



Media Information  
Alessandro Zanardi  
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**Next assignment Mugello: Alessandro Zanardi to compete in the Italian GT Championship.**

- **Alessandro Zanardi to share the BMW Team Italia modified BMW M6 GT3 cockpit with Erik Johansson and Stefano Comandini.**
- **Alessandro Zanardi: “I can’t wait to get behind the wheel again”.**
- **Two further para-cycling world titles for Alessandro Zanardi.**

**Munich. Alessandro Zanardi (ITA) has his next assignment in a BMW race car at the beginning of October. The BMW works driver will contest the penultimate round of the 2019 Italian GT Championship season at Mugello (ITA) with BMW Team Italia from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> October. Zanardi will share the cockpit of a modified BMW M6 GT3 with BMW Motorsport Junior Erik Johansson (SWE) and Stefano Comandini (ITA).**

Zanardi has very special memories of Mugello. He contested the Italian GT Championship finale there back in 2016. It was his debut in the BMW M6 GT3, and he celebrated a victory cheered on by the whole paddock in the Sunday race. Now, Zanardi returns to Mugello with the BMW M6 GT3 and Italian team principal Roberto Ravaglia’s BMW Team Italia.

“We’re really looking forward to competing with Alex again at Mugello,” said BMW Group Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt. “The emotions of his win there three years ago are still very real to us all, as are the many impressions that his guest start at the 24 Hours of Daytona in January left on us. It’s great to see him at the wheel of a BMW race car again, and we’re confident that the weekend at Mugello will be fantastic.”

“I’m really looking forward to the weekend at Mugello, for many reasons,” said Zanardi. “For one thing, it has been a few months now since my last race at Daytona and I can’t wait to get behind the wheel again. BMW Team Italia managed by my old friend Roberto Ravaglia is also like a second family to me – as are the engineers at BMW M Motorsport, who have been close by my side for many years. Now we are all returning to the track together. And last but not least are the memories of the win in 2016, on my debut in the BMW M6 GT3. It was an unforgettable and indescribable weekend. I already know that I will enjoy the preparation and race at Mugello from the



first to the final moment.”

Unlike in 2016, when two sprint races were held at the finale and Zanardi was the sole driver of the car, this time it is a three-hour endurance race. That is why Zanardi will share the cockpit with the two regular drivers Johansson and Comandini, who are contesting the entire season for BMW Team Italia. The BMW M6 GT3 will be specially modified by BMW M Motorsport engineers. The continuously developed systems that enable Zanardi to race have been perfected further based on insights from the 24-hour race at Daytona (USA).

Zanardi will also drive without prosthetic legs at Mugello, since this proved to be the ideal option for him. He will brake using the hand braking system fitted in the BMW M8 GTE at Daytona. This will be combined with the standard pedals in the BMW M6 GT3 that Eriksson and Comandini use. Zanardi's steering wheel with gas ring is also familiar from his GT appearances and his DTM guest start at Misano (ITA) last year. The steering wheel will be changed during the driver change. The modifications to the BMW M6 GT3 also include the fully-automatic centrifugal clutch, which worked well at Misano and Daytona. This system has the major advantage for Zanardi that he doesn't need to operate a clutch level with his hands as well. The software for the handbrake, steering wheel and centrifugal clutch will be adapted to the requirements of the Mugello appearance. Zanardi has already tested with the car.

It's intensive weeks for the Italian, as between testing the BMW M6 GT3 and the race weekend and Mugello there has been another highlight on his schedule: the 2019 UCI Para-cycling Road World Championships at Emmen (NED). Zanardi continued his amazing success story in the world of para-cycling in emphatic fashion and won two gold medals and one silver medal. Zanardi took gold in the team relay with the Italian national team on Wednesday and in Friday's time trial – securing his paracycling world titles numbers 11 and 12. He was also second after an incredibly close finish in the road race.

“I obviously travelled to Emmen with great expectations, but these results probably exceed even my optimistic goals,” said Zanardi. “I am very proud, particularly of the world champion's jersey, which I won in the time trial, as that is one of the toughest races of all. I gave it my all in the road race too. It went fantastically and everything was perfect, including the final corner, when I was still leading the race. In the end, however, Tim de Vries was simply stronger than me. He deserved the win and I am very proud of my second place.”

Zanardi's results in Emmen proved once again that he is one of the very best in the



world of paracycling. His goal is to qualify for the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo. This coming weekend, however, Zanardi will focus on another of his passions: triathlon. On Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> September, he will compete in the 'Ironman Italy Emilia-Romagna' at Cervia (ITA). Last year, he set a new world record at the event with a time of 8:26.06 hours, the fastest time ever recorded by a triathlete with physical disabilities over the Ironman distance. On Sunday, Zanardi will then contest another triathlon over the half Ironman distance at Cervia.

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