

Karun @ British F3

Third place finish for Chandhok

Castle Combe, England

22/06/03



Indian Formula 3 driver **Karun Chandhok** finished in 3rd position in round 12 of the British Formula 3 championship (scholarship class), at the Castle Combe circuit. The circuit is one of the fastest on the calendar and average speeds for the 3 km lap are close to 180 kmh.

Unusually hot weather of over 30 degrees centigrade welcomed the Formula 3 circus to the Wiltshire circuit. On Saturday the drivers had just a 1 and a half hour test session to set their cars up and prepare themselves for qualifying later in the day. Chandhok's weekend started off well when he was fastest in the test session with a time of 1:01.2 seconds, a tenth of a second ahead of team-mate Steven Kane.

By the time qualifying came though it became apparent that Ernesto Viso had been able to claw back the gap to the two T-Sport drivers and he qualified on Pole Position for both, Rounds 11 and 12 to be held on the Sunday. Kane qualified behind him in 2nd with Chandhok just behind in 3rd for both races. Karun gave his version of the days proceedings after qualifying; *“ Free practice was really good and the car was working really well straight out the box. But during qualifying the ambient temperature had gone up by 12 degrees, which made a big difference I think and for some reason we couldn't get the car to work as well in the heat as Viso could. ”*

A huge and enthusiastic crowd filled the stands on Sunday to watch the Formula 1 stars of the future do battle. Race 1 though was over almost as soon as it started for the 19 year old Chandhok. He explains what happened *“I made a decent start and was closely following one of the championship class cars on the straight going towards the first corner when he just lifted off the throttle. I had nowhere to go and hit him from behind, which launched me off the circuit and into the field. It was very disappointing for my race to end so quickly especially when we could've easily scored some good points.”*

Race 2 was a better result for the Madras born driver. Starting on the dirtier side of the circuit, Karun got lots of wheelspin as the lights went green which ended his chances of fighting with Kane for second place. The race thereafter was a fairly processional affair till it was red flagged 3 laps from home when Nelson Piquet Junior hit the wall at the final corner.



“It was good to actually finish a race here. Last year we were very fast but had problems in both races and also we didn’t finish in the first race today. 3rd place is not a bad result, but it’s been one of those weekends where the team and I just haven’t been able to put the winning package together. After the dominant weekend we had at Silverstone these last couple of days have been a bit of a wake up call for everyone as to how hard Formula 3 is.”

Chandhok who is supported primarily by **JK Tyres in association with Kingfisher, Rolon, UCAL, Amaron and Parx** has his next race on the 13th of July at Oulton Park.

Race results –

Round 11 –

1. Ernesto Viso
2. Steven Kane
3. Justin Sherwood

Round 12 –

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

Championship positions –

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|-------------------|------------|
| 1. Steven Kane | 182 points |
| 2. Ernesto Viso | 148 points |
| 3. Karun Chandhok | 145 points |