

Charlie *Kimball*

Taking the American Dream to Formula One

KIMBALL SECOND IN FORMULA 3 EURO SERIES OPENER

Charlie Kimball began his 2008 Formula 3 Euro Series campaign with a great second place at Hockenheim in Germany this past weekend, April 10-13, 2008. He qualified his Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes in 7th in very tricky wet conditions on Saturday morning. After the top-8 finishers from Saturday's Race 1 were inverted to set the grid for Race 2, Kimball once again started 7th. However underestimating the grip available off the start line, Kimball stalled as the lights went out and was then hit by two back markers, ending his race before it began. Kimball's Saturday result still leaves him third in the Championship table only 2 points out of the lead.

The race weekend began well when Kimball set the third fastest time in Thursday's wet to drying test session. Prema's competitiveness was clearly evident as all three team cars were in the top 5 in the session. Friday's Free Practice was delayed by more than two hours due to heavy fog and Kimball struggled to set a competitive lap time due to multiple on-track incidents on his new tire run. As the 29-car field prepared for qualifying on Friday afternoon, torrential rain caused the stewards to postpone Qualifying until Saturday morning. Saturday morning dawned with clearing skies and warmer temperatures but the circuit was still thoroughly wet from the previous night's rains. Running the shortened 25-minute session on wet tires, Kimball continuously improved his laptime and crossed the line on the final lap setting the 7th fastest time.

"That was a very difficult session because the track was changing corner by corner," Kimball said. "There was the option to change to dry tires, but it was too big a risk. In conditions as tough as those, I am very pleased with 7th and know I can have a great race."

Race 1 saw the Californian make an amazing start, passing Christian Vietoris to take 6th position before the first corner. Then he made another bold pass around the outside of ART driver Jon Lancaster as the pair headed into the hairpin. The American began chasing down the leading four cars when a Safety Car was deployed after Lancaster suffered a serious accident on lap 9. As the field accelerated for the restart, race leader Nico Hulkenberg, pulled off the circuit with an apparent engine problem. Kimball did not miss a beat and made a great restart, sticking close to both Edoardo Mortara and Jules Bianchi. As the trio approached the hairpin three abreast, Kimball avoided an out of control Mortara who slid into Bianchi. Kimball nipped to the inside and passed both cars, exiting the corner in 2nd place. He proceeded to set fast lap after fast lap while chasing the leader, eventually taking the checkered flag only 1.4 seconds behind the leader.

"That was so much fun!" exclaimed Kimball. "I had a good start and then from there picked off places when I could. I knew from Thursday that we were very fast in dry conditions- all I had to do was keep my nose clean and drive intelligently. It is great to repay all the team's hard work over the winter with a podium in the first race."



Charlie *Kimball*

Taking the American Dream to Formula One

Race 2 was not to be a repeat of Kimball's charge from 7th to 2nd. As the lights went out, Kimball underestimated the amount of grip from the warm tires and rubbered track and he stalled his Mercedes engine. There were a few close calls as other drivers avoided the stationary car until Jens Klingmann, from 25th on the grid, missing the multiple waved yellow flags and not looking ahead, ran straight into the back of Kimball's car. The significant impact destroyed the right rear corner of Kimball's car and ended his race.

Kimball explained what happened, "I made a mistake – I let the clutch out a little too aggressively and rather than getting a fantastic start, I didn't go anywhere. As for the crash, I am not sure what Klingmann was doing, but it was definitely not watching where he was going!"

Kimball's results are all the more impressive because in addition to the usual competitive pressures of any season opener, Kimball faced the added challenge of competing as a Diabetic driver for the first time. Since his diagnosis in October of 2007, Kimball has been working with a team of diabetic specialists to develop a physical, nutritional and medical program to manage his condition. Kimball is competing with cutting edge technology and uses a constant blood glucose monitor while in the race car to continually track his glucose levels. This technology, along with his determination and dedication, means Kimball is in peak physical condition and competes with no ill effects.

Kimball will now continue to train in preparation for Rounds 3 and 4 of the 2008 Formula 3 Euro Series to be held at the Italian circuit of Mugello, just outside of Florence, May 2-4, 2008.

About Charlie Kimball:

Charlie Kimball is a successful young American racing driver forging a career in the highly competitive world of open wheel racing. He has spent the last few years racing in some of the most competitive racing categories in the world including British Formula 3, Formula 3 Euroseries and the World Series by Renault. The 2009 season sees Kimball returning to the United States as he challenges for the title in the Firestone Indy Lights Championship.

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

