

Review of the 2008 12H Hungary

(27 September 2008) The Schubert Motorsport BMW Z4 M Coupe has won the inaugural 12 Hours of Hungary which is part of the Toyo Tires 24H Series at the hillside circuit outside of Budapest. The race may have been 12 hours long by the clock, but it was far more of a sprint than an endurance event. The BMW spent many hours battling with the Jetalliance Porsche 996 RSR. They were seldom more than a lap or two apart, with several on track passes for the lead between them.

The winning team consisted of Stian Sorlie from Norway, plus Claudia Hürtgen and Jörg Viebahn from Germany. The race would be decided upon a combination of expert driving, deft pit work, and as with any classic duel—the question of who would blink first. The answer to that question didn't come until late in the race. Well into the darkness the Porsche had a broken brake disc and then later stalled on course with a broken driveshaft. This dropped them to third behind an excellent second place for another Porsche, that of the Swedish based team of Levin Racing with drivers Erik Behrens, Magnus Ohman, Lars Stugemo, and Anders Levin. They overcame throttle problems encountered early on.

The long scrap between the Schubert BMW and the Jetalliance Porsche also featured a fine duel pitting two stars of the day, Claudia Hürtgen and Ryan Sharp. The former showed why she is one of the fastest women racing in the world today. She reset the race's fastest lap several times, but then as the sun was setting Ryan Sharp in the Jetalliance entry gave chase. He set the fast lap chasing down and passing the BMW, although the lead would not hold. Ryan Sharp partnered the Porsche with owner Lukas Lichtner-Hoyer and Vitus Eckert.

One of the closest fought battles in the race was for D1 honors, the class for diesel-powered cars. The eventual winner was the No. 99 BMW 120D, another entry from Schubert Motorsport. They rose to fourth place overall at the end thanks in part to the D1 contest and also because faster cars were delayed. The team of Peter Posavac, Csaba Walter, and Jacob Tackmann-Thomson handled the D1 winning car and overcame a spirited challenge from second place finishers in the class the No. 88 Seat Leon Supercopa of Procar Motorsport. This was one of several all-Hungarian teams consisting of five regular Seat racers Brigitta Nagy, Tibor Nagy, Viktor Csuti, Norbert Kiss and Lászlo

Csuti. Third in D1 after a very steady run, was the quicker of two Marcos Racing International entered BMW 120Ds.

The SP2 class for specialized GT and prototype cars was won by the Brokernet Silver Sting, the very exotic Porsche-powered super car built here in Hungary. Drivers István Rácz and Attila Bárta, along with team owner Kálmán Bodis, rose as high as fourth overall during the middle of the race, but were faced with a litany of gearbox related issues. Indeed, the SP2 class was the scene of much anguish. The next car in the category was the No. 35 Proex Motorsport Ferrari F430, that had a spin at the start, fought back, then lost time with a broken clutch and ended with a brief fire in the refueling area.

Another car in the SP2 class, the No. 888 Audi R8, provided perhaps the most heartfelt story in the race. It was one of the fastest cars in practice and qualifying, but broke both its clutch and engine during the race morning warm-up. The team spent the first 9-1/2 hours of the race replacing the motor with a spare and emerged from the garage well into the night. Met with the cheers of the onlookers, the Audi turned in some of the fastest times in the late stages of the race.

The race also included the A2 class for smaller-engined cars. It was won by another national squad, the Endurance Club Hungary entered Ford Fiesta ST. Drivers were István Gáspár, László Fekete, Gustáv Herter, and Béla Nyitray. They defeated an unusual Suzuki Swift that uses a chain-driven Hayabusa motorcycle engine.

The 1st 12 Hours of Hungary concludes this season's TOYO TIRES 24H Series of endurance events. The concept continues in only a few months time with the 4th TOYO TIRES 24H Dubai, to be held on 9-10 January 2009. That will be followed by another first time event, the 24 Hours of Dakar, to be held in Senegal on 20-22 February 2009.

Overall result:

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| 1. Schubert Motorsport 1 | BMW Z4 M Coupe | class A6 |
| 2. Levin Motorsport Sweden | Porsche 996 RSR | class A6 |
| 3. Jetalliance Racing | Porsche 996 RSR | class A6 |

Other Class Winners:

SP2	Bovi Motorsport	Brokernet Silver Sting
D1	Schubert Motorsport 2	BMW 120D
A2	Endurance Club Hungary	Ford Fiesta ST