

# THILENIUS GROUP

## Mechanical Issues Sideline THILENIUS GROUP in DMV 250 Meilen Rennen

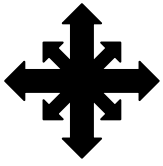


Hey! I returned to Germany October 8 for the **DMV 250 Meilen Rennen**, round nine of the Langstrecken Meisterschaft Nurburgring (VLN). Andrew Novich, in his first race on the Nordschleife, joined me in the **Rotek Racing Children's Tumor Foundation BMW Z4**. A rear wheel bearing failure early in the four-hour race forced us to pit for extended repairs. Despite taking the checkered flag, we were unable to log enough laps to classify as a finisher.

Over the past year, I have been working with **Rotek Racing** to bring more drivers from North America to the Nurburgring. I raced with Andrew as a teammate and competitor for many years and knew he would love the Nordschleife. I was thrilled when **Rotek** offered me the chance to race with Andrew and get back into the V5 class **BMW Z4** I drove in the 24 hour in May.

Practice day dawned clear, but the weather report was not encouraging. By the time Andrew and I completed registration, rain had started to come down in earnest. I took to the track first. The combination of temperatures around 40°F, a wet track and cold tires created very sketchy conditions. It took nearly two full laps before a dry line started to develop and I was able to build some heat in the tires. Andrew took over and finished the practice session logging his first laps in the **Rotek Z4**.

Rain continued overnight and into qualifying on Saturday morning. We responded to the conditions by softening our **JRZ** dampers and installing a new set of **Yokohama** rain



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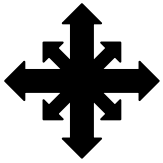
tires. Andrew recorded 12:01.457 on his second lap to place the **Rotek Racing Children's Tumor Foundation BMW Z4** 7<sup>th</sup> in class V5. I ran three laps, but was unable to better Andrew's time, struggling with a lack of rear grip in the wet conditions. Following qualifying, the crew found a broken front stabilizer bar link that definitely would have contributed to a lack of rear grip. With a repaired suspension, I was confident we would be much more competitive in the race Saturday afternoon.



While the **Rotek Racing** crew prepared the car for the start of the race, I received a summons to the race steward's office. I racked my brain... Did I miss a yellow flag or not respond to a blue flag? Was I too fast in the pit lane? I was at a loss to explain the summons. Upon appearing at the steward's office, I discovered I was randomly selected for a drug test. Relieved, I passed the drug test with flying colors and headed back to finish my preparations for the race. This was my first drug test. I am glad the organizers are taking the FIA drug policy seriously.

The track was wet when Andrew took rolled out on the pace lap, but it appeared to be drying. Changing to dry tires too early or too late and we would lose time with the wrong tires for the conditions. Some of our competitors headed to the pit lane at the drop of the green flag, but this proved to be a poor decision with many cars sliding off track. We knew a majority of the remaining cars would pit at the end of the first lap meaning over 100 cars would be in the pit lane, so we chose to stay out until end of the second lap. Our **Yokohama** rain tires held up brilliantly in the mixed conditions

and Andrew moved us up to P4 in class, setting personal bests sector after sector. The timing of our stop was perfect. The **Rotek** crew quickly re-fueled the **Z4** and installed dry weather tires to keep us in contention for a podium finish.



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Unfortunately, on the second lap following our pit stop, Andrew reported a problem with the suspension. Andrew was able to limp the **Rotek Z4** back to the pits where the crew quickly diagnosed the left rear wheel bearing had failed, damaging the ABS wiring in the process. Replacing a rear wheel bearing in the **Z4** is not easy, or quick. Repairs took over an hour.

Andrew returned to the track to complete his stint before turning the car over to me to take to the checkered flag. I knew there was little chance I could improve our position, but I thought I could log enough laps to classify as a finisher. I pushed hard and recorded my all-time fastest lap in the **Rotek Z4**, a 9:44.554. Scattered rain showers returned over the last three laps, but I was able to hold on to finish. Despite my best efforts, we did not have enough laps in the books to classify as a finisher.



Clearly, I am disappointed with the result. Andrew and the **Rotek Racing** crew deserved a much better finish. However, I am still pleased with my pace and for the support **THILENIUS GROUP** provides to **Children's Tumor Foundation** and their goal to end NF. If you would like to contribute to **Children's Tumor Foundation**, please visit my donation page at <http://join.ctf.org/Thilenius> or for more information visit <http://www.ctf.org/> or [www.racing4research.org](http://www.racing4research.org).



## About THILENIUS GROUP

THILENIUS GROUP, LLC based in California provides vehicle dynamics engineering, motorsports and sports marketing services. With over 30 years experience engineering vehicle dynamics at the OEM level, road racing motorsports and sports marketing, THILENIUS GROUP can help you reach your goals. Information about THILENIUS GROUP services is available at [www.thileniusgroup.com](http://www.thileniusgroup.com). Latest updates available on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThileniusGroup](https://www.facebook.com/ThileniusGroup) and Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ThileniusGroup>.