



BMW Motorsport

The goal has been achieved: BMW works driver Alessandro Zanardi completes his second long-distance triathlon in Hawaii with a great overall result and the win in his division.

Kona (US), 11th October 2015. Alessandro Zanardi (IT) has once more successfully completed the long-distance triathlon in Hawaii (US). On Saturday, the BMW works driver and BMW Brand Ambassador participated in the prestigious endurance test for the second time. His target was to better his time from his debut in 2014 and he succeeded in this – despite really treacherous conditions with strong winds and extremely hot temperatures of over 35 degrees Celsius. The 48-year-old Italian completed the total distance of 226.255 kilometres in a time of 9:40:37 hours. In doing so, he was seven minutes faster than last year.

With his time, Zanardi claimed a great overall result: He was 167th overall among the 2,425 participants who had started the event this year. In addition he took the win in his division, the "PC" division for physically challenged participants. The triathlon consisted of a 3.86 kilometre swim in the open ocean, a cycling section of 180.2 kilometres and a final running part of a full marathon distance of 42.195 kilometres. Zanardi, who had both his leg amputated, had to complete the whole distance solely by the power of his arms. He tackled the cycling section with his handcycle, while for the running section he used an Olympic wheelchair.

In this race, Zanardi once more proved his determination and his will to never give up, because over the course of the day he had to overcome several challenges. "It is an adventure. It is almost certain that something unpredictable will happen and today it happened immediately," the Italian reported. "I don't know why, but when we were at the turning point in the swimming section, I started to feel dizzy. I was very scared at that point, because I thought if I black-out here everybody is going to run over me and I am going to drown. Luckily I could see the bottom of the ocean, so I just focussed very much on that and managed to control the dizziness. But it stayed there until the end and I was still not feeling well when I jumped on my handcycle. For the first half an hour I felt freezing cold and I was shaking." But Zanardi went on, determined to finish the event.

"Then eventually the engine got going and everything was okay. In fact it was brilliantly enjoyable," he said with a smile on his face. However, in the second half of the cycling section the feared strong wind picked up again: "It gradually got stronger and stronger and the last 50 kilometres were really difficult. In addition, it was incredibly hot. The heat came from the road and, with me being that low, it was very, very hard. But I could see that everybody struggled. The performance of the people around me just dropped, they all had to slow down because for everybody it was a physically difficult situation with the wind and mainly the heat."

Despite these conditions, Zanardi improved his time in comparison to last year – even if he admits that he had planned to be even faster. "I thought I could do better than 9:40 hours, but also with my Olympic wheel chair I was not able to improve as much as I thought because I was done," he said, underlining how big the challenges at this triathlon are. "But it is okay – overall I am very, very happy with my performance. And it is a good reason to come back here again and give it another try!"

Zanardi will now return to Europe. Next weekend (17th/18th October) he will join the 2015 DTM season finale in Hockenheim (DE), where he will be driving the BMW M4 DTM Race Taxi.



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