



BMW Motorsport

**A look behind the scenes: BMW Brand Ambassador Alessandro Zanardi visits the BMW plant Spartanburg.**

Spartanburg/Greenville (US), 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014. Alessandro Zanardi (IT) took a close look behind the scenes of the manufacturing processes at BMW today: the BMW Brand Ambassador visited the BMW plant Spartanburg in South Carolina (US). The plant is close to Greenville, where Zanardi will contest the UCI Para-Cycling World Championship over the next few days. The BMW plant Spartanburg began producing BMW cars for the world market 20 years ago in 1994. Today, several BMW X models are manufactured there to be exported to more than 140 markets around the world. Currently, over 8,000 employees manufacture about 1,200 vehicles each day.

The employees gave Zanardi a guided tour of the plant, including the state-of-the-art assembly lines where the different BMW X models are assembled. The Italian also used the opportunity to chat with the employees about their respective tasks, as well as his racing season as BMW works driver with the BMW Z4 GT3 in the Blancpain Sprint Series and his various activities as a para-athlete. The staff at the plant gave Zanardi a warm welcome, they took pictures with him and got his autograph as a souvenir.

“My visit to the BMW plant in Spartanburg was just fantastic”, Zanardi commented. “I felt a bit like a kid in a candy shop looking at all these beautiful cars. When I stood between all these machines and robots I also felt like I was in a movie like ‘Transformers’. It was fascinating. All the people were very kind and gave me a very warm welcome. Some of them have been fans of mine since the days I was racing in IndyCars over here in the United States, and a lot of people were well informed about how I am doing these days in the Blancpain Sprint Series with my BMW Z4 GT3. So I am looking forward to getting a lot of support from them throughout all the events of the Para-Cycling World Championship and I hope I can make them proud.”

Across from the BMW plant Spartanburg is the BMW Performance Center test facilities with different road and off-road test courses. Tomorrow, Thursday, the BMW Performance Center will host the UCI Para-Cycling World Championship team-relay competitions, which Zanardi will contest with the Italian national team. The individual races are scheduled over the next few days: on Saturday, Zanardi will start in the time trial and on Monday, he will tackle the road race. He is the reigning world champion in both disciplines.

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