BMW
Corporate Communications

Media Information
04th July 2012

Le Mans Classic 2012.
BMW Motorsport icons return to the stage.

Munich. In just a few days – from 6 – 8 July 2012 – the global classic motor sport community will once again descend on Le Mans, France. Held every other year since 2002, the event etches delight onto the faces of drivers and spectators in equal measure and has become a firm fixture on the classic motor racing calendar.

BMW involved as a key partner.

BMW is a Le Mans Classic partner this year, and BMW France has teamed up with BMW Group Classic to offer an extensive programme of attractions. Topping the bill will be activities celebrating the "40 Years BMW M GmbH" anniversary and the division's illustrious motor sport heritage. As well as the display of BMW M cars and racing machines, "taxi drives" and offerings from BMW France and BMW Group Classic at various locations, the BMW M Parade – complete with demonstration runs – is sure to provide a particularly glittering attraction at 14.00 hrs on Saturday, 7 July. The Parade will be led by two legendary BMW racing cars with well-known faces in the driver's seat; 1999 Le Mans winner Pierluigi Martini will be back at the wheel of his victorious BMW V12 LMR, while Dieter Quester will take to the circuit in a "Wirtshaus" BMW M1 Group 4. Hot on their heels will be the full gamut of BMW M cars.

BMW well represented in the 24-hour race.

The BMW brand will be represented in various classes of the 24-hour race by a total of 13 privately entered cars. A trio of BMW 328s (Grid 1) will be joined by five BMW 3.0 CSL machines and five members of the BMW M1 Group 4 fraternity (Grid 6), some piloted by familiar figures. Dieter Quester, a successful BMW works driver in touring car, hill climb and Formula 2 racing in days gone by, will line up in the BMW 3.0 CSL he piloted to a widely lauded class win in 1973.

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Prince Leopold of Bavaria, likewise a successful BMW touring car driver and current BMW Brand Ambassador, will be competing in a BMW M1 Group 4 machine.

Overall victory at Le Mans in 1999 – a great racing moment for BMW Motorsport.

1999 saw BMW add another chapter to its long history of racing success, as a BMW works team celebrated overall victory in the Le Mans 24 Hours– one of the world's toughest and most exhausting car races – for the first time. The 580 hp 12-cylinder engine powering the newly developed BMW V12 LMR ran with the precision and dependability of clockwork through every minute of the race. Victory was confirmed after 24 hours and 366 laps of the 13.6-kilometre circuit, the Italian driver Pierluigi Martini crossing the line in car number 15 to send the champagne corks flying. Sharing driving duties with Martini in the legendary endurance race were the equally drained but euphoric German Joachim Winkelhock and Frenchman Yannick Dalmas. However, BMW's long and successful tradition at the classic 24-hour event stretches beyond that overall victory in 1999 and its numerous class wins. Indeed, it is the BMW Art Cars that add such a unique facet to the relationship between BMW and Le Mans. In 1975 French auctioneer-cum-racing driver Hervé Poulain came up with idea of commissioning renowned artists to give BMW racing cars an individual touch. Alexander Calder (US) started the ball rolling with the BMW 3.0 CSL, which was followed in the years up to 1979 by creations from Frank Stella (US), Roy Lichtenstein (US) and Andy Warhol (US). All of these cars would line up at Le Mans for the 24-hour race, the Warhol-liveried BMW M1 enjoying the greatest sporting success with its sixth-place finish. The BMW Art Car collection has now expanded to 17 cars and provides a link between motor sport and art that no other vehicle collection is likely to match.

Pictures from the Le Mans Classic 2012 event will be available from the BMW Group Pressclub from Monday, 9 July 2012.

Media Information
Date 04th July 2012
Subject Le Mans Classic 2012.
Page 3

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BMW Museum – Hands-on history
Visitors of all ages can explore the past, present and future of the BMW brand at BMW Welt, the BMW Museum and the BMW plant. The BMW Museum plays an important role in this. Since re-opening in 2008, it has been successfully presenting the history of BMW and offering a glimpse of the future. The museum also explores the theme of mobility for the benefit of younger visitors. The Junior Museum organizes a special program for children and young people, basing its educational concept on learning through play. The museum also has a history of its own: it is one of the oldest automobile museums in Germany, was built in 1973 and declared a historic monument in 1999

The BMW Group.
The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 25 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

During the financial year 2010, the BMW Group sold 1.46 million cars and more than 110,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for 2010 was euro 4.8 billion on revenues amounting to euro 60.5 billion. At 31 December 2010, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 95,500 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. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last seven years.

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