



24h Spa-Francorchamps

**Disappointment at Marc VDS Racing – Vita4One Racing's BMW Z4 GT3 running in the top-five.**

Spa-Francorchamps (BE), 28<sup>th</sup> July 2013. During the night the 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps (BE) once more lived up to its reputation of being among the toughest challenges in motor racing: With six and a half hours to go, only Vita4One Racing's number 26 BMW Z4 GT3 is still involved in the battle for a top position at the 65<sup>th</sup> running of the endurance classic. Frank Kechele (DE), Greg Franchi (BE) and Stefano Colombo (IT) are currently in fifth.

For large parts of the race, the BMW Z4 GT3s of Marc VDS Racing had thrilled the fans around the 7.004-kilometre circuit by battling for the lead, before technical problems forced both cars to retire early on. In the night at 02:00hrs, Nicky Catsburg (NL) had to park the number 4 car due to an electrical issue. At this point the Dutchman was running in second. A little more than three hours later, a rather unusual sort of problem put an end to second-placed Maxime Martin's (BE) race in the number 3 BMW Z4 GT3 as well: the fire extinguisher housing had burst, damaging the car's electrical system.

Before that the race had already seen the retirements of the third Marc VDS Racing car, as well as the cars of TDS Racing, ROAL Motorsport and DKR Engineering due to incidents on the track or technical problems.

**Jens Marquardt (BMW Motorsport Director):**

"Six of our seven BMW Z4 GT3s entered in the Spa-Francorchamps 24 Hours had to retire at a relatively early stage. This is particularly disappointing for the Marc VDS Racing team that had successfully battled it out among the front-runners with two cars during the first half of the race. The reasons for the retirements differ. In some cases they were caused by incidents on the track. In other cases technical problems occurred, some of which have never been experienced on the BMW Z4 GT3 before. Now we will closely analyse the problems in detail, in order to make sure they won't happen again in the future. This race once more proves it's one of the toughest events in the world. Many other teams find themselves in a similar situation to us, as the list of retirements is already fairly long."

**Maxime Martin (Marc VDS Racing, #3 BMW Z4 GT3):**

"If you start with three cars and find that, after a little bit more than 12 hours, you have none of them still on track... It's disappointing, for sure. But it's part of racing. We knew at the start anything could happen. The cars were really well prepared, and the team did an amazing job. If you want to win a 24 hour race you need luck, and we just didn't have enough this time."

**Markus Palttala (Marc VDS Racing, #4 BMW Z4 GT3):**

"We came here with high hopes and it's been good since the first session. I led the race at six hours, which gave the team some really important points in the Blancpain Endurance Series. It was a really hard moment to hear Nicky Catsburg had parked the car."



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