

Please close this new browser to return to indmotorsport.com

## Karun @ British F3 Unlucky Chandhok scores solid points

**Thruxton, England**

**17/08/03**



India's fastest teenager Karun Chandhok scored a pair of third places in Rounds 17 and 18 of this years British Formula 3 championship (scholarship class). The races over the weekend were held at the Thruxton circuit in Hampshire, where average speeds over a single lap exceed 195 Km/h !

The super fast nature of the circuit lays a greater importance on car setup than at most other venues on the calendar. Karun and the T-Sport team came to Thruxton on a high having won 5 out of the last 8 races and were looking forward to extending their championship lead. Friday's test sessions though showed that the team and driver were in for a tough weekend when various problems and mishaps meant that they never were able to quite get a good indication as to how competitive the package was.

At the end of the two qualifying sessions on Saturday, the Madras born driver secured a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> starting position respectively for the two races on Sunday, just 2 tenths of a second away from pole in both sessions. A slightly disappointed Chandhok said later ***" In the first session I got caught out with the traffic and was not too happy because I felt we should've been quicker. The second session though was not too bad but certainly it looks like Viso has a bit of an edge on us this weekend. Unfortunately we couldn't make full use of the test day and it's hurting us a bit now."***

At the start of Race 1, Chandhok made a good move into the inside of the Complex of corners after turn one but his luck was about to turn when he was shoved wide onto the grass rejoining down the order in third place. The 19 year old then made a bold move around the outside of Can Artam into the chicane but lost out to Ernesto Viso a lap later. He explains what happens ***"I was pulling up alongside one of the championship class cars when he shoved me off to the side almost onto the grass which caused me to lift off in the middle of the straight. This allowed Viso to just drive straight past me in a straight line."*** Thereafter the top three contenders, Steven Kane, Viso and Chandhok himself ran close together keeping each other under pressure so that at the flag just 1.3 seconds covered all three of them.

Race 2 promised to be better. Chandhok again made a good start and was running just behind Viso at the front with Kane a few seconds behind. The leading 2 were setting an impressive pace for the opening few laps but slowly

the T-Sport driver started dropping back. He talks us through *“ Viso was a little bit quicker but only by a tenth or two for the first few laps but then from lap 4 or 5 onwards I started having a problem with the front left tyre. Every lap it got worse and I had to drive slower and slower. Finally by half distance there were chunks of rubber coming flying off and by the end of the race it was down to the canvas. I seriously thought about stopping purely from a safety point of view but decided that points were more important. I was very lucky to finish !!”* Steven Kane passed his limping team-mate a few laps from home to leave the Indian a frustrated in a 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

The T-Sport team owner Russell Eacott said *“Thruvton is notorious for it’s tyre wear but even so the problem on Karun’s car is very unusual and he did very well to bring the car home with the tyre like that. It’s difficult to tell what caused the problem because we hadn’t experienced any difficulties with the tyres all through the weekend. It’s a shame because he was close to Viso and was on course for a second place but that’s motor racing !!”*.

Chandhok who is sponsored primarily by **JK Tyres, in association with The Vanguard Group, Kingfisher, UCAL Mikuni, Rolon, Amaron and Parx**, has his next 2 races at the infamous Spa circuit in Belgium in two weeks time. *“I’m really looking forward to Spa. All year I’ve heard people talking about how incredible it is and now I’m finally going to experience it. It’s going to be a hard weekend for me though because both Viso and Steven have been there before and I haven’t, but we’ll see what happens when we get there.”*

Results :

#### **Round 17 –**

1. Steven Kane
2. Ernesto Viso
3. Karun Chandhok

#### **Round 18 –**

1. Ernesto Viso
2. Steven Kane
3. Karun Chandhok

#### **Championship positions –**

- |                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1. Steven Kane    | 253 points |
| 2. Karun Chandhok | 244 points |
| 3. Ernesto Viso   | 237 points |