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Contact:

**Thomas Plucinsky**

BMW of North America Motorsport Communications

201-406-4801 (cell) / [thomas.plucinsky@bmwna.com](mailto:thomas.plucinsky@bmwna.com)

**Bill Cobb**

BMW of North America Motorsport Press Officer

215-431-7223 (cell) / [billcobbcommunications@yahoo.com](mailto:billcobbcommunications@yahoo.com)

**Oleg Satanovsky**

BMW of North America Product and Technology Spokesperson

201-414-8694 (cell) / [oleg.satanovsky@bmwna.com](mailto:oleg.satanovsky@bmwna.com)

**Kathi Lauterbach**

Rahal Letterman Lanigan, VP of Communications

317-297-8064 (office) / 317-447-4337 (cell) / [klauterbach@rahal.com](mailto:klauterbach@rahal.com)

**BMW Team RLL Delivers First BMW M8 GTE Victory in Double Podium  
Performance in Michelin GT Challenge at VIR.**

**Woodcliff Lake, N.J. – Aug. 19, 2018...** Today, nine races into the inaugural racing season of the newest BMW race car, BMW Team RLL added another entry in the record books by delivering the first victory and first double podium finish for the all-new BMW M8 GTE at the Michelin GT Challenge at VIR.

The No. 25 BMW M8 GTE, driven by Connor De Phillippi and Alexander Sims, completed 88 laps of the classic Virginia International Raceway two-hour-and-forty-minute race, winning with just a 1.323 second margin of victory. The No. 24 BMW M8 GTE, with John Edwards and Jesse Krohn co-driving, finished a very strong third, only 4.439 seconds behind their teammates, to cap a very exciting weekend.



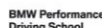
Opening the race in a big way, starting drivers Edwards, in the No. 24 BMW M8 GTE, and De Phillippi, behind the wheel of the No. 25 BMW M8 GTE, rocketed forward at the green flag to move into the second and third positions respectively. De Phillippi's jump from his fifth place starting position earned him the VP Fuels Stand on the Gas Award.

Edwards inherited the lead when the No. 67 Ford GT pulled off with problems on lap 28, pitting one lap later to hand off to Krohn. De Phillippi pitted on the next lap, handing the No. 25 M8 to Sims.

At the one hour mark, Krohn raced in second position, Sims in fourth. Sims was slowed by an off course excursion and a resulting collision with a GTD car that ultimately caused him to serve a drive-through penalty on lap 39. Not to be denied, the British ace and the team set upon a plan to get back to the front. Sims pitted for fuel and tires under the race's only caution period while Krohn stayed out, now in the lead. Krohn pitted on lap 54, returning to the fight in fifth. By lap 62 the large crowd at VIR could see that today would be BMW's day. Sims, now in the lead, built up a 45 second gap to the balance of the GTLM field following the next round of pit stops. Krohn had charged from fifth to third by lap 65 while Sims, counting on his Michelin tires to double stint, took advantage of his margin to pit for only fuel and deliver the first win for the BMW M8 GTE by just over one second.

"First and foremost, congratulations to all at BMW Team RLL." said **Victor Leleu, BMW of North America Motorsport Manager**. "The race demonstrated a flawless execution from the crew, engineers and drivers. Everyone has put their heart and soul into the M8 GTE program and we couldn't be happier we were able to deliver the car its first-ever win today at VIR. The team has had to adapt to a lot of changes with this new program. We had a few challenging races this year but no one ever doubted the potential of the new car from day one. Even after the cruel result at the previous race at Road America, everybody felt strong and kept plugging away, knowing it was just a matter of time. Today is that day! I'm very proud we proved the worth of the all-new M8 GTE against the most competitive GT field in the world."

"Great team effort today! Everybody did an excellent job!" said **Brandon Fry, BMW Team RLL Technical / Racing Operations Director**. "We had a good pit stop strategy and the drivers did an awesome job. This is something we've been working



towards for a while and we have had some bad luck go our way but everything finally came together today. So, good job by everybody. Super proud of the team!"

**Connor De Phillippi, driver No. 25 BMW M8 GTE (P1):**

"Today is the first win for the BMW M8 GTE. I am so proud of these guys. We got so close at the last event and these guys have been working their tails off since last November. I couldn't be happier to be a part of this whole program. It's time to celebrate!"

**Alexander Sims, driver No. 25 BMW M8 GTE (P1):**

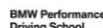
"What an eventful race. Connor did a great job at the start to get us up to P3. I got in and raced past the Corvette, I tried to get by Dirk, but I made a mistake, committed too much and lost control, unfortunately hitting a Lexus. We received a drive-through penalty which I thought was the right decision, it was my fault. At that point I thought the race was over but amazingly there was a safety car that brought us back into contention. From that point on, our pace was really good. We were strong and able to race with the guys around us and yeah, for the last stint, the Michelin tires held on fantastically well to the point we could double stint them at a track that is notoriously hard on tires such as VIR. Great strategy by the Rahal Team and BMW and great pace from the car, the M8 GTE's first win is very sweet to get."

**John Edwards, driver No. 24 BMW M8 GTE (P3):**

"It's a great day to have both cars on the podium. We were competitive all race long and there was a tight battle at the end. I thought Jesse had a shot at the Corvette but every time he got closer he would lose downforce and grip, but either way, a great job by him to regain some of the spots we had lost in the pit stop. Overall, a really great day for the first win for the BMW M8 GTE and a double podium for BMW."

**Jesse Krohn, driver No. 24 BMW M8 GTE (P3):**

"Super happy for the team, for BMW Motorsport and for Alex and Connor. The team really deserves this. They really deserved 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, but unfortunately time ran a little bit short at the end and I couldn't deliver. Overall, a really, really good day for the team and for BMW."



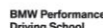
The tenth round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will take place at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca on Sunday, Sept. 9th and be broadcast live on FOX Sports 1 from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. ET.

### **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 Rolls-Royce Motor Cars; Designworks, a strategic design consultancy based in California; technology offices in Silicon Valley and Chicago, and various other operations throughout the country. BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC in South Carolina is the BMW Group global center of competence for BMW X models and manufactures the X3, X4, X5, and X6 Sports Activity Vehicles. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 346 BMW passenger car and BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 153 BMW motorcycle retailers, 127 MINI passenger car dealers, and 36 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.

### **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, former CBS Late Show host David Letterman and Mi-Jack co-owner Mike Lanigan, has been competing for almost three decades. Prior to the start of their 27<sup>th</sup> season of competition in 2018, the team had compiled 42 victories, 53 poles, 162 podium finishes, three series championships (1992, 2010, 2011) and claimed 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. The following year the team won both the Manufacturer and Team Championships in the GT category and swept all three GT titles - Manufacturer, Team and Driver – in 2011. In 2012, the team finished second in the Team Championship and third in the Manufacturer Championship and in 2013, the team finished second in the Driver, Team and Manufacturer Championship. Since 2014, BMW Team RLL has competed in the



GTLM class of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship with a two car program and has brought their total to 17 wins, 23 poles and 68 podium finishes as well as a second place finish in the Manufacturer, Team and Driver championships in 2015 and 2017.

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**Journalist note:** Information about BMW Group and its products in the USA is available to journalists on-line at [www.bmwgroupusanews.com](http://www.bmwgroupusanews.com) and [www.press.bmwna.com](http://www.press.bmwna.com).

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