



MINI CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Media information

31 May 2022

BRAVE EFFORT.



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At the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring, the Bulldog Racing MINI John Cooper Works defied all odds for 40 laps. The fans were thrilled by the fighting effort and the red racer quickly became a favourite with the spectators.

Munich/Nürburg. The Formula 1 Grand Prix of Monaco has a higher glamour factor. There are more high-tech cars at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. But no motorsport event exudes such fascination as the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring. This is where full professionals compete with real amateurs, where high-tech racing cars meet production vehicles. This is precisely what makes the wild chase through the “green hell” so appealing. Here, racing is still celebrated in its most original form. On the legendary Nordschleife of the Nürburgring, thrilling wheel-to-wheel duels and vivid motorsport are guaranteed. This is exactly why fans flock to the cathedral of German motorsport.

A total of 230,000 race aficionados provided the appropriate setting for the 50th edition of the 24 Hours of Nürburgring. In the middle of it all was the bright red MINI John Cooper Works from Bulldog Racing, which became a real crowd favourite after just a few laps and was showered with applause at every turn.

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And this despite the fact that the conditions were anything but ideal for the MINI. While the big teams prepared for the race with immense commitment of man and material, Bulldog Racing lifted the MINI JCW almost spontaneously out of the baptismal font. Considering it was only in September last year that the green light was given for the “24-hour race” project, it is clear that not everything is going to run smoothly. That’s why the team had to send the MINI JCW onto the 25.378 kilometre circuit with significantly reduced power due to a technical problem during the first two qualifying sessions. On Friday night, the tireless efforts of the mechanics paid off as they found the defect and fixed it immediately. The result: the MINI burned a personal best time into the Eifel asphalt during the one-hour Friday session despite an unfortunate Code 60 zone, where the cars are slowed down to 60 km/h. More importantly, the Bulldog team saw smiling faces everywhere. The car worked and the drivers praised the neutral handling. A guarantee for fast lap times on the Nordschleife.



“The car is really great to drive and a lot of fun. In a hectic race like this, it is important to concentrate on the track and the competitors and to be able to rely on your car,” Markus Fischer was pleased to say.

The eagerly awaited showdown began at 4 p.m. on Saturday. One of the 138 cars that took up the challenge “24 hours through the green hell” was the Bulldog Racing MINI John Cooper Works with starting number 112, which started in the SP3T class.



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Markus Fischer drove the first stint and was immediately involved in tense fights for positions, but quickly found his rhythm and started the race very well.

Whereas the drivers used to feel their way around first, the 24 hour race has now developed into a sprint race in which every hundredth of a second is fought for from the very start with a knife between the teeth. Accordingly, the action was hectic and the first accidents were not long in coming; Markus Fischer had to avoid several skirmishes with the Bulldog Racing MINI already on the first lap and was slightly hit on one occasion. After eight laps, Danny Brink took over the wheel and successfully continued the race to catch up, overtaking one competitor after the other. When Uwe Krumscheid got behind the wheel after 16 laps, the Bulldog Racing MINI had already made up 21 positions in the overall standings and was fighting for fifth place in the strong SP3T class. A top performance that showed that the concept of the car is absolutely competitive even under the toughest conditions.

The racing continued to be extremely restless and hectic. The consequence was a veritable orgy of accidents and the resulting Code 60 zones demanded the utmost concentration from the drivers and made it difficult for them to find a rhythm. Then, the inevitable happened: on the 19th race lap, Uwe Krumscheid was hit on the driver's side for the second time during an overtaking maneuver. At first, the MINI was still able to continue, but about half a lap later, the red racer was doomed by the late effects of the "enemy contact". In the Kallenhard section, it stopped at the crash barrier.

The car was towed away and brought back to the paddock, which took over an hour due to the sheer number of accidents. Immediately, the repair work began, because giving up was not an option for the Bulldog Racing Team. With impressive teamwork, the work was completed after only 90 minutes and Jens Dralle steered the MINI back onto the track.

In the dark, conditions were extremely tricky as the many accidents had left their mark and the track was extremely dirty. A sharp carbon part can cause massive damage to a tyre. Exactly this fate befell the John Cooper Works and Jens Dralle had to complete almost an entire lap of the Nordschleife with a flat tyre. This mishap set the Bulldog Racing MINI back again, but the team continued to fight bravely. This did not go unnoticed: the fan base of the red racer grew steadily and so did the mood of celebration. At the well-known sections of the track, the fans turned night into day with light installations, lasers and fireworks. As soon as the MINI appeared, applause and cheers erupted.

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The incredible support inspired Markus Fischer, who promptly set a new team best time despite the extensive repair work just a few hours earlier. But the joy lasted only until lap 40, when the MINI was hit once again by a competitor in the following stint, again on the driver's side already battered from the second collision. The impact and subsequent recovery of the car caused extensive damage. In the pits, it was quickly clear that this new accident made it impossible to continue in a safe way. The team's unanimous decision followed immediately: the Bulldog Racing MINI John Cooper Works was parked for good.

Despite the disappointing result, the conclusion was positive. "The MINI John Cooper Works proved to be absolutely competitive even under the toughest racing conditions, especially when you consider that we only started this project nine months ago. My compliments and thanks go above all to the entire team, who mastered all tricky situations in a remarkable way," team boss Friedhelm Thelen sums up.

The car's next appearance will during the Goodwood Festival of Speed in England.



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Fuel consumption, CO₂ emission figures and power consumption were measured using the methods required according to Regulation VO (EC) 2007/715 as amended. They refer to vehicles on the German automotive market. For ranges, the NEDC figures take into account differences in the selected wheel and tyre size, while the WLTP figures take into account the effects of any optional equipment.

All figures have already been calculated based on the new WLTP test cycle. NEDC figures listed have been adjusted to the NEDC measurement method where applicable. WLTP values are used as a basis for the assessment of taxes and other vehicle-related duties which are (also) based on CO₂ emissions and, where applicable, for the purposes of vehicle-specific subsidies. Further information on the WLTP and NEDC measurement procedures is also available at www.bmw.de/wltp.

For further details of the official fuel consumption figures and official specific CO₂ emissions of new cars, please refer to the "Manual on the fuel consumption, CO₂ emissions and power consumption of new cars", available at sales outlets free of charge, from Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH (DAT), Hellmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen and at <https://www.dat.de/co2/>.

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The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2021, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million automobiles and more than 194.000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2020 was € 5,222 billion on revenues amounting to € 98,990 billion. As of 31 December 2020, the BMW Group had a workforce of 120,726 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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