

Karun @ British F3 CHANDHOK DOMINATES WEEKEND....ALMOST !!

4th May 2003, Yorkshire

India's rising star **Karun Chandhok** totally dominated the scholarship class of the British Formula 3 championship at the Croft circuit in Yorkshire – except for the final 100 metres of the 2nd race.



The 19 year old's weekend started off well when he was 2nd during the Friday test session held in incredibly wet conditions. Chandhok, who has struggled in the past in the wet conditions, was in confident form and looking forward to the rest of the weekend.

The next day, he was able to convert that confidence into a fantastic performance in qualifying when **he recorded his first Formula 3 pole position in the morning and followed it up with his 2nd one later in the afternoon.** An ecstatic Karun later said *“ I'm really pleased to have finally put it on pole. This is one thing I hadn't yet done in Formula 3 and to qualify on pole again in the 2nd one makes it all the more satisfying. The car worked really well today and full credit to the team on the job they did. It was not an easy session because my team-mate Steven Kane was pushing really hard but we did enough to just beat him in both sessions.”*

Though the forecast was for heavy showers, sunny sky's greeted the teams and drivers at the 1.9 mile circuit on Sunday morning. Karun started off race 1 just as he wanted – in the lead. On lap 3, he got held up by some of the championship class cars going into the hairpin and Ivor McCullough got ahead, only to make a mistake himself on the next lap, which let Chandhok back into the lead.



From there on the T-Sport driver drove maturely against stiff competition from Ernesto Viso and Steven Kane to come out on top and take his second race victory of the season. *“ That was a seriously hard race. The circuit was very slippery and both Visa and Steven were pushing like mad. It was really close racing and in fact Viso even hit me from behind on one lap as we went into the final hairpin bend. I was really glad to come out on top under those circumstances”* he said afterwards.



Race 2 started off even better for the Madras driver. A very good opening lap meant that he was running well inside the top 10 overall and ahead of most of the championship class cars. Chandhok and his team-mate Steven Kane ran closely together with the gap between them stabilising at just under one second. Kane was never quite close enough to challenge Chandhok for the lead, but on the last lap within sight of the chequered flag, Kane made a mistake under braking at the final corner and went into the side of Chandhok, taking both of them out of the race.

It was a huge disappointment both for Karun and the team, *“Steven apologised straight away afterwards and admitted his mistake. I don’t think he’s the type of guy who’ll take someone off intentionally so I accepted his apology. It’s just disappointing because that would’ve completed a clean sweep of 2 pole positions and 2 wins but anyways, it is what it is and there’s nothing I can do about it now. The team and I worked really hard for that win and there’s no doubt about the fact that this weekend we were the car-driver combination to beat. On the positive side, the win in the first race puts us back into the championship lead, which is psychologically a major plus point.”*

Karun’s race engineer **Alan Woodhead** was pleased with his driver’s work over the weekend, *“Karun went through a bit of a slump at Snetterton. We gave him a real talking to at the factory and I think that really fired him up for the weekend. He did everything that we could ask for – pole position, victory in race 1 and leading fairly comfortably in race 2. It was unfortunate about the incident with Steven. He’s apologised to Karun and us, and as a team we’ve sorted it out. I’m confident that such things won’t happen between the team-mates again.”*

Chandhok, who is supported primarily by JK Tyres, in association with Kingfisher, Rolon, Amaron, UCAL Mikuni and Parx, has his next 2 races at the tight and twisty Knockhill circuit in Scotland in just one week’s time.

Results –

Round 5 –

1. **Karun Chandhok 22:09.235s**
2. Ernesto Viso 22:01.023s
3. Steven Kane 22:11.025s

Round 6 –

1. Christian England 29:37.706
2. Ivor McCullough 29:46.692
3. Ernesto Viso 29:47.493

Championship positions –

1. **Karun Chandhok (80 points)**
2. Steven Kane (79 points)
3. Ernesto Viso (62 points)