



BMW Motorsport

The successful streak continues: BMW Brand Ambassador Alessandro Zanardi defends his world-title in the para-cycling time trial.

Nottwil (CH), 31st July 2015. Alessandro Zanardi (IT) continued on his winning ways at the 2015 UCI Para-cycling Road World Championship in Nottwil (CH). Two days after being crowned world champion with the Italian national team in the team-relay, he has now celebrated another success. The BMW Brand Ambassador and BMW works driver successfully defended his world-title in the time trial in the MH5 category (men's hand-cycle).

In Friday's time trial the para-athletes tackled a 15.5 kilometre lap around Nottwil. The course included challenging uphill and fast downhill sections. Zanardi once more proved to be unbeatable with his hand-cycle. He completed the distance in 28:19:12 minutes, winning the race with an advantage of around 40 seconds over second-placed Oscar Sanchez (US). In doing so, Zanardi secured his third-consecutive world-title in this discipline.

"It probably was one of the best handcycle races of my life," said Zanardi. "It was a tough race. At about halfway through I was behind, lying in third, and that was not encouraging, as I knew I had to save energy for the really demanding final uphill section. But it did not change my tactics, as I had just got to go for my race and give my best – as I always do. I caught up and when we entered the final climb I had the same time as the leaders. I then was so fast uphill that at the end of the climb I even managed to overtake the guy who had started in front of me. What followed was a crazy downhill run where in one corner I nearly lost it. Luckily I did not! Then on the final, flat section I was fast like a rocket, because I thought it would be really close. But it was not – in fact I won with a good margin."

"I knew that it was going to be hard, but I wanted this result so badly," Zanardi continued. "I knew that I had it in my arms but that it would be a challenge, as over the last months I had combined two things that I really love – motor racing and handcycling. I want to thank my trainer Francesco Chiappero and everybody who helped me to successfully tackle this challenge. In less than one week I competed in the 24-hour race at Spa-Francorchamps in my BMW Z4 GT3, basically staying awake for two days, and came here to contest these races in which every bit of energy matters in order to beat exceptional opponents. So I am incredibly proud of this result."

On Sunday (2nd August) Zanardi will compete in his third and final race of the 2015 UCI Para-cycling Road World Championship. He will compete in the road-race. He was crowned world champion in this discipline in 2013 and finished runner-up in 2014. The results of this year's UCI Para-cycling Road World Championship count towards qualifying for the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro (BR).

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