



Media Information  
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**Interview with Johannes Scheid: “I didn’t sleep during that time anyway”.**

- **In an interview, Johannes Scheid looks back on 50 years of endurance racing on the Nordschleife.**
- **Scheid won the 24-hour race in the legendary ‘Eifelblitz’ BMW M3 in 1996 and 1997.**
- **Scheid: “We almost completely wrote off the car after the first few practice laps in 1997”.**

**Nürburg. Johannes Scheid (GER) is a legend at the Nürburgring (GER). At the 2019 edition of the 24-hour race, he was honoured by BMW M Customer Racing for 50 years in motor racing. He has spent almost his entire career driving BMWs on the Nordschleife. In 1996 and 1997, he won the 24-hour race in the legendary ‘Eifelblitz’ BMW M3. Scheid called time on his career before the start of the 2020 season. On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 24-hour race and the first overall victory for BMW, Scheid looks back on his two triumphs and his experiences over the course of 50 years on the Nordschleife.**

**Mr. Scheid, you have witnessed almost the entire history of the Nürburgring 24 Hours. What was the best time?**

Johannes Scheid: “It is always nicest when you win. As such, the 1990s, when I twice took overall victory, were obviously the best for me. However, the other times were also very nice. In total, I claimed about ten class victories in the 24-hour race. From a driver’s point of view, the best time was with the BMW M3 E30, when there was just two of us alternating at the wheel, as that meant you got to do a lot of driving. The time flew by. I didn’t sleep during that time anyway, as I also had to muck in as a mechanic if anything happened to the car. The most we used to get was a massage.”

**Did you always drive BMW cars?**

Scheid: “I started with a BMW 1800. From time to time I drove smaller cars, but since I started driving the BMW M3 E30, I always raced in a BMW and finished in the



top five of the overall standings on several occasions.”

**Your glory days came in 1996 and 1997, with two overall victories. That was when the legend of the ‘Eifelblitz’ was born, wasn’t it?**

Scheid: “Correct. That was our first victory in 1996. Our BMW M3 E36 was mainly white and, in my opinion, looked pretty naked. Sabine Schmitz – still Sabine Reck at the time – was driving the car with us and was a talented artist. I said to her: ‘Come up with something.’ She painted the castle that overlooks the Nürburgring on the side, and the name ‘Eifelblitz’ was born.”

**Which of the two victories was the most special?**

Scheid: “Definitely the second one in 1977, because of the circumstances. We had almost completely written the car off after the first few practice laps. We brought the wreck back to our garage and completely dismantled everything except the engine. The garage resembled a battlefield. We then built it back together with new parts, but left off the whole of the front. It then went to a colleague on the straightening bench, where we completed the reassembly. By the second practice session, we were back out on the track. I drove a test lap and heard something rattling. It turned out that it was a part of the wishbone. Peter Zakowski was driving at the time and happened to have a turning shop, so we dragged one of his colleagues out of the disco that night, and got him to make a copy of the part. Unfortunately, we could not determine exactly what the material was, so we ended up just using the production part, which was made of rubber. That worked too. We were able to start the race, but the VWs were actually better than us – especially as our ABS also failed. However, we had the upper hand when it came to tyre selection in the rain, and had to make fewer pit stops. That is how we won.”

**You drove your last 24-hour race in 2009. However, you have remained a true great at the Nürburgring outside of the cockpit.**

Scheid: “As well as driving and my role as team principal, I was also involved in founding the endurance cup and pretty much introduced organised racing at the Nürburgring. We first met at my house for breakfast, then later again in Cologne, where we decided to form an endurance series. I am also still a member of the presidium at the Deutscher Sportfahrer Kreis DSK. We played an important role in allowing the Nürburgring Endurance Series to be the first series to stage races again after the first phase of the pandemic.”



**As team principal, you recently competed with the BMW M240i Racing. What do you like best, the old cars or the modern ones?**

Scheid: “The modern cars at the end were great. You obviously had far less work to do on them than in the cars that I built myself. Particularly ‘Dicke’, our BMW M3 GTS – actually a BMW M3 GTR, but I could not call it that because of the works car of the same name. That was a nice time too, but the modern BMW M240i Racing was always very reliable and we always had very nice battles in our Cup class.”

**Ahead of this season, you sold your BMW M240i Racing and brought an end to your career as team principal. Why was that?**

Scheid: “First and foremost it was simply becoming harder and harder to cover the costs as a small team with just one car. I would actually have liked to continue driving in the 2020 season, but then along came the pandemic and I said to myself: ‘It’s time to call it a day’.”

**How will you follow the 24-hour race this weekend?**

Scheid: “I think I will be there. I helped out a team with the preparation of its car and am also involved as a consultant for a few other teams, so I have not left the Nürburgring behind completely.”

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