

## BMW TEAM RLL: MID-OHIO SPORTS CAR CHALLENGE PREVIEW



Woodcliff Lake, N.J. – August 2, 2011... BMW Team RLL is looking forward to its home race at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course this weekend. Based in Hilliard, Ohio the team will be competing less than fifty miles from their workshops and headquarters. The Mid-Ohio Sports Car Challenge marks the mid-point of the 2011 American Le Mans Series season and is expected to be a challenging race for the team following a competition adjustment to both M3 GTs by the series sanctioning body. Following three wins in the first three races and a third-place finish at the Grand Prix of

Mosport, Joey Hand and Dirk Müller currently lead the GT Driver standings with teammates Bill Auberlen and Dirk Werner holding the third spot. As we approach the middle of the season, BMW Team RLL leads the GT Team points standings and BMW leads the GT Manufacturer's standings. BMW Team RLL will arrive at Mid-Ohio handicapped by a competition adjustment from the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA). Following the team's third consecutive win at the Northeast Grand Prix at Lime Rock Park on July 9th, IMSA released bulletin #11-14 requiring a reduction of 0.4mm in the M3 GT intake restrictor beginning at Mid-Ohio.

The new restrictor will reduce the volume of air entering the 4.0-liter V8 engine by some three percent with an equivalent loss of horsepower. "Mid-Ohio is obviously a track that our team circles on the calendar every year, and personally it is a track that holds a lot of memories for myself and my family," said **Bobby Rahal, Team Principal** - "The BMW Team RLL M3 GTs were strong at Mosport but the strongest car doesn't always win, which is one of the great things about racing. We had a great start to the season, but our advantages can be erased fairly rapidly if we don't come to the track every weekend ready to compete. I promise that we will be ready to compete this weekend at Mid-Ohio."

**Bill Auberlen, driver No. 55 M3 GT** - "We had amazing cars at Mosport and were the team to beat. After some trouble for both cars we finished on the podium and that's great for the team. Now we are going to BMW Team RLL's home track. The cars were really good last year at Mid-Ohio. The track has great fast straights and the technical aspects of the track are handled really well by our cars on Dunlop tires. Add in our deep track knowledge and I think we should look really good."

**Dirk Werner, driver No. 55 M3 GT** - "Bill and I are still within striking distance of second place in the championship. Thanks to the good results they have enjoyed recently, our teammates Dirk and Joey have opened up a bit of a gap at the top of the table. Nevertheless, we want to go on the offensive at Mid-Ohio. It is the home circuit for BMW Team RLL and we all want to get a good result there. I think the circuit suits our car and I know the circuit very well having already raced there a few times. My teammate Bill also knows it very well, so it is all set up for us to get a good result there."

**Joey Hand, driver No. 56 M3 GT** - "Everybody knows Mid-Ohio has had its ups and downs for me, but I really like the track. Its home track for BMW Team RLL and the friends and family of team will be there. I lived in Cleveland, Ohio for three years and Mid-Ohio was my home track back then. It's one of those tracks that you need to have some tricks up your sleeve and I know a few of them. So far this year the team brings out a great race car every time and I don't expect anything different at Mid-Ohio. Mosport did not end up as we wished, but the M3 GT was really





quick the whole time. This has been a career year for me and I am looking for more.”

**Dirk Müller, driver No. 56 M3 GT** - "At Mosport we were unfortunate to pick up the drive-through penalty that prevented us finishing anywhere higher than fourth place. However, we still have a very solid lead in the championship. So, with the battle for the title in mind, our goal for Mid-Ohio is to extend our lead. Mid-Ohio is a very technical circuit with many different surfaces and some very slow corners. Personally, I like it a lot and am really looking forward to it. It will be another hard fought battle in the GT class. We are generally under a lot of pressure there, as it is the home race for BMW Team RLL, which is based in Hilliard, Ohio. There will be a lot of family members and friends there, all cheering for us." Following a Promoter's Test Day on Thursday, August 4, practice and qualifying for the American Le Mans Series Mid-Ohio Sports Car Challenge will be held on Friday, Aug. 5. The two-hour-and-forty-five-minute race is scheduled to take the green flag at 3:30 p.m. ET Saturday, Aug. 6. The race will be broadcast live on ESPN3.com and rebroadcast on ESPN2 beginning at 10:00 PM ET Sunday, Aug. 7.

#### **About BMW Team RLL:**

**BMW Group In America** BMW of North America, LLC has been present in the United States since 1975. 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 338 BMW passenger car and BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 138 BMW motorcycle retailers, 105 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.

**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 nearly two decades, compiling 22 victories, 31 poles and two series championships (1992, 2010) as well as claiming an Indianapolis 500 victory (Buddy Rice Parts in 2004). In 2009 the team joined BMW of North America to campaign the new BMW M3 in the American Le Mans Series, and in 2010 won both the Manufacturer and Team Championships in the GT category.

Journalist note: Information about the BMW and its products is available to journalists on-line at [www.bmwusanews.com](http://www.bmwusanews.com).

Video interviews and on-board clips are available at [www.youtube.com/BMWNAMotorsport](http://www.youtube.com/BMWNAMotorsport).

Follow BMW Team RLL on Twitter at @BMWNA\_Racing and on Facebook at BMWUSA.

Information about Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing is available via at: [www.rahall.com](http://www.rahall.com).

