

Charlie *Kimball*

Taking the American Dream to Formula One

KIMBALL STRUGGLES UNDER TUSCAN SUN

Charlie Kimball struggled during the second round of the F3 Euro Series Championship held this past weekend, May 2nd through 4th, at Mugello in Italy. The American spent the test sessions on Thursday and Friday learning the new circuit but was unable to convert competitive testing times into a good qualifying session and he started Race 1 from 15th on the grid. Kimball made a good start to move up to 13th but ultimately a short off track excursion meant the Prema driver finished in 17th. In Race 2, Kimball made another good start however in turn 3 he was punted into the gravel as the field poured through the narrow circuit. Kimball finished the weekend without scoring any championship points however remains tied for 7th in the championship.

Open testing at the fast Mugello circuit started with a tricky wet to drying session which made it difficult for the young American to learn the new circuit and feel the balance of the car. Throughout the day, he worked with the Prema Powerteam to develop the car in preparation for the qualifying session on Friday. In the hot and dry session, Kimball struggled with tire pressure meaning he was only able to complete the 16th fastest time of the afternoon. After grid penalties from Hockenheim were assessed Kimball moved up one place to start Race 1 from 15th on the grid.

“Before qualifying, we made a change to the car to try and make the tires work better in the warmer temperatures,” remarked Kimball after qualifying. “But it didn’t work at all. It only succeeded in making the car very uncomfortable to drive and difficult to be consistent. I am confident we can fix it for the race though.”

Race 1 saw Kimball rocket off the start line, making the best start the team has seen to date. He quickly moved up to 13th and was chasing down 12th when a small mistake cost him several places. After closing on Erik Janis, Kimball struggled with massive under steer and went through the gravel trap rejoining the field down in 18th. He managed to pick up one more place while struggling with the car balance and finished the race in 17th.

“The car was largely unbalanced and I struggled with under steer the whole race.” Said Kimball after the race, “I went off because as I closed up to the back of Erik Janis, the under steer got a lot worse and I couldn’t make the corner. We have some good ideas how to make it better for tomorrow.”

Race 2 saw Kimball start from 17th, where he finished Race 1. The Californian driver again made a good start and was challenging for 14th position as the field poured through the first complex. Kimball moved to the outside for Turn 1, setting up for Turn 2 but got squeezed to the outside for Turn 3. Kimball was holding the position when Rodolfo Gonzalez ran squarely into Kimball’s right rear, vaulting him into the air and into the gravel trap. Although he missed the wall, Kimball’s car was beached in the gravel and his race finished on the spot.



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After the race Kimball commented, "That was a fitting end to a very frustrating weekend. I had to make as many positions as possible on the start and got boxed out to the outside for turn 3- the contact was still avoidable but these things happen in the mid field pack! I am looking forward to getting to the next race at Pau as I have been there before and really enjoy street circuits."

Kimball continues his physical fitness training and will return to California to meet with sponsors before heading to Pau in France for the third round of the F3 Euro Series championship on the 31st May and 1st June, 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.

