Spectacular, thrilling, surprising – 25 facts about Manthey-Racing

06/06/2021 Record-winner at the Nürburgring-Nordschleife 24-hour race, successful operations team for Porsche Motorsport in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC), reputable supplier of performance kits for road cars: the name Manthey stands for top performance on the race track and road.

The company, based in Meuspath in Germany's Eifel region, celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. Here are 25 interesting, spectacular and at times unexpected facts about Manthey-Racing:

3,000 metres between home and hell
Aside from the close sporting and emotional ties between the successful Manthey-Racing squad and the Nürburgring, the team headquarters on the Meuspath industrial estate lies just 3,000 metres as the crow flies from the start-finish line of the legendary racetrack in Germany's mountainous Eifel region.

An idea for the motorsport world
Over the course of his long and illustrious career, Olaf Manthey has become known around the world – not only for his successes and his distinctive handlebar moustache but also for his innovative ideas. In 1978, at what was only his third outing as a rookie driver, he surprised his rivals with tyre-warmers at the Trier hillclimb event and, much to their astonishment, promptly left them in his dust.

At Le Mans with stars and stripes
In 1999, Manthey-Racing claimed the GT class victory at the Le Mans 24 Hours with the Porsche 911 GT3 R and drivers Uwe Alzen, Patrick Huisman and Luca Riccitelli. At the same time, the German customer squad also ran an identical car entered by Champion Racing with drivers Müller/Wollek/Mayländer. The American Manthey Porsche finished second in its class – a "one-two in disguise".

Super in the Supercup
Manthey-Racing quickly advanced in the Porsche Supercup. In its first year, the fledgling squad achieved fourth place. From 1997 to 2000, the team took home the championship title four times in a row, all with the Dutchman Patrick Huisman at the wheel of the Cup-911. Manthey-Racing not only set sporting standards – the team's smart uniforms and upmarket hospitality inspired the other squads to follow suit.

April Fools' Day to begin a wonderful story
On 1 April, 2000, Manthey-Racing moved into a brand-new company building in Meuspath. "The new location should enable us to achieve great success over many years," said Olaf Manthey at the time. Although his announcement was said in fun, it turned out to be prophetic: the company's successes

meant that the thriving team had outgrown the space by 2006, resulting in the first expansion of the site.

The industrious seven

"I stood in the new workshop and thought: I hope this goes well..." says company founder Olaf Manthey as he remembers the day Manthey-Racing moved into its first home. It began with seven vehicle hoists and three permanent employees but after several expansions around 200 people now work for the prosperous company.

The beginning of a special relationship

Timo Bernhard is one of the most successful drivers in the history of the Nürburgring 24-hour race – the long-standing works driver and Porsche Brand Ambassador has won five times at the wheel of Manthey-Racing's cars. Bernhard's first outing for the squad was on 12 April, 2003, when the then 22-year-old won his class at the VLN event in the cockpit of a 911 GT MR Turbo that he shared with Lucas Luhr and Wilhelm Kern.

250 miles to retirement

On 8 October, 2005, Olaf Manthey contested his last event as a professional racer. The Bonn-born driver with the famous moustache joined forces with Timo Bernhard in the 911 GT3 MR at the DMV 250-mile race on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife and bid his active racing career farewell in fitting style: with a win!

Nordschleife heavyweights: Frikadelli and Manthey

The unforgettable Sabine Schmitz and Klaus Abbelen, the founders of Frikadelli-Racing, also competed under the banner of Manthey-Racing as part of their joint racing activities on the Nordschleife. During the 2007 VLN season, the meat producer and his partner notched up notable successes in the endurance racing series at the wheel of the Porsche 911 GT3.

Victory for the rolling laboratory

28 May, 2011: Marco Holzer, Richard Lietz and Patrick Long pushed the development test drives of the Porsche 911 GT3 R Hybrid to the extreme during round four of the VLN. The trio beat all fully-developed GT3 vehicles to clinch a sensational win. To date, this is the first and only victory for a hybrid car on the Nordschleife.

You have mail: a message from Mama Raeder

A new door opened for Raeder Motorsport for the 2010 season. On behalf of Audi, two front-wheel drive TT cars were showcased at the Nordschleife and the project was a huge success: overall victory in the six-hour race! Olaf Manthey was the first to offer congratulations. Then, something unusual happened: Mama Raeder wrote to thank him, saying how much his praise meant to her sons. Her heartfelt words developed into a strong bond that eventually led to the merger of Manthey-Racing and Raeder Motorsport.

For Porsche, the glass is a little more than half full

After the merger of Manthey-Racing and Raeder Motorsport in 2013, Porsche AG acquired a 51 per cent stake in the Meuspath team. Since then, the sports car manufacturer from Stuttgart has been running its World Endurance Championship operations, among others, through its majority stake in Manthey-Racing.

Two cheers for Raeder
Olaf Manthey retired from the day-to-day business of his company in 2015. "I no longer want to travel around the world for motor racing," he said, in the hope of a well-deserved retirement as he handed the reins to Nicolas and Martin Raeder. "These two have impressed me and have shown my wife Renate and me the greatest respect," he said of his successors, who are now leading the company into the second quarter of a century.

Daytona: unfinished business
Porsche racing cars in the hands of Manthey-Racing are a force to be reckoned with at 24-hour races – the many victories at the Nürburgring and Le Mans speak for themselves. The one big exception is the 24 Hours of Daytona: after three attempts at the endurance classic in Florida, Manthey-Racing's cars have retired early every time.

The Porsche icon plus one
912 is the highest starting number with which a Porsche 911 GT3 R fielded by Manthey-Racing has taken up the Nürburgring 24-hour race. At 50 per cent, the 912's win rate is impressive. In 2016, the 'sister of the Grello' retired after 100 laps; in 2018 the car – driven by Tandy/Makowiecki/Lietz/Pilet – clinched the sixth outright victory for the record-holders from Meuspath.

Six is sexy
Six victories have made Manthey-Racing the most successful team at the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife and the streak of four outright wins between 2006 and 2009 is likely to remain a record for eternity. In 2011 and 2018, a Porsche race car campaigned by Manthey-Racing again outpaced the entire competition.

A perfect dance on the world championship stage
In 2013, shortly after the merger with Raeder Motorsport, the team took responsibility for Porsche Motorsport's GTE-Pro factory campaign in the WEC. In the first season, Manthey-Racing's two 911 RSR cars scored a one-two result at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. In 2018, the team repeated the feat and pocketed all world championship titles in the GTE-Pro class at the end of the season.

Well evolved: no one is faster
On 25 October, 2018, Porsche's experienced development driver Lars Kern turned a 20.8-kilometre lap of the Nordschleife at the wheel of the 911 GT2 RS MR in 6:40.3 minutes. The 700-hp vehicle – modified by Manthey-Racing and prepared for its mission through the 'Green Hell' – became the fastest road-going sports car on the legendary racetrack in the Eifel.

The champions with the number one

The winner has the honour of competing with the lowest starting number. As reigning champions, Manthey-Racing tackled the Nürburgring 24-hour race five times with the number one on its doors: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2019. The year 2012 was the only exception. After the victory of Lieb/Luhr/Bernhard/Dumas in the previous year's race, the Manthey-run Porsche 911 GT3 R competed with the numbers 10 and 11.

Facebook search

11 October, 2019: practice for the penultimate round of the VLN. The famous 'Grello' fielded by Manthey-Racing crashed into the barriers at the Nordschleife and lost several parts of its body. The marshals at the side of the track collected the distinctive yellow and green parts and placed them behind the guardrail for the team to pick up later but when Manthey-Racing went out to collect the debris, the parts had vanished. Someone had beaten them to it. The team appealed to the public with a post on Facebook, revealing that the components were crucial for an insurance claim. Lo and behold, a few days later, the bits and pieces reappeared. For the team, it was the most successful Facebook post of the year – also in terms of generated traffic.

Leadership modelling: do as I do

The top management at Manthey-Racing know what they're talking about: the company founder Olaf Manthey can look back on 30 overall wins in the VLN (now the NLS), while Nicolas Raeder contested the series nine times for Raeder Motorsport. With his brother Martin, he prepared cars that yielded Raeder Motorsport six outright victories.

Manthey fresh and new: racing remains at the core

As Manthey-Racing GmbH celebrates its 25th anniversary, the thriving enterprise is celebrating with a rebranding. While the familiar black, red and white company colours will remain the same, the logo now has a new and dynamic look. The Manthey-Racing brand is now simply Manthey – the company, however, continues to remain true to motor racing.

Fifty is just the beginning

Manthey-Racing has notched up a total of 54 overall victories in the NLS (formerly VLN) over the past quarter of a century. This makes the outfit from Meuspath the most successful team by far in the record book of the popular endurance series. Porsche tops the list of the most successful brands with

Petrol in the veins, diesel on the road

Motor racing runs deep in the veins of the Manthey-Racing crew. This total devotion is evident, wherever they compete in the world. But while the employees have petrol in their veins, there is diesel in the street address: Manthey-Racing's headquarters is on Rudolf-Diesel-Straße in Meuspath.

Where there's smoke there's steam

Nürburgring 24-hour race, 2008: Manthey-Racing claimed its third straight overall victory and Olaf Manthey's signature moustache fell victim – it was cut off during the celebrations. However, the race started with a nail-biting situation: in the opening lap, plumes of smoke rose from the eventual winning car and it quickly returned to the pits. The engineers gave the all-clear: it was only steam. Over the 24

hours, the squad turned a two-lap deficit into a three-lap lead over the hottest pursuers.

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Title: 911 GT3, 2007, Porsche AG
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Title: Olaf Manthey, 2021, Porsche AG
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Title: Poster, 2009, Porsche AG
Subline: A race poster for the 24 Hours of Nürburgring in 2009

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Title: 911 GT3 R, 24 hour race, Nürburgring, Porsche AG
Subline: 911 GT3 R

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Title: Nicolas and Martin Raeder, managing directors and co-owners of Manthey-Racing, 2021, Porsche AG
Subline: Nicolas and Martin Raeder, managing directors and co-owners of Manthey-Racing

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