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Date 31 October 2024

Topic BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 Namibia.

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BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 Namibia.

Recap.



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The BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 – The Spirit of GS Returned Home.

Munich. The BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 returned to its roots in Africa, with Namibia serving as the breathtaking backdrop for this ninth edition of the legendary event.

Company Bayerische Motoren Werke Aktiengesellschaft

Postal address BMW AG 80788 Munich

Telephone +49 89 382-0

Internet www.bmwgroup.com Over the course of six days, 22 teams from around the world comprising 16 men's and 6 women's teams—traversed an adventurous 1,350-kilometer route through some of Namibia's most challenging and diverse terrains.



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This year's event was not merely a competition but a true test of skill, endurance, and camaraderie, reflecting the essence of the GS spirit. The event kicked off with teams navigating vast dry savanna areas, towering canyons, rocky trails, and dry riverbeds. Each day presented unique challenges designed to push the limits of both the riders and their machines. Participants faced a series of special stages that tested their off-road riding capabilities, mechanical knowledge, navigation skills, intelligence, and teamwork, all while demonstrating the rugged versatility of the BMW R 1300 GS Trophy Competition Bike.

With nearly 190 participants—including riders, marshals, mechanics, medical teams, and media representatives - from 34 nations, the GS Trophy 2024 was a global celebration of adventure motorcycling. It brought together 120 motorcycles and 32 support vehicles, creating a vivid tableau of international unity and shared passion for exploration.

Returning to Africa, where the GS Trophy first began in 2008, this year's edition paid homage to the spirit of adventure that has defined the event since its inception. After traveling through the challenging terrains of Tunisia, Southern Africa, Patagonia, Canada, Thailand, Mongolia, New Zealand, and Albania in previous editions, the GS Trophy came full circle, embracing Namibia's rugged beauty.

Team Germany Reclaims the Trophy.

The final day of the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 was charged with excitement as Team Germany stood on the brink of an extraordinary achievement. With South Africa having claimed the last four editions—in 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022 - Germany was eager to carve their own place in the event's storied history.

Having previously won the GS Trophy in 2012, Team Germany was no stranger to success. This year, they returned with renewed



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determination, ready to showcase their skill and teamwork on Namibia's demanding and diverse terrain. From the challenging riverbed of the Khan River to the rugged ascents of Bosua Pass, the German team met every challenge with precision and resilience, distinguishing themselves through their consistent performance.

Reflecting on their victory, **Christopher Michi (181)** expressed the team's disbelief and joy: "It's an indescribable feeling. We came here to give our best, but actually to stand here as winners, it's surreal."

Throughout the competition, their strategic approach and unwavering focus allowed them to steadily gain points, ultimately securing their lead. "We've trained for this moment for so long," said **Niko Wecker (182)**. "Every special stage, every obstacle, we faced it together as a team. South Africa has set the bar incredibly high for so many years, and to reach this milestone is just incredible."

When the final results were announced, the team's excitement was undeniable. They had accomplished what they set out to do, reclaiming the GS Trophy title. "*This victory is more than just a trophy*," **Jan Stahl (183)** reflected. "*It's the culmination of everything* we've worked for. The feeling of standing here, knowing we've made *it_it's something we'll never forget.*"

The Rise of Team International: A New Milestone for the Female Riders.

After six days of relentless competition through Namibia's challenging terrains, the Female International Team emerged victorious.

From the outset, the team demonstrated a remarkable blend of skill, teamwork, and determination. Each special stage was met with enthusiasm and grit as they navigated through the dunes, rocky passes, and technical trails that defined this year's course. Their



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journey was not just about the competition; it was about the bond they shared and the passion they brought to every challenge.

"I am beyond thrilled! This feels like a dream come true," said **Małgorzata Jakubiak (321)**, reflecting on their victory. "We knew the competition would be tough, but to stand here as winners is something I will cherish forever. We've pushed our limits and learned so much along the way."

The team's strategy and cohesion were key to their success, allowing them to consistently perform at the highest level across the various special stages. Their victory was a testament to the strength of their preparation and the support they gave each other throughout the event. "I am over the moon!" said **Anna Cárdova (322)**. "I never imagined we would come this far, and to be standing here as winners is just surreal. It's an honor I never expected, and I'm so grateful to be a part of this incredible experience!"

This victory is not just a win for Team International; it is a celebration of the growing presence and impact of female riders in the world of adventure motorcycling.

In 2024, BMW Motorrad continues to champion female riders by maintaining dedicated competition categories for the women's teams, featuring six two-person teams tackling the same course and challenges as the men's teams, competing for their own Trophy. And what an incredible display of skill and spirit it has been.

Fearless and remarkably prepared, these women have proven themselves in terms of both skills and endurance, and their mastery of the BMW R 1300 GS Trophy Competition Bike has been impressive. These competitors stand at the forefront of a growing movement of women embracing adventure motorcycling, and their stories reflect the vibrant evolution of the female GS scene.





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The Adventure Unfolded: Day-by-Day Triumphs and Trials.

Day 1: Midgard to Ai Aiba – A Warm Welcome. At day 1 the GS Trophy 2024 kicked off with an exhilarating ride from Midgard to Ai Aiba, introducing participants to the Namibian landscape's diverse and challenging terrain.

The riders faced three special challenges: the Namibia Welcome Trial, a technical section near an abandoned copper mine; the AKRAPOVIČ Enduro Challenge, a thrilling test through a sandy riverbed; and the Photo Challenge, where riders had to capture the spirit of the day in a single image.

Highlighted Challenge: AKRAPOVIČ Enduro Challenge. Set in the sandy riverbed of Omaruru river, this challenge tested the riders' endurance and control as they navigated the soft sand and unpredictable terrain. It was a demanding start that quickly reminded everyone why they were there—to push their limits and embrace the adventure.

Day 2: Ai Aiba to Spitzkoppe – Into the Heart of Namibia. Riders embarked on a scenic loop around Ai Aiba's game reserve, encountering giraffes and zebras along the way before heading towards the iconic Spitzkoppe. They tackled the Flying Boxer Challenge, and the SENA Rock Challenge.

Highlighted Challenge: Flying Boxer.

Riders had to pull a suspended motorcycle across a canyon using ropes, a visually stunning challenge that required strength, coordination, and teamwork. It was a spectacular sight, showcasing both the riders' ingenuity and the breathtaking Namibian landscape.

Day 3: Spitzkoppe Loop – Whispers of Stone and Sand. Day 3 saw riders navigating a loop around the Spitzkoppe, traversing the dry Omaruru Riverbed and its surrounding rocky terrain. They faced the Camel Thorn Tree Challenge, the Omaruru METZELER



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Challenge, and the Spitzkoppe INSTA360 Challenge and a continuation of the Photo Challenge.

Highlighted Challenge: Camel Thorn Tree Challenge. Set in the sandy riverbed of the Omaruru River, this challenge required teams to plug a tire quickly and efficiently—a real-world scenario that tested their mechanical skills under pressure. It was a unique opportunity to showcase practical skills in the stunning yet harsh Namibian environment.

Day 4: Spitzkoppe to Swakopmund – From the Desert to the Deep Blue.

The riders journeyed westward from Spitzkoppe to the Atlantic coast, experiencing a dramatic change in scenery as they transitioned from desert dunes to the coastal town of Swakopmund. The day included the ADVANTEC Pull Challenge and the Rooi Tafel Trial.

Highlighted Challenge: Rooi Tafel Trial.

Riders navigated a technical trial course featuring tight turns, deep sand, and steep climbs in the rocky terrain near the Khan River Valley. The breathtaking landscape added to the difficulty and spectacle of this demanding challenge.

Day 5: Swakopmund to Midgard – The Long Way Home. This was the longest and most varied day of the event, with riders covering over 400 km from the coast back to Midgard, traversing the Namib Desert and Bosua Pass. They faced the LEATT Push Challenge, MPS Questionaire and the Midgard Slow Trial. **Highlighted Challenge:** LEATT Push Challenge.

Simulating a real-world scenario where a motorcycle needed to be jump-started, this challenge required teams to push the bike until it started, testing their coordination, strength, and ability to work under pressure. It was a unique and practical test of their skills.



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Day 6: Midgard Loop – The Final Kilometers.

The final day featured a short but technical 50 km loop around the Midgard estate, with the last special challenge, the Final Course, taking place at the lodge. It was a true test of all the skills honed throughout the event.

Highlighted Challenge: Final Course.

Riders had to navigate a complex series of off-camber turns, tight corners, and a slalom section, with the entire course designed to push their technical abilities to the limit. It was a fitting conclusion to a week of intense competition and camaraderie.

After six grueling days of adventure, the event concluded with an unforgettable celebration under the Namibian sky. The final night was filled with laughter, stories, and friendship as the riders and crew gathered for the closing ceremony. A local DJ and the band "Blikweg" provided the soundtrack for the evening, their energetic performances lifting the spirits of everyone present. The night reflected the GS Trophy spirit, with participants dancing, sharing their experiences, and celebrating their accomplishments. It was a fitting end to an epic journey, leaving everyone with cherished memories of both the competition and the friendships forged along the way.

Safety at the Forefront: The GS Trophy Medical Team.

David Rubel, the **Lead Medical Coordinator**, emphasized the GS Trophy's commitment to rider safety. "*Our main goal was to ensure the response time is on par with European or U.S. standards, aiming for a maximum of 15 to 16 minutes to reach an accident site*," said Mr. Rubel. To achieve this, the team was well-equipped with "*four medical cars, including two doctors, six paramedics, and a helicopter staffed with a doctor and a paramedic.*"

Regarding the challenges of the terrain, David Rubel noted, "The landscape here in Namibia is unforgiving. Whether it's dehydration due to the dry climate or potential injuries from falls, we have to be prepared for anything."



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With the support of the medical team and resources like satellite communication and a well-prepared rescue chain, the GS Trophy continues to prioritize the safety of its participants without compromising the spirit of adventure.

The BMW R 1300 GS Trophy Competition Bike.

The BMW R 1300 GS, the official bike for the competitors, was engineered specifically for the rigors of the GS Trophy. Its heart is the new 1,300cc air/liquid-cooled boxer engine, capable of producing 143 horsepower at 7,750 rpm and 145 Nm of torque at 6,500 rpm, offering a robust yet smooth power delivery. This model featured significant weight reductions and a redesigned frame, providing greater agility and improved handling.

The bike came equipped with a range of off-road enhancements, including:

- Handlebar Risers: For a more comfortable standing position during technical sections.
- Enduro Foot Pegs: Wider and more stable, offering better grip and control.
- Engine Protection Bars and Skid Plate: Essential for safeguarding the engine and lower frame from rocks and debris.
- Cross-spoke wheels with Off-Road Tires: Designed for superior traction and stability in sandy and rocky conditions.
- Adjustable Gear and Brake Levers: Allowing riders to customize the controls for optimal ergonomics.

The BMW R 1300 GS also introduced advanced electronics, such as the latest generation of Dynamic ESA (Electronic Suspension Adjustment) and Pro Riding Modes, which include settings like Enduro and Enduro Pro for tailored performance on rough terrain. Its



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lightweight construction and advanced features made it the perfect tool for navigating Namibia's challenging landscapes.

The BMW F 900 GS Trophy Marshal Bike.

The marshals' bike, the BMW F 900 GS, is a versatile mid-weight adventure bike designed for agility and control. It is powered by an 895cc parallel-twin engine, delivering 105 horsepower at 8,500 rpm and 92 Nm of torque at 6,750 rpm, offering a perfect balance of power and manageability.

Key features tailored for the event included:

- Optimized Weight Distribution: A redesigned frame and a reduction in overall weight by 14 kg compared to its predecessor, enhancing its off-road prowess.
- Dynamic ESA: Electronic suspension system for quick adjustments to varying terrain, ensuring maximum grip and comfort.
- 21-inch Front Wheel and Long-Travel Suspension: Providing improved stability over rough terrain and better shock absorption.
- Rally-Style Foot Pegs and Enduro Hand Guards: For increased rider support and protection during off-road sections.

The BMW F 900 GS was equipped with a TFT display featuring integrated connectivity options, allowing marshals to stay in contact with the riders and support team. Its advanced technology and nimble performance made it an ideal companion for navigating unpredictable terrains and ensuring the smooth running of the event. Both the BMW R 1300 GS and BMW F 900 GS demonstrated BMW Motorrad's dedication to crafting motorcycles that excel in adventure riding, blending cutting-edge technology with the rugged capability needed for the world's most challenging off-road event.



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Namibia. "The Land of Many Faces".

Namibia is a country of stunning diversity, both in its landscapes and its people. Situated in southwestern Africa, it is bordered by Angola and Zambia to the north, Botswana to the east, South Africa to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

The country is known for its arid climate, being the driest in sub-Saharan Africa, and its vast, rugged terrains.

Geography.

Namibia spans an area of about 825,615 square kilometers, making it one of the largest countries in Africa. Its landscapes are dominated by deserts, including the ancient Namib Desert along the coast and the vast Kalahari Desert in the east. The central plateau, where the capital city Windhoek is located, rises to over 1,500 meters above sea level and is bordered by mountain ranges such as the Erongo Mountains. Namibia also has significant watercourses like the Okavango, Zambezi, and Kwando rivers, which carry water from high-rainfall areas in Angola across the Kalahari, supporting some of the most biodiverse areas in the country.

Demographics.

Namibia is sparsely populated, with a population density of about 3.7 people per square kilometer. The population is approximately 2.8 million people as of 2023. It is one of the least densely populated countries in the world, with most people living in urban centers near major water sources. Windhoek, the capital, is the largest city, with a population of around 477,000.

History and Culture.

Namibia has a rich cultural heritage influenced by various groups, including the Khoisan, Damara, and Nama people, as well as the Bantu-speaking Ovambo and Herero people who migrated into the area around the 14th century. The country was a German colony in



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the late 19th century and was later administered by South Africa until it gained independence in 1990. This colonial history has significantly impacted the country's architecture, language, and cultural institutions.

Landscape.

The Namib Desert, which extends along the entire western coast of Namibia, is one of the oldest deserts in the world and features iconic landscapes such as the towering sand dunes of Sossusvlei. The Etosha Pan, a vast salt pan in the north, turns into a shallow lake during the rainy season and supports a diverse array of wildlife. In the south, the Fish River Canyon is one of the largest canyons in the world, showcasing spectacular geological formations.

Namibia's unique blend of desert landscapes, towering mountains, and vibrant cultures make it a truly remarkable country, offering both the harsh beauty of its arid terrains and the resilience of its people.

The Spirit Behind the Ride: Heartwarming Tales from the GS Trophy.

A Family Affair: Father and Son Make GS Trophy History.

In a heartwarming display of the GS Spirit, **Andrea Gioia (151)** and his father, **Massimo Gioia (152)** of Team Italy, have become the first father and son duo to compete together in the GS Trophy. When asked about their feelings upon arrival, Massimo shared, "*This is a very beautiful experience with my son, Andrea.*" It's clear that this event is not just another competition for them; it's a shared adventure that has deepened their bond.

For Andrea, riding alongside his father is something special. "I always use a motorbike with my father, but I never did something like this with him before," he said, emphasizing the uniqueness of participating in such a significant event together.



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Their preparation for the GS Trophy was a true family affair. "We trained with the enduro motorbike and had some sessions with BMW Academy in Italy," Massimo explained. Being just 40 kilometers apart back home allowed them to practice together often.

Riding Through Pain: Anna's Journey to the GS Trophy.

Two months before the GS Trophy, **Anna Cárdova (322)** of the Female International Team was thrown off her horse, dislocating her shoulder in a painful accident that nearly derailed her dreams of competing.

"I had the joint out of the shoulder for almost two hours. It was really difficult to get it back, and it was really painful," she shared. Despite the pain, Anna's resolve never wavered.

Following the accident, she underwent five weeks of rehabilitation. "I found an amazing physiotherapist who gave me exercises to fix not just the joint but all the muscles and things around the shoulder." Her dedication to recovery was unwavering, exercising four times a day. "It was necessary because I really wanted to be here," she emphasized.

When she finally saw her GS Trophy bike with her name on it, the struggle and pain seemed to fade. "*The feeling is amazing. It's something exceptional, the only one in the world, and it's here at the GS Trophy,*" she said, with a sense of accomplishment. Anna's story is a powerful reminder that with resilience and determination, no challenge is insurmountable.

An Amputee's Triumph: Conquering the GS Trophy Challenge. Mike Booth (160), MRP (Media Related Person) for Team UK, didn't let his prosthetic leg hold him back from experiencing the thrill of the GS Trophy. "There's two ways of looking at an injury," he said. "You



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either use it as an excuse not to do things, or you use it as a reason to just try a bit harder." With this mindset, he faced the same grueling routes as the competitors, covering the sandy tracks, rocky canyons, and long, demanding days.

Despite losing his right leg in a severe crash at the Isle of Man TT two years ago, Mike chose to push his limits rather than be defined by them. "Some days were really hard. The sandy tracks were so churned up, I thought if this gets any harder, I might have to throw in the towel," he shared, reflecting on the physical and mental challenge of keeping up with the intense pace.

Even in those tough moments, Mike's determination never wavered. "I'm never going to be as good as I was before because my leg isn't going to grow back," he said, "but if you keep trying to get better, stay healthy, and try to be as strong as you possibly can, then the only limiting factor is your mindset."

For Mike, the GS Trophy was more than just a test of endurance; it was a testament to the human spirit's capacity to overcome adversity. His journey serves as a powerful reminder to all: "Just get out there and do it if you can."

A New Generation Rises: A Young Competitor's Story.

At just 21 years old, **Sardar Shahan Khan (203)** of Team India is the youngest participant in this year's GS Trophy, embodying both youth and determination. "*I've been off-roading for half of my life*," Shahan proudly shared. "*I have three GSs at home, and half of their mileage is off-road*."

This was not his first attempt to qualify. Back in 2020, he competed in the qualifier of his home country, India, for the GS Trophy but couldn't proceed due to not having a driver's license. "I was 17 back then. I got the best time but couldn't compete because I didn't have my driver's license yet," he recalled. As soon as he turned 18, Shahan



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applied for his license the very next day and continued to train rigorously. Despite narrowly missing out on a spot in the 2022 Trophy, he remained undeterred, training alongside his friends and mentors, **Dev Venkatesh (202)** and **Anand Dharesan (201)**. His persistence paid off as he finally made it to the GS Trophy 2024, not just as a participant but as a member of Team India.

For Shahan, the GS Trophy is just the beginning. He plans to take on an instructor course and explore rallying professionally. "*Maybe I'll be the youngest marshal someday*," he said with a smile. It's clear that for Shahan, this adventure is only the start of a long and promising journey.

Behind the Scenes: The Making of the GS Trophy.

Stefanie Grund, Senior Project Manager for the International GS Trophy 2024, shared insights into the complexity of organizing such a large-scale event. "You can prepare everything perfectly but have to be ready for any change," she stated, reflecting on the unpredictable nature of the event planning.

Each GS Trophy comes with unique challenges. "There's always one topic which is especially difficult for the organization," she mentioned, highlighting the helicopter logistics in Namibia as a major issue this year.

Stefanie also explained the extensive permitting process in Namibia: "We had to get a lot of permits like drone permits, track permits, and work visas for everyone involved." Support from a local film production agency was crucial in navigating these challenges.





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BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024, Namibia. Final standings:

Male Teams:

1. Germany, 283 points 2. South Africa, 223 3. Brazil, 177 4. France, 153 5. UK, 150 6. Latin America, 147 7. Italy, 145 8. International Team, 140 9. China, 139 10. India, 134 11. Benelux, 125 12. South Korea, 117 13. Japan, 112 14. Mexico, 107 15. USA, 94 16. Middle East, 93

Female Teams:

- 1. International Team, 278
- 2. Japan, 273
- 3. France, 267
- 4. Germany, 263
- 5. South Korea, 249

BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy. Winners year-by-year.

2024 Male: Germany, Female: International Team 2022 Male: South Africa, Female: South Africa 2020 South Africa



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2018 South Africa 2016 South Africa 2014 CEEU (Central Eastern European Union) 2012 Germany 2010 UK 2008 USA

BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy. Hosting regions year-by-year.

2024 Namibia 2022 Albania 2020 New Zealand 2018 Mongolia 2016 Thailand 2014 Canada 2012 Patagonia (Chile, Argentina) 2010 Southern Africa (South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique) 2008 Tunisia

BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy. Motorcycle models used year-by-year.

2024 R 1300 GS 2022 R 1250 GS 2020 F 850 GS 2018 R 1200 GS 2016 R 1200 GS 2014 R 1200 GS 2012 F 800 GS 2010 F 800 GS, R 1200 GS 2008 F 800 GS, R 1200 GS





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You can find highlights of the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2024 on the BMW Motorrad social media channels:

http://www.facebook.com/bmwmotorrad https://www.instagram.com/bmwmotorrad https://www.youtube.com/bmwmotorrad https://www.linkedin.com/bmwmotorrad/showcase/bmwmotorrad https://www.tiktok.com/bmwmotorrad

You will find press material on BMW motorcycles in the BMW Group PressClub at <u>www.press.bmwgroup.com.</u>

In case of queries, please contact:

Damien Cagnart, Spokesperson BMW Motorrad Tel: +49-151-601-95806, <u>Damien.Cagnart@bmw.de</u>

Tim Diehl-Thiele, Head of Communications BMW Motorrad Telephone: +49-151-601-57505, <u>Tim.Diehl-Thiele@bmw.de</u>

Web: www.press.bmw.de E-mail: <u>presse@bmw.de</u>

The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2023, the BMW Group sold over 2.55 million passenger vehicles and more than 209,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2023 was \in 17.1 billion on revenues amounting to \in 155.5 billion. As of 31 December 2023, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,950 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.



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