

Le Mans: Nissan ZEOD praised for run on electric power

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Racing at Le Mans is all about pushing technology limits and much attention was paid this year on the Nissan zero-emissions hybrid electric racer called ZEOD (Zero Emissions On Demand) RC. Its team was hoping it would make a true name for itself in performance. This is the hybrid electric prototype racer with innovative design. The good news is that the ZEOD indeed made quite a name for itself in an earlier run

before a setback later on. The car has a 1.5-liter, 40 kilogram, 400 horsepower, three-cylinder engine and a pair of 110kW 40,000 rpm electric motors. The ZEOD with driver Satoshi Motoyama at the wheel realized its goal of reaching 300km/h (186 mph) with pure electric power on Le Mans' Mulsanne Straight, setting a record as the fastest electric-powered entry.

"They say that life is a rollercoaster, but certainly motorsport takes this to the next level. Just today we've had massive highs followed by a temporary low," said Darren Cox, Global Head of Brand, Marketing & Sales, NISMO, in a Saturday statement from Nissan. What was he referring to? The long and the short of the ZEOD story in this year's Le Mans was that the Nissan ZEOD RC completed the all-electric Le Mans lap but had to retire shortly thereafter, in a situation which Nissan itself described as "new tech" being halted by an "old tech" issue.

In a press release on Saturday, headlined, "Nissan ZEOD RC heroic electric lap followed by heartbreak," Darren Cox, global head of brand, marketing & sales, NISMO said, "We were very confident in starting the race and earlier in the week we had already exceeded 300 km/h. We were looking forward to doing some more electric laps throughout the race but a traditional part of a gearbox broke. It is a real shame because we were really looking forward to showcasing the EV technology in the race. It has been an amazing experience for everyone that has been involved." ZEOD is also of engineering interest because of its lack of mirrors, instead using a rear-facing camera that projects to a screen, combined with a radar system using dots and arrows on a display screen. The symbols change color and size depending on approaching cars and how fast they are going.

Le Mans-watchers in the press gave Nissan credit for having showcased the ZEOD. They acknowledged its impressive advance despite the turn of events. As The Telegraph said on Sunday, "Nissan's ZEOD didn't go

far in the race, but the problem that stopped it in the first half hour, ironically, was with its very [conventional](#) gearbox, a simple off-the-shelf piece of a complex jigsaw that in all other aspects was anything but unambitious."

Similarly, Jo Borrás of Gas2 said, "there's one thing about the ZEOD RC's performance at Le Mans 2014 that no one will be able to talk down: it was the first car to complete a full lap of the Circuit de la Sarthe on electric power, and the first battery powered car to hit 300 km/h on the Mulsanne [Straight](#)."

More information: * [nissannews.com/en-US/nissan/us ... lloed-by-heartbreak](#)

* [www.themotorreport.com.au/5913 ... 00kmh-and-no-mirrors](#)

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