# **U.S. Press Information**



For Release: IMMEDIATE

**Contact: Thomas Plucinsky** 

BMW of North America Motorsport Communications

201-406-4801 (cell)

thomas.plucinsky@bmwna.com

# **Matt Russell**

BMW of North America Motorsport Communications 201-248-0169 (cell)

Matthew.Russell@bmwna.com

### Bill Cobb

BMW of North America Motorsport Press Officer 215-431-7223 (cell) billcobbcommunications@yahoo.com

## Kathi Lauterbach

Rahal Letterman Lanigan, VP of Communications 317-297-8064 (office) / 317-447-4337 (cell) klauterbach@rahal.com

# BMW Team RLL Qualifies Second and Third for 62<sup>nd</sup> 12 Hours of Sebring

**Woodcliff Lake, N.J. – March 14, 2014 . . .** The intense competition the GTLM class demonstrated during the Rolex 24 At Daytona in January definitely increased in today's qualifying session for the 62<sup>nd</sup> annual 12 Hours of Sebring. The top-seven cars of the 11-car class qualified within one second. The top three spots were even closer, seemingly only the blink of an eye covering the pole winning Porsche and the two BMW Team RLL Z4 machines.

Dirk Müller's lap of 1:59.024 minutes around the 3.74-mile, 17-turn Sebring International Raceway put the No. 56 BMW Z4 only .091 seconds in arrears of the pole sitting No. 912 Porsche of Michael Christensen. Müller will co-drive with John Edwards and Dirk Werner. The No. 55 BMW Z4 GTLM of Bill Auberlen qualified in the third position with a lap of 1:59.094 minutes – only .070 seconds behind Müller. Auberlen will co-drive with Joey Hand and Andy Priaulx.











"We are obviously pleased with the pace of the Z4," said **Bobby Rahal, Team Principal**. "We are not the fastest, but we are right in the middle of it all. This race doesn't depend on where you start, as it is a long hard race. It is all about having a comfortable car that can be driven hard. So far - so good. We have been fortunate to win this race a couple of times, but there are twice as many cars in the race this year than there has been in the past, so the opportunities to hit somebody or get hit by somebody is far greater. It is really going to be about staying out of trouble. There is a big difference in the speed of the cars and the caliber of the drivers, so you really have to be on your toes, drive defensively as much as you can and still be fast. It will be a balancing act."

BMW Team RLL finished second and fourth in the Rolex 24 At Daytona - the only team in the GTLM class to finish both team cars in the top-five. Book-ended by the 2009 and 2013 seasons when it introduced the M3 GT and Z4 GTE, BMW Team RLL has five podium finishes at Sebring, including back-to-back victories in 2011 and 2012.

**Dirk Müller, driver No. 56 Z4 GTLM** – (2<sup>nd</sup>) – "Second and third is fantastic. When I came into the pits I was on pole and I hoped to keep that position right to the end of the session. This morning in practice four I spent an hour in the car preparing for qualifying and it was a lot of fun driving it then. Being less than a tenth away from pole is very close and Bill just behind. It's amazing how close the times are. In reality qualifying doesn't count for that much at the end of the day because it is a very long race."

**Bill Auberlen, driver No. 55 Z4 GTLM** – (3<sup>rd</sup>) – "I have never felt better going into this race. If I was to pencil in who I would want as my team-mates, I have got them. I have the car I want to be in and the team I want behind me. We have every element needed to win Sebring. We'll have to stay smart to get to the end with the amount of inexperience in this large field, but once there we'll be ready."

The 62<sup>nd</sup> annual Twelve Hours of Sebring takes the green flag at 10:15 a.m. ET tomorrow. Follow BMW Team RLL on Twitter at @BMWUSARacing for "from-the-pit-box" updates all weekend. Fox Sports 1 will carry live coverage of the first three hours of the race. The remainder of the event will be streamed live on IMSA.com and the FOX Sports Go mobile app. FOX Sports 1 will also televise a three-hour highlight show beginning at 8:30 a.m. ET on Sunday, March 16<sup>th.</sup> More information on the program can be found at www.bmwusa.com and www.imsa.com.









# Motorsport

# **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 and X3 Sports Activity Vehicles and X6 Sports Activity Coupes. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 339 BMW passenger car and BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 139 BMW motorcycle retailers, 119 MINI passenger car dealers, and 35 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.

Information about BMW Group products is available to consumers via the Internet at: www.bmwgroupna.com

# **Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing**

BMW's partner, Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing, based in Hilliard, Ohio and co-owned by three-time IndyCar Champion and 1986 Indianapolis 500 winner Bobby Rahal, Mi-Jack co-owner Mike Lanigan and CBS LATE SHOW host David Letterman, has been competing for over two decades, compiling 28 victories, 42 poles and three series championships (1992, 2010, 2011) as well as claiming an Indianapolis 500 victory (Buddy Rice in 2004). In 2009 the team joined BMW of North America to campaign the new BMW M3 in the American Le Mans Series. In 2010 the team won both the Manufacturer and Team Championships in the GT category. In 2011 the team swept all three GT titles - Manufacturer, Team and Driver.

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