



### **BMW Team RLL Finishes Third and Fourth at Circuit of the Americas**

#### **Müller Moves to Second in GT Driver Points**

**Woodcliff Lake, NJ – Sept. 21, 2013 ...** BMW Team RLL finished third and fourth in today's inaugural American Le Mans Series race at the Circuit of the Americas. Both BMW Z4 GTE machines ran strongly for the majority of the race, only to fall victim to the top speed advantage of the Corvettes and Vipers in the closing stage of the 2.75-hour event.

John Edwards and Dirk Müller claimed third in the No. 56 Z4 GTE for Müller's second consecutive podium appearance. The result, combined with the withdrawal of the No. 4 Corvette during the race, moves Müller (preliminary) to second in the GT driver point standings, 13 points behind the leaders.

Despite qualifying fourth, Edwards had to start the No. 56 car from the rear of the entire field of 33 cars due to a miscue of the team with the qualifying tires. He charged back to fifth in class before pitting on lap 24, some 50 minutes into the race. Müller rejoined the race in ninth and drove an equally strong first stint to be in third before making his final pit stop on lap 48. Müller then charged to second position and hounded the leading Corvette for the remainder of the race. On the last lap, he was unable to defend the Viper on the long, uphill front straight and was forced to settle for the last step of the podium.

The No. 55 of Bill Auberlen and Joey Hand finished fourth. Auberlen started the race from the pole position earned by Hand in yesterday's qualifying session. When the green flag waved, the car experienced a mechanical issue that, despite clearing up within minutes, cost Auberlen six positions. He kept his head down and moved back near the front before pitting on lap 19. Hand rejoined the field in ninth and at the one-hour mark was fifth. One half-hour later he was in second, only five seconds from the lead. He made his final stop on lap 49, at the 1.45 hour mark. He ran strongly behind Müller for the remainder of the race before being relegated to fourth by the faster top speed of the Viper, only four laps from the checkered flag.

"I'm disappointed for the team," said **Bobby Rahal, Team Principal**. "There's such a deficit in straight-line speed, it just hurts our ability to race those other guys. But the Z4

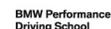


ran beautifully and handled well. The pit strategy was solid; we passed the Ferrari and both Vipers in the pits, so we made up a lot of places. We did our best; and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> are not so bad, and we'll try again at VIR. The Circuit of the Americas is fabulous... world class. I haven't been to anything else built like this in this country, perhaps ever. It's great to come to race tracks like this because you really feel like they have invested in the sport. It was fun to start the race, but of course you know I'd rather be in one of the cars."

"There's no doubt in my mind that The Ultimate Driving Machine was the best-handling car in the race today, but unfortunately that's no replacement for the horsepower disadvantage we face," said **Gordon McDonnell, BMWNA Motorsport Manager**. "Joey and Dirk did a great job trying to hold onto their positions but it's quite evident that Corvette and Viper have a lot more top speed, and that's something we just can't fight against."

**John Edwards, driver No. 56 Z4 GTE – (3<sup>rd</sup>)** – "It was a pretty intense day at the office today. We had a little mix up with the tires and so we had to start last in the GT field. I could tell our car was really quick and I started moving up through the field. The team called a great race and put us in a position to challenge for the win at the end, but at the end of the day there's no replacement for pure horsepower and we saw what happened. The Z4 is unbelievable in the corners and through the Esses. It's a dream to drive and I could see myself gaining on any car around that wasn't a prototype, but those corners are the toughest places to pass people."

**Dirk Müller, driver No. 56 Z4 GTE – (3<sup>rd</sup>)** – "What a race. It was like a roller coaster. Just shortly before the race I got the message that we were starting from the back of the grid, and at that point I was really down and wanted to go home. But when I saw John challenging through traffic to the front, and absolutely on top of it, he really showed me that his mind was switched on, and I was fully motivated by that. When I got in the car after he did 55 minutes, I knew it had to be maximum attack. I did what felt like one hour, fifty-five minutes of qualifying. I had that yellow machine in front of me, but first I had Joey in front of me. It was a lot of fun to race him and I really enjoyed it. Then I was just trying to chase the Corvette down and I wanted to catch him, like a terrier...and I did it, tenth by tenth. I got caught in traffic a bit and used all my experience, but in the end the Viper passed me in the straight like it was a GT1-class car. I wanted to win, but I'm happy with P3 because I gave it my all."



**Bill Auberlen, driver No. 55 Z4 GTE – (4<sup>th</sup>)** – “It’s kind of unusual but I had a crazy start in the first few laps and I dropped back quite a bit. But then it straightened out and we were quick enough to stay with the others. Then, Joey did the two next stints and earned P2, but eventually we just got run down by these competitors that are so fast it’s just ridiculous...they’re in a whole different world speed-wise. Sometimes it feels ridiculous.”

**Joey Hand, driver No. 55 Z4 GTE – (4<sup>th</sup>)** – “I’ve had a good time all week. I’m glad I had the chance to be here with BMW Team RLL. I got comfortable really early at this new race track, including the laps in the rain. Bill had a tough go of it in the race with some tire pressure issues at the start. I got in the car and got a good roll going in the first stint, and the strategy was good too. On the second stint, the heavy fuel load started putting a lot of heat into the brakes and we basically ran out of front brake pads at the end. All I could do was try to save it to come home. It’s a shame because the race got really good at the end and my car was improving overall. I had tried to save my car for the end but that’s the way it goes. I appreciate the effort everybody gave here and that’s all we had.”

Round Nine of the 2013 ALMS season will be held at Virginia International Raceway, in Danville, Virginia, on Saturday, Oct. 5. The 2.45-hour race will be broadcast Sunday, Oct. 6 on ESPN2 television at 5:30 p.m. ET.

### **BMW Group In America**

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### **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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