



**For Release:** IMMEDIATE

**Contact: Thomas Plucinsky**

BMW of North America Motorsport Communications  
201-406-4801 (cell) / [thomas.plucinsky@bmwna.com](mailto:thomas.plucinsky@bmwna.com)

**Hector Arellano-Belloc**

BMW Product & Technology Communications  
201-962-6195 / [hector.arellano-belloc@bmwna.com](mailto:hector.arellano-belloc@bmwna.com)

**Bill Cobb**

BMW of North America Motorsport Press Officer  
215-431-7223 (cell) / [billcobbcommunications@yahoo.com](mailto:billcobbcommunications@yahoo.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 M6 GTLM and BMW M6 GT3 master the challenge of Daytona at their debut race.**

**Woodcliff Lake, N.J. – January 31, 2016...** Both the new BMW M6 GTLM and the BMW M6 GT3 proved their promising potential in the very first round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship: At the classic 24 Hours of Daytona (US), the number 25 BMW M6 GTLM crossed the line in fifth in the GTLM category. Bill Auberlen (US), Dirk Werner (DE), Augusto Farfus (BR) and Bruno Spengler (CA) had alternated at the wheel over the course of their 721 race laps.

In the GTD class, the number 97 Turner Motorsport BMW M6 GT3, driven by Michael Marsal (US), Markus Palttala (FI), Maxime Martin, (BE) and Jesse Krohn (FI), finished the debut race of BMW Motorsport's new GT3 challenger in sixth. The No. 96 sister car had dropped back early in the race due to technical problems, ultimately finishing 17<sup>th</sup> in the GTD category.

The 7:13 a.m. sunrise over the Daytona International Speedway showed only one BMW M6 GTLM remaining in the Daytona 24 Hours. About four hours earlier, on lap 360, the number 100 BMW M6 GTLM, with Lucas Luhr (DE) behind the wheel, suffered a crash in turn one due to a brake problem. Luhr was unhurt, but the damage forced the team to retire the car from the race. Luhr had shared driving duties with John Edwards (US), Graham Rahal (US) and Kuno Wittmer (CA).

**Jens Marquardt (BMW Motorsport Director):**

“After all these months of intensive development work, countless kilometres of testing and all the passion brought in by everyone at BMW Motorsport and in our teams to get our new GT race cars ready, our goal was to finish the race in Daytona – and, if possible, bringing home some good results. Overall I’m happy with the race debuts of the BMW M6 GTLM and the BMW M6 GT3. We knew that the 24 Hours of Daytona would be a tough test right at the beginning of the season. And this is exactly what we experienced this weekend. Walking away from Daytona with P5 in the GTLM class and P6 in the GTD category is a good result and a nice reward for the whole squad. The start into our anniversary season on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of BMW definitely was a positive one. With car number 100 we had to endure quite a scary moment. Fortunately Lucas Luhr escaped from this accident without a scratch. For the fans it was an extremely exciting and entertaining race. Many different cars fought for the lead, several manufacturers performed on a similar level. The IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship promises to be a real thriller in 2016. We saw that the basis of our all-new car is very promising. And I’m confident that we will score some really good results over the course of the season.”

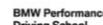
**Bobby Rahal (Team Principal, BMW Team RLL):**

“You never know how you truly add up until you get to the first race. The 100 car was having a really good race, so it was a shame that we had a problem that you don’t see very often. Unfortunately it took us out of the race. I think the performance of the M6 was quite good and the guys were doing a great job. The same goes for the 25. It is a new car and I think just finishing the race was kind of a victory in its own right. It is disappointing naturally not to have won, but that was asking a lot of this car on its maiden voyage. The Corvette is a well proven car, the Porsche is the same thing and I think we saw that today. Given that the M6 is a brand new car, with brand new systems - everything - the fact that the 25 car made all 24 hours without a lot of problems says a lot.”

**Bill Auberlen (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, 5th place):**

“The No. 25 M6 ran almost perfectly for 24 hours. We missed a few kilometers per hour on straight line speed to our competitors, but that will be addressed. After a day like today we can certainly hold our heads high.”

**Dirk Werner (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, 5th place):** “In general I think everybody can be quite happy with our car. We had little problems here and there, but not necessarily with the car. The race was tough and sometimes we had to land back on our feet after struggling a little bit. But now it is the end of the race and all the engineers and mechanics



kept the car in good shape and we are good enough to fight for a podium. For the first race for the M6 I think we can be quite happy because we had no major problems. I think all the testing paid off and I am quite happy. Obviously this is a completely different track to the other ten ones we race on in this series, so since the M6 is a new car we have to go to each race and start with a clean sheet of paper, get our set up right and maybe the drivers will have to adapt a little bit to the car on different tracks. But we have a good group of people and I am confident everyone is pushing.”

**Augusto Farfus (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, 5th place):**

“I was very excited coming to this race as I had seen at the Roar what the new M6 could do. I felt it would be a fantastic race car for Daytona and that proved to be the case. I was also very happy to be the driver to bring the car across the finish line. To finish a 24 hour race in a brand new car with no major technical problems is a great achievement in itself. Okay we may lack top speed and this we need to pass other cars, but I know BMW will work on that as this is just the start of the project. I had some very intense stints and the one early in the morning was like a double qualifying when I was trying to hang in there with the Porsches and Corvettes.”

**Bruno Spengler (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, 5th place):**

“For the first 24 hours for the M6 it is a good experience and it is important to cover some kilometers and stay on track. Knock on wood we haven’t had big technical defects so far, so we will see. Unfortunately we miss a little bit of performance compared to the opposition . But it is a young car and there are still things to learn and things to do on it. It is a good start for the car, but as I said before, the opponents were a little bit quicker during the whole race, and was difficult to expect more than a top three or four finish. The positive is that we didn’t have any large technical issues and the car was running well. That is positive for the future and we have to keep on working and try to make the car even faster.”

**Maxime Martin (Number 97 BMW M6 GT3, 6th place):**

“We had quite a good race. There were no big issues or even little mistakes. Unfortunately, we did not have the top speed of our competitors. The M6 GT3 definitely has potential. To finish 6th in its very first race - a 24 hour race - is excellent. In time I know the M6 GT3 will be able to show all of that potential.”

**Jesse Krohn (Number 97 BMW M6 GT3, 6th place):**

“Racing in Daytona has always been one of my dreams. It is one of the biggest races in the world and I have grown up watching these races. I have always wanted to be here and now I



have had the opportunity to come. The M6 GT3 is quite good. It has a lot of potential. It is the first outing for the car in race conditions, so it has been impressive the way we have been able to run with it. I am happy with the whole Turner Motorsport team and the way they worked, how everything is organized and it is a real pleasure to work with them.”

**Lucas Luhr (Number 100 BMW M6 GTLM, DNF):**

“There was some kind of explosion at the front right that made the bonnet go up, so I couldn’t see where I was going. I believe it was a brake problem. I had two or three good hits. It’s a shame because we were running well and we were right there in the hunt. It is also a shame for all the guys with a new car that had such a good performance for the first time running and they don’t get rewarded.”

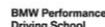
The IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship is set to continue on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016 with another classic race, the 12 Hours of Sebring (US).

**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 and X4 Sports Activity Coupes. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 340 BMW passenger car and BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 153 BMW motorcycle retailers, 124 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.

**The BMW Group**

With its three brands, BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world’s leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 30 production and



assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2014, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.118 million cars and 123,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2013 was euro 7.91 billion on revenues amounting to approximately euro 76.06 billion. As of 31 December 2013, the BMW Group had a workforce of 110,351 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built 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.

### **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 over two decades. Prior to the start of their 25th season of competition in 2016, the team has compiled 37 victories, 49 poles, 144 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. The 2014 season brought a new challenge with the creation of the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship and the team finished on the podium six times including four second-place finishes. In 2015, the team earned three wins, two poles and a total of eight podium finishes to finish second in the Manufacturer, Team and Driver championships. Prior to the start of the 2016 season BMW Team RLL had won 13 races, 20 poles and 57 podium finishes.

# # #

**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).



# # #



**Motorsport**