

Charlie *Kimball*

KIMBALL TAMES EVERY CONDITION TO PODIUM AGAIN IN BARCELONA

For the first time this season, Charlie Kimball scored points in both Formula 3 Euroseries races at the Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona, Spain this past weekend, September 22-24. The young American also finished on the podium for the second consecutive race weekend. Kimball's results were even more impressive considering he overcame very difficult weather and track conditions. The American moved up from his best qualifying place of tenth to finish a points scoring 6th in the torrential rain of Race 1, and then scored a solid 2nd place finish in Race 2. The points he accrued over the weekend mean he is one point away from ninth in the Formula 3 Euroseries Championship.

The Californian showed good speed throughout the practice sessions on Thursday as well as on a damp track in the Free Practice on Friday. He finished the Free Practice in 11th without using new tires. The impressive pace transferred through to the qualifying where Kimball qualified 10th, his best starting spot of the year.

He still felt as if there was more to come from the car, "I know it's my best starting spot of the year, but I am still disappointed. I didn't improve on my second set of tires and think I should have been easily on the front 3 rows."

The weather came into play before the start of Race 1 as the heavens opened drenching the racetrack. The rain continued throughout the morning and meant that the race would be run on wet tires. Kimball made the most of his British wet weather experience and moved from 10th to 7th by the end of the first lap. He then moved up to 6th as race leader Paul di Resta was given a penalty for jumping the start. As the rain increased to a torrential downpour, Kimball pulled away from the group of cars behind him and closed in on the two in front, even with the very limited visibility. As they approached the first corner, Kamui Kobayashi, in fourth, went wide through the gravel and Kimball took the opportunity to overtake Kazuki Nakajima at the same time. As Kimball continued the lap and began to close on third, the red flags were waved and the race was stopped because of the level of water on the circuit. Because of the regulations regarding a red flag, the results revert to two laps before, meaning Kimball would finish 6th, even though he was fourth on the road.

Kimball was excited afterwards, "That was mayhem! I couldn't see anything as we got to the first corner after the start, the spray created a whiteout. Afterwards, it took a long time for my tires to come up to temperature, but when they did, I was faster than most everybody out there. It was difficult to pass because when I would get close to the car in front of me, the visibility was cut to nearly nothing."

Taking the American Dream to Victory Lane

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By finishing in the top-8 and scoring points in Saturday's Race 1, Kimball would take advantage of the reverse grid rule and start Race 2 in 3rd. After showers overnight, the circuit was damp, but drying quickly as the Catalunyan sun created a dry line. This meant everyone would start on slicks, but the start would be treacherous as the main grandstands overlooking the start line blocked the sun from drying the starting grid. The 21-year-old Kimball still managed to make a great getaway and pass second placed Sebastien Buemi into the first corner. After running 4 laps behind the safety car to clean up a first corner crash, Kimball made a good restart to chase fellow American Richard Antinucci for the rest of the race. Kimball would run the third fastest lap, but with the aerodynamic effects of the high speed corners, he could never get close enough to mount a challenge for victory.

"It is a great feeling to be part of an American one-two in one of the toughest junior categories in Europe," Kimball said afterwards. "I made a good start and moved into second, and after the safety car tried to challenge Richard, but losing the downforce through the fast corners was killing any chance I had to pass. Still, my second consecutive race weekend with a podium, my best qualifying this year and my first points on Saturday mean this weekend has been a success."

In the three week gap before the penultimate F3 Euroseries race at Le Mans, Kimball will try to finalize his plans for the Macau Grand Prix in November and continue to focus on his fitness regime.

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.

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