



24h Nürburgring

**Eventful start to the 24-hour race – BMW Sports Trophy Team Marc VDS in the leading group after four hours.**

Nürburgring (DE), 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014. The 24-hour race on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (DE) is underway – and the spectators have been treated to a feast of action and incidents over the course of the first four hours of racing. After a thrilling opening phase, Bas Leinders (BE), Markus Palttala (FI), Nick Catsburg (NL) and Dirk Adorf (DE) of BMW Sports Trophy Team Marc VDS were the best-placed BMW. The number 26 BMW Z4 GT3 is fifth overall.

Their car was involved in an incident with the #20 BMW Z4 GT3 of BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert on lap two of the race, when Palttala collided with Claudia Hürtgen (DE). The resulting spin cost Hürtgen a number of positions. However, she and team-mates Dominik Baumann (AT), Jens Klingmann (DE) and Martin Tomczyk (DE) soon fought their way back into eleventh place.

The race is already over for their team-mates Dirk Werner (DE), Lucas Luhr (DE), Dirk Müller (DE) and Alexander Sims (GB). Suspension damage resulted in Sims crashing in the fourth hour of racing. A part of the chassis damaged the oil pump of the number 19 BMW Z4 GT3, causing irreparable damage to the engine.

Maxime Martin (BE), Marco Wittmann (DE), Uwe Alzen (DE) and Jörg Müller (DE) were the victims of misfortune: running second at the time, Martin lost control of the number 25 BMW Z4 GT3 on a patch of oil approaching the NGK chicane, spinning at high speed. The car dropped back to 48<sup>th</sup> place. In the meantime, however, the four drivers have battled back into the top 15. The two BMW Z4 GT3s fielded by the Walkenhorst Motorsport team are 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> after four hours of racing.

The BMW M235i Racing with the appropriate number 235, which is run by BMW Motorsport and driven by Alexander Mies (DE), TV expert Alex Hofmann (DE), and journalists Marcus Schurig (DE) and Jethro Bovingdon (GB) is currently 79<sup>th</sup> overall. Four hours into the race, the Adrenalin Motorsport team leads the BMW M235i Racing Cup class with the #308 BMW M235i Racing.

**Quotes from the BMW drivers after four hours.**

**Maxime Martin (BMW Sports Trophy Team Marc VDS, #25):**

“The start to the race was okay. It could obviously have gone better for my team and me. Without the incident in the chicane we would have been right up there with the leaders after one and a half hours of the race. I just lost the rear end all of a sudden. Fortunately I was able to regain control of the car. I came straight into the pits to allow my mechanics to check the car. At first glance everything was okay, so I was able to continue. We lost time, but this is a long race. There is still everything to play for.”



**Claudia Hürtgen (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, #20):**

"The incident with the other BMW Z4 GT3 was very frustrating and unnecessary at this early stage of the race. Fortunately I was then able to work my way back through the field until we were relatively close to the front-runners. As such, we were able to do a decent job of damage limitation."

**Markus Palttala (BMW Sports Trophy Team Marc VDS, #26):**

"In my opinion, the collision at the start was a misunderstanding. That sort of thing should obviously not happen between fellow BMW drivers. Fortunately both Claudia Hürtgen and I were able to continue."

**Lucas Luhr (BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, #19):**

"We actually made a good start to the race, and managed to stay out of all the mayhem. It is obviously a great shame that we have had to retire so early in the race. Everyone in the team was really committed and had worked very hard. Personally, I had hoped my first big race for BMW would pan out differently, but at least I made a good start. The car was running superbly until the incident. We will keep our fingers crossed for the remaining BMWs now."

**Alex Hofmann (BMW M235i Racing, #235):**

"I had a good start and was able to overtake two other BMW M235i Racings. After that I concentrated on learning more with every lap I completed. Generally speaking, there seemed to be too much testosterone around in the early stages. Everyone involved needs to understand that the race lasts 24 hours. It is a huge shame when so many cars are totalled so early on in the race."

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