



Media Information  
Alessandro Zanardi  
31<sup>st</sup> August 2017

**BMW Brand Ambassador Alessandro Zanardi defends his world-title in the para-cycling time trial.**

- **Success in the first of three competitions at the 2017 UCI Para-cycling Road World Championships in South Africa.**
- **Alessandro Zanardi extends his collection of world-titles to nine.**
- **Zanardi: “I am very proud of this result.”**

**Pietermaritzburg. The world para-cycling elite are meeting in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, for the 2017 UCI Para-cycling Road World Championships – and Alessandro Zanardi (ITA) lives up to his role as a favourite. On Thursday, the BMW Brand Ambassador won the time trial in the MH5 category (men’s hand-cycle), defending his world title in the discipline. Overall, it is the ninth world title that Zanardi has won in his para-cycling career to date.**

The time trial was the first of three competitions that Zanardi is taking part in at the Pietermaritzburg world championships. The para-athletes completed three laps on a 7.75 kilometre long circuit, a total distance of 23.3 kilometres. Zanardi continued where he had finished at the previous world championships held in Switzerland two years ago - with winning ways. He completed the distance in 37:47.96 minutes and was 2.6 seconds faster than his rival and friend, second-placed Tim de Vries (NED). In doing so, Zanardi secured his fourth consecutive world title in the discipline.

“I am very proud of this result and I want to thank everybody in my team, including my wife Daniela, who contributed to it,” said Zanardi. “It was a very long race, pretty technical, and the interpretation of the unfolding race was the key to finishing with a smile on my face. On the first lap I was fourth, then second on lap two, and on lap three I was ahead. I guess I not only had what it took to win the gold medal but I also used it in the best possible way.”



“When you win by only two seconds after over 37 minutes of competition you have to admit that you were not stronger than the guy who finished second but that you were just a little luckier,” Zanardi continued. “But I was certainly as strong as my rivals and, as I am approaching the age of 51, I think it is quite remarkable, given that some of these guys are in their mid-twenties. So I am proud of it and I take it.”

On Saturday (2<sup>nd</sup> September) Zanardi will compete in the 60.7 kilometre individual road race and on Sunday (3<sup>rd</sup> September) the team-relay is scheduled for him and the Italian national team. Zanardi is also the reigning world champion in both of these disciplines.

**Media Contact.**

BMW Sports Communications  
Dr. Robert Hohenauer  
Phone: +49 (0)151 – 601 45720  
Email: [robert.hohenauer@bmw.de](mailto:robert.hohenauer@bmw.de)

**Media Website.**

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