



Media Information
7th April 2021

BMW Esports meets manga: In ‘Heroes of Rivalry’, BMW sends its partner teams on a fantastic adventure and presents OG Esports as new addition.

- **Dota 2 world champions OG Esports will fly the flag for BMW from now on.**
- **New ‘Heroes of Rivalry’ campaign brings the BMW Esports involvement to the world of manga.**
- **Japanese artist Acky Bright to develop eight exciting episodes.**

Munich. ‘United in Rivalry’ enters the next level in 2021. BMW is once again partner of some of the top Esports teams in the world this season. Cloud 9, FNATIC, FunPlus Phoenix, G2 Esports and T1 will be competing in the classic League of Legends game in BMW colours, where they will regularly do battle for wins and titles. On Wednesday, OG Esports – a world-leading team in Dota 2 and on other platforms – was announced as new ‘United in Rivalry’ partner team, thus BMW will also play an important role in Esports outside the League of Legends cosmos. Now the teams are off on a very special journey together; in Japanese artist Acky Bright’s manga, they are the heroes in a fantasy world. They can only make it through the adventures that await them there as one, despite being rivals – making them ‘United in Rivalry’.

“The superheroes in our manga not only develop great power in their adventure, but they also inspire the imagination of every single person,” said Stefan Ponikva, Vice President Brand Experience BMW. “There is something magical about manga; it touches peoples’ hearts. That is the crux of the matter. Manga follows our goal of wrapping brand messages in emotions – with great finesse for images, language and symbols – and entertaining people. In pop culture like the Esports scene, this is far more effective than another display ad. Through manga, we are communicating on the same wavelength with a target group that does not actually respond positively to advertising, and we are there, where they are – on their mobile devices. With Heroes of Rivalry we are initiating the next stage and not just fuelling the Esports hype, but getting actively involved. I am really looking forward to BMW’s second year in Esports.”

The BMW Esports teams’ story is set in the well-known manga genre of Isekai, in which real-world heroes master challenges in a parallel fantasy environment and have to survive fictional dangers. The manga art form that originated in Japan and Korea – where it’s called ‘manhwa’ – is experiencing a global boom. The fan base is growing rapidly, and leading streaming services are investing heavily in the manga related



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anime market. Manga are very different from western comics, with one difference being the opposite reading direction of the 100-or-so-page magazines, which is from right to left. Many manga are published as episodes in periodical magazines before being bundled together as a standalone volume. There are eight episodes of 'Heroes of Rivalry' in total that will be released on the BMW Esports social media channels and on www.bmw.com/heroesofrivalry.

The concept and the storyline for 'Heroes of Rivalry' came from Jung von Matt based in Hamburg, while the artwork came courtesy of popular Japanese illustrator and manga artist Acky Bright. Bright started out as a graphic designer and developed his own unique design, illustration, livepaint and manga style, which made him stand out from other mangaka, and has earned him a loyal fanbase. He founded his own studio, Brightworks, for design and ad campaigns and is a partner in cool-Japan art company Tokyo Direct, which co-produces manga, licenses work internationally, arranges artist events such as live-painting and engages social networking activities.

OG Esports celebrates debut in 'Heroes of Rivalry' manga.

BMW Esports presented its sixth partner team OG Esports to fans as part of the 'Heroes of Rivalry' campaign. The European team will fly the BMW colours in the game Dota 2. OG Esports was founded in 2015 and won 'The International', the most important and most lucrative tournament of the season, in both 2018 and 2019. The team was awarded a total cash prize of around 27 million US dollars for those two victories at the Dota 2 world championship. In addition to Dota 2, OG Esports is represented by strong teams in other games – including Valorant.

"OG Esports is giving the United in Rivalry family another boost," said Ponikva. "As well as League of Legends, we are now also involved in Dota 2 – and with an absolutely top team. This is another step towards realising our vision of immersing ourselves deep in the pop culture of Esports and expanding our involvement in this unique scene with a very specific language, and specific references and symbols."

"I grew up with a poster of a BMW motorcycle on my wall... Many years later... being able to work with them, it's a dream come true," said JMR Luna, CEO of OG Esports. "BMW is a wonderful brand and company, and they entered Esports partnering with five of the biggest Esports orgs in the world and it is an honour for us to be part of this



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prestigious group now. Once again thank you to our fans for continuing to believe and support us, and OG and BMW will now work hard to bring many more incredible moments to you all."

Dota 2, like League of Legends, is a multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game and the successor of the popular 'Defense of the Ancients' modification of the strategic game 'Warcraft 3'. The game was released as a free-to-play title on 9th July 2013. Dota 2 had more than 11 million monthly active users around the world in January 2019. OG Esports was the first team to win four major titles in Dota 2 back in 2017, and the first team to defend their World Championship title in 'The International' in 2019.

About BMW Esports.

BMW has been collaborating with five of the world's best teams as a partner in the classic League of Legends game since 2020. Cloud 9, FNATIC, FunPlus Phoenix, G2 Esports and T1 fly the BMW colours in the biggest events in the industry. The highlight of the first collaborative season in 2020 was the Worlds, in which G2 esports and FNATIC made it to the knock-out stage of the finals in the battle of the world's best teams. G2 Esports even made it to the semi-final. The Dota 2 specialists OG Esports are a new addition to the 'United in Rivalry' squad as of April 2021. The involvement in Esports gives BMW completely new touch points with a dynamic, rapidly growing community; making Esports an important future field for BMW marketing activities. BMW has prominent representatives in sim racing as well, and has integrated BMW SIM Racing into its racing programme as a standalone pillar. The BMW SIM Cups attract the world's best sim racers, who do battle for wins, titles and attractive cash prizes in virtual BMW racing cars. BMW SIM Racing teams are taking part for the first time in 2021. BS+COMPETITION, G2 Esports, Team GB and Team Redline represent BMW on various simulation platforms.

Note to editors:

A clip about the 'Heroes of Rivalry' campaign launch is available for download in the BMW Group PressClub.



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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 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2020, the BMW Group sold over 2.3 million passenger vehicles and more than 169,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2020 was € 5.222 billion on revenues amounting to € 98.990 billion. As of 31 December 2020, the BMW Group had a workforce of 120,726 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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