

KIMBALL PROVES HIMSELF IN PAU

Formula 3 Euro Series racer Charlie Kimball made a guest appearance in the 66th Pau Grand Prix, a round of the British Formula 3 Championship this past weekend June 3-5, at the street circuit of Pau in the south of France. His race results of fourth and sixth were very impressive considering that the tricky circuit claimed up to seven crashed cars every session. The finishing order once again demonstrated the race-craft the young Californian has developed as he started the two races from 10th and 8th places respectively. He took advantage of typical street circuit carnage and made competitive passes to improve his order in both races.

Practice did not go exactly to plan as Kimball made an error in the first session on Friday which resulted in a bent car and a loss of track time. For his first visit to a circuit as unique as Pau, track time and circuit knowledge is key which meant that he was slightly on the back foot going into qualifying. However, he did catch up, improving his time every lap through out the first qualifying session to place him 10th on the grid for the first race. His sector times showed his true pace to be within the top 7 of the field. The second qualifying session was another tricky affair - 27 cars on a 2.7km track meant a significant amount of traffic. The Signature driver had put a time good enough for fifth on the grid when on another hot lap, he pushed slightly too hard into the last chicane and ran slightly wide. While recovering from the 'moment' another driver collided with Kimball, ending the session for both drivers. After the session resumed, the circuit conditions improved and other drivers were able to put in more flying laps, pushing Kimball down the grid to 8th. He spoke about qualifying, "I am still making up for missing most of the session on Friday, but I have a lot more speed than my qualifying showed. Now I will just have to avoid the wrecks and pass when I can."

Race 1 started well for Kimball as he rocketed away from the line and into 8th by the end of the first lap. After five laps behind the safety car to clean up a start line crash, Kimball then passed for 7th and was soon promoted to 6th as his former teammate Christian Bakkerrud found the barriers through the tricky Foch Monument curve. Finally with only 2 laps to go, an incident between the American's teammate Guillame Moreau and another driver promoted Kimball to 5th where he finished. Then 3 hours after the finish of the race, the stewards handed Moreau a penalty for the contact which promoted Kimball to 4th, his best result of the year.

Kimball was enthused about the race and said, "That was so much fun! As soon as I passed Salvador Duran for 7th, I closed the 3 second gap in front of me within two laps. We have so much speed in the car that hopefully I will be able to move up as many places in tomorrow's race."

Race 2 saw more action for Kimball. He had made another impressive start from 8th and was running 6th on the first lap when the red flags came out for a stranded car at the hairpin. This meant the race was restarted completely and while the 21-year-old made another good start, all the other drivers improved theirs, so he only made up one spot from his starting grid position. Then after two laps he made an incredible pass on Autosport Award winner Oliver Jarvis into the hairpin which put him into 6th. He held station until the checkered flag despite pressuring Maro Engel for the remainder of the race.

"I made such a good start on the first start I knew I could have finished at least 5th," Kimball said. "After the restart, I made a really bold pass on Ollie and caught the next train of cars in less than a lap, but since we were so close, it was impossible to pass. I absolutely loved racing here through the streets and can't wait to do it again!"

Kimball will now return to California for a week of well earned rest. After the break, he will be back in Europe testing before the resumption of the Euro Series July 1-2 at the Brands Hatch circuit in England.

For more information please visit www.CharlieKimball.com or email Charlie@CharlieKimball.com.