



BMW Motorsport

Disappointing Sunday race for Alessandro Zanardi at Slovakia Ring.

Slovakia Ring (SK), 24th August 2014. Alessandro Zanardi (IT) was fully motivated heading onto the grid for today's main race of the Blancpain Sprint Series at Slovakia Ring (SK). However, lady luck was not on his side today. The BMW works driver had to retire after the first lap as his BMW Z4 GT3 was hit by an opponent in the first corner.

All looked well for Zanardi: he was tenth on the grid and ready to start a catch up towards the front, just as he did at his last outing in the series in Brands Hatch (GB), where he raced to a sensational fifth place from the back of the grid in his BMW Z4 GT3. In addition, weather conditions today were much better than yesterday, when it had poured down during most of the qualifying race. Today, it was windy, but dry with some sun.

However, Zanardi's main race was over before it began. His BMW Z4 GT3 was hit when several cars collided in the first corner after the rolling start. While other cars were stranded in the gravel, Zanardi was able to continue, but after the first lap he had to go to the pits with a puncture on the left rear as well as other damage to the car. The ROAL Motorsport team tried to fix the car in order to send the BMW Z4 GT3 back on track, but it turned out that the damage was too big and Zanardi had to retire.

"We had the weather we were hoping for and I strongly believed we had the car to get a good result. But unfortunately this is racing," Zanardi commented. "After a very good start I got trapped behind the accident and I tried to avoid it but, of course, many cars were coming behind me and I got pushed into the chaos. So basically I had nowhere to go and in all the chaos going on somebody damaged my left rear tyre. Towards the end of the lap I could feel the tyre losing pressure and I told my team over the radio that I would come in to change the tyre. Then we decided to retire because the damage to the car at the front was too bad. It would have been too dangerous to continue like that. It was a real pity because, for sure, the car would have been good enough to get a really strong result. So now we have to try next time."

The main race was won by Thomas Jäger (AT) and Dominik Baumann (AT) from BMW Sports Trophy Team Schubert, Caca Bueno (BR) and Sergio Jimenez (BR) from BMW Sports Trophy Team Brasil finished second. The Slovakia Ring hosted the fourth round of the 2014 Blancpain Sprint Series. The next round will be held in two weeks' time at Portimao in Portugal (5th to 7th September).

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