

# BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team



**For Release: March 12, 2009**



**Contact:** David J. Buchko  
Motorsports & Heritage Communications  
201-307-3709 (office) / 201-321-6857 (cell)  
dave.buchko@bmwna.com

Bill Cobb  
BMW NA Motorsports Press Officer  
215-295-3115 (office) / or 215-431-7223 (cell)  
billcobbcommunications@yahoo.com

Eric Mauk  
Rahal Letterman Racing, Director of Communications  
614-529-7000 (x104) (office) / 614-264-1254 (mobile)  
emauk@rahal.com

## **CURTAIN RAISES ON BMW RAHAL LETTERMAN RACING TEAM M3s AT 57<sup>TH</sup> TWELVE HOURS OF SEBRING**

**Woodcliff Lake, NJ – March 12, 2009...** The two BMW M3s of the Rahal Letterman Racing Team will make their competitive debut at the 57<sup>th</sup> annual 12 Hours of Sebring on March 21<sup>st</sup> as BMW returns to the American Le Mans Series for the first time since the 2006 season.

Assembled at Rahal Letterman Racing's Hilliard, Ohio headquarters over the past three months, the two BMW M3 racing cars represent more than two years of planning, design, construction and testing.

In recent weeks both M3s have had to undergo substantial additional modifications. Originally conceived for the GT2S class, the M3s have now been consolidated into GT2. Following the January 26-28 Winter Test IMSA further clarified aerodynamic, restrictor, and fuel cell specifications. Close cooperation with IMSA and the ALMS meant the team could prepare one of the cars for an additional two days of testing at the end of February.



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"Two ALMS seasons have passed since BMW was last on track in 2006," said Martin Birkmann, BMW of North America Motorsports Manager. "We understand that the competition will be tough, but that is exactly what we are looking for. The first BMW M3 was originally built to race and, almost 25 years and four generations later, we are looking forward to getting back on the track with the 2009 BMW M3. Sebring is one of the most demanding races in the world and certainly will test our cars and our team. Just finishing the 12 Hours has always been considered an accomplishment."



"Getting ready to debut the BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team M3s at Sebring has been a rewarding experience, and our team has worked very hard to get to this point," said Bobby Rahal, co-owner of Rahal Letterman Racing. "We have been pointing to this weekend for a long time and everyone here is eagerly anticipating the green flag as BMW returns to its rightful place in American sportscar racing. Our driver lineup is one of the best anywhere and the team we have put together with BMW is more than ready to carry the flag as the 2009 season begins."

The No. 90 M3 will be co-driven by BMW veterans Bill Auberlen and Joey Hand. The two Californians are well-known to BMW followers and 2009 will mark the fourth year the duo has raced together in a BMW M3. 23-year old Tommy Milner will share the No. 92 M3 with Dirk Müller. Sebring will be the first time the two have raced together.

All four drivers have extensive driving experience behind the wheel of race M3s and this skill will be heavily relied upon at Sebring. The BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team M3s will be among only a handful of GT2 class cars to race the entire twelve hours without a third driver.

BMW has two overall victories (1975 – CSL, 1999 – V12 LMR) and two GT class wins (1997 – M3, 1998 – M3) at the 12 Hours of Sebring.

Practice will begin Wednesday, March 18 and continue on Thursday. A 25-minute qualifying session is scheduled for 2:45 p.m. Thursday afternoon. A one-hour-and-forty-five minute night practice is scheduled for 7:15 p.m. A one hour final practice session at 9:55 a.m. Friday morning is the only on-track activity before Saturday's



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race. The 57<sup>th</sup> annual 12 Hours of Sebring is scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. Saturday morning. SPEED TV will broadcast the race live.



## About Rahal Letterman Racing:

Rahal Letterman Racing, based in Hilliard, Ohio and co-owned by three-time IndyCar Champion and 1986 Indianapolis 500 winner Bobby Rahal and CBS LATE SHOW host David Letterman, has been competing for more than a decade compiling 20 victories, 30 poles and one series championship (Bobby Rahal in 1992 in CART) and an Indianapolis 500 championship (Buddy Rice in 2004). In 2008 Rahal Letterman Racing again won Rookie-of-the-Year honors at the Indianapolis 500 and partnered with Andersen Racing to run two entries in the Indy Pro Series. In 2009 the team has joined BMW North America to campaign the new BMW M3 as BMW Rahal Letterman Racing Team in the American Le Mans Series and will as serve as the organizers of the Formula BMW Americas championship.

## BMW Group In America

BMW of North America, LLC has been present in the United States since 1975. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars NA, LLC began distributing vehicles in 2003. The BMW Group in the United States has grown to include marketing, sales, and financial service organizations for the BMW brand of motor vehicles, including motorcycles, the MINI brand, and the Rolls-Royce brand of Motor Cars; DesignworksUSA, a strategic design consultancy in California; a technology office in Silicon Valley and various other operations throughout the country. BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC in South Carolina is part of BMW Group's global manufacturing network and is the exclusive manufacturing plant for all X5 Sports Activity Vehicles and X6 Sports Activity Coupes. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 338 BMW passenger car centers, 335 BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 142 BMW motorcycle retailers, 83 MINI passenger car dealers, and 30 Rolls-Royce Motor Car dealers. BMW (US) Holding Corp., the BMW Group's sales headquarters for North America, is located in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.



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