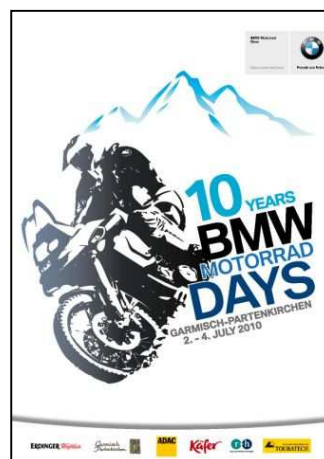


## Born to perform

When female rock band the Wild Cats take to the stage, they never fail to deliver a powerful, imposing and unique performance. The same could be said of the BMW K 1300 R motorcycle when it takes to the road, which is perhaps why the five members of the band were introduced to the bike at a recent photo shoot for BMW Motorrad Days.

At this year's tenth annual BMW motorcycle festival on 2 to 4 July, the Wild Cats will make their debut before an audience of approximately 30,000 riders in the resort of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, south Germany. However, lead vocalist Heike Wimmer, keyboard player Manuela Schuhbaum, drummer Tina Zacher, bass player Bylle Baringer and guitarist Daniela Schrack thrive on the adrenaline rush of performing live at events across Europe.



“One of my favourite Wild Cats gigs was on New Year’s Eve in Salzburg, Austria, when we played to more than 17,000 people,” says founding member Manuela. “Our first TV performance was also exciting, on RTL’s Rockmania in Berlin. And at another gig in Munich, pop stars including Take That and Mando Diao were listening to us!”



Manuela started her stage career at the age of six, singing at public events, such as Christmas parties in her home town of Schöllnach near Passau. “A little later, I started learning my first instrument, the accordion, then the piano,” she adds.

Band members Tina and Daniela also began honing their musical talents relatively early in life. The youngest Wild Cat, Tina, from Osterhofen in Bavaria, has been singing and playing the drums since she was 11. Daniela began playing classical guitar at the age of 10 in an Austrian music school near her home in Wels.

“After learning how to play etudes by Bach and Latin-American bossa novas, I decided to focus on playing electric guitar,” she says. “At 16 I got my first electric guitar – my lovely baby-blue Fender Stratocaster – and have been playing and singing in live bands ever since.”

In contrast, Heike and Bylle followed their musical dreams a little later in life. Heike, from Passau, owes her career to a karaoke contest she took part in at the age of 23. “I’d been singing my whole life, and when I sang karaoke, I couldn’t believe that people were so impressed by my voice. That’s why I then started singing professionally.”

Bylle, from Munich, didn’t start learning guitar and electric bass guitar until she was in her early twenties. “It was always my dream to play music and rock with bands on stage,” she explains. To achieve her ambition, she gave up her office job and now focuses on songwriting, developing her bass playing and performing with the Wild Cats.

The band’s typical set list includes an eclectic mix of pop hits, rock classics and soul ballads, which will appeal to visitors of all ages and with all musical tastes at BMW Motorrad Days. Such diversity also reflects the individual characters of all five members of the Wild Cats.

When they’re not performing together, the ladies have very different ways of winding down. Motorcycle enthusiast Bylle, who also has a licence for national car racing at Austria’s Salzburgring and has travelled far and wide on two wheels, relaxes by swimming in lakes around Munich. Heike balances her hectic lifestyle as Wild Cat frontwoman with spending time at home with her two children and family. And Manuela takes time out with long walks in the woods and recharges her batteries by reading and swimming.

Daniela and Tina have less time for relaxing in the pursuit of education and personal ambitions. A scientific assistant at the the Johannes Kepler University in Linz, Daniela plans to finish a doctoral thesis in Environmental Management within the next two years. And Tina has two goals in addition to playing with the Wild Cats: “The first is to become a good radio host, and the second is to be successful with my own wedding planning company,” she explains.

Despite their individual commitments and achievements, Manuela, Heike, Daniela, Tina and Bylle are united by their desire to succeed as the Wild Cats. Delighted to participate in a promotional shoot with the BMW Motorrad team, the ladies are enjoying the build-up to the brand’s festival in July.

The photo shoot was the first time the band had shared the spotlight with a motorcycle. “The photography shoot was an exciting experience for us, posing with the K 1300 R and incorporating it into the shots,” said Manuela. “The K 1300 R is a really imposing motorbike and makes a powerful impression – just like the Wild Cats!” added Daniela.



