507 was built to a design created by Albrecht Graf Goertz, a colleague of Raymond Loewy. This sports car, available with three different rear-axle transmission ratios and a range of top speeds between 190 and 220 km/h, worked wonders for the image of Bayerische Motoren Werke. Almost all BMW 507s, in many cases bought originally by international celebrities, are still on the road today. Two of them have special bodies.

Year of construction	1957
Quantity	251 (1956 - 1959)
Engine	Eight-cylinder V-engine
Displacement	3168 cc
Bore x Stroke	82 x 75 mm
Power output	150 bhp at 5000 rpm
Transmission	Four-speed, central shift
Front brakes	Hydraulic duplex brakes with servo
Rear brakes	Hydraulic simplex brakes with servo
Dimensions	4380 x 1650 x 1260 mm
Unladen weight	1220 kg
Max. speed	205 km/h

BMW and the Mille Miglia: triumphs for eternity.

The name says it all, and it has a legendary resonance: Mille Miglia. From its inception, this road trial covering 1,000 miles was considered the ultimate challenge for drivers and cars alike. Those who stayed the course in the Mille Miglia proved not only their competitiveness in motor sports but also their automotive engineering prowess.

Between 1927 and 1957, the Mille Miglia was staged 24 times in northern Italy. It was a spectacular event for many thousands of motor sport fans and a perfect stage for race drivers such as Tazio Nuvolari, Stirling Moss, Rudolf Caracciola, Juan Manuel Fangio and Fritz Huschke von Hanstein. But the Mille Miglia was also a crucial trial of strength for car manufacturers. The legendary event celebrated its revival in 1977 and, as a reliability trial for historic vehicles, has kept alive the spirit of classic car racing ever since. In 1925 four young men from Brescia, as wealthy as they were enthusiastic about motor racing, had resolved to turn their home town into a hub of motor sports. Two years later they saw their plans come to fruition. Henceforth, the start and finish line in Brescia would take on a carnival atmosphere, with the drivers and their automobiles enthusiastically celebrated by the numerous spectators who flocked there.



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Each year racing fever spread throughout the land – and not only because the cars that dominated the event were initially of Italian manufacture.

The first Mille Miglia led through Bologna and Florence to Rome, and from there through Ancona, Ferrara, Treviso and Vicenza back to Brescia. In subsequent years the route also went over unsurfaced roads and through narrow village streets. It was a tough test for drivers and vehicles alike, creating a unique atmosphere in which man and machine were constantly driven to their physical limits. Its critics were deeply concerned about safety, and their fears were tragically vindicated in 1938 when ten people died in a terrible accident near Bologna. This tragedy prompted the Italian government to impose an immediate ban on racing events on public roads.

Just two years later, the rally was replaced by the 1st Gran Premio Brescia delle Mille Miglia. Once again the course covered 1,000 miles, but this time it ran along paved roads in the city triangle between Brescia, Cremona and Mantua. Competitors drove around the course nine times, while spectators got to know not only a new route but also an entirely new triumphant car.

For many years the 8-cylinder bolides from Alfa Romeo had dominated the Mille Miglia with their supercharged engines that produced up to 360 hp. Only in 1931 did Rudolf Caracciola manage to halt the Italians' winning streak in a powerful, supercharged Mercedes SSKL. But then a new kind of sports car appeared on Europe's racing circuits: the BMW 328, actually a rather delicate vehicle when compared to its competitors, with its 2-litre engine and a modest output of 80 hp. This small 2-litre-class roadster won the Mille Miglia in 1938, enabling BMW's breakthrough. But the truly great triumph followed in 1940 when Fritz Huschke von Hanstein and Walter Bäumer drove to a historic victory in their BMW 328 Mille Miglia Coupé with a Touring body. Driving at an average speed of 166.7 km/h, they set a record that would remain unbeaten. The second-placed car, an Alfa Romeo, did not cross the finish line until a quarter of an hour after the victorious BMW 328.

For BMW, this spectacular success was to remain the only overall victory in the classic event. The Second World War initially put an end not only to the Mille Miglia but also to BMW's motor racing activities. On its revival in 1947, the Mille Miglia once again led from Brescia to Rome and back. Following Alfa Romeo's win in the maiden event, Ferrari assumed the dominant role in subsequent years. After the war BMW no longer sent works teams to Italy. Despite some spectacular races – such as the 1955 victory by Stirling Moss and David Jenkinson in a Mercedes 300 SLR – the demise of the Mille Miglia was only a matter of time. The field of participants became increasingly bewildering; occasionally there were over 400 vehicles at the start line, including diesel models and oddities such as the ISO micro-car – the predecessor of the BMW Isetta – which bravely struggled across the Apennine passes in 1954. But above all, negotiating the roads and making it to the finish line became increasingly fraught



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with risk as the race cars grew more powerful and faster from year to year. The tragedy of 1938 was repeated in 1957 when a serious accident in Guidizzolo claimed 12 fatalities – and spelled the end for the Mille Miglia.

The fascinating moments of the Mille Miglia remain etched in the memories of countless automobile enthusiasts – and they can be experienced again today in the Mille Miglia storica. In 1977, exactly half a century after the first Mille Miglia, a new version of the legendary race was staged for the first time. It is now held in May of each year as a reliability time trial at historic sites. The chase for best times has turned into a demonstration of automotive engineering skills in a three-day event that attracts hundreds of thousands of spectators to the roadsides. All vehicle models that participated in the classic Mille Miglia at least once between 1927 and 1957 are permitted to enter. That includes the BMW 328 and other models such as the BMW Isetta and BMW 507 – two models deployed by private competitors in the 1950s. Each year BMW Classic dispatches a range of vehicles from its collection to the Mille Miglia start line. Private teams are also involved in the 1,000-mile event.

For fans of classic automobiles, today's Mille Miglia enjoys an importance on a par with the significance of the original races for the motor sport scene of the time. Nowhere other than between Brescia and Rome is the history of motor sport and automotive engineering celebrated so intensely and impressively. The Mille Miglia storica pays homage to the design engineers and their creations, which continue to inspire professionals and aficionados to this day.

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