

02/09/2008

TANTALISINGLY CLOSE

Place: Oschersleben (GER)
Dates: 30th - 31st August 2008
Track length: 3.6km

Race 1

Grid Position: 9
Result: 8

Race 2

Grid Position: 1
Result: -

Once again, Tim came tantalisingly close to success – and once again the luck factor was missing. Instead of being able to use pole position in the second round at Oschersleben to claim a first victory in the Formula Master series, or at the very least a podium spot in his home race, Tim's luck ran out on the very first corner, a collision through no fault of his own knocking him out of the race.

"It was a typical situation for the first corner at Oschersleben," says Tim, describing the accident. "I got off to a good start and had my nose ahead as I entered the 90-degree left-hander." He then felt a sudden bang on the left from behind, shot two metres off the ground and landed in the gravel. "It may have been spectacular for the crowd, but unfortunately the cars aren't designed for it." And that was the end of Tim's race. But he wasn't apportioning any blame. "It was a normal race accident. You can't say anyone was at fault."

And yet the home race at Oschersleben had started so promisingly. As early as Wednesday's testing on the Wednesday before the race, Tim had posted the second-fastest time. In Friday's free practice, he confirmed the good impression made by getting in amongst the Top Six on a set of used tyres. So there was every prospect of climbing even higher. Then he had his first stroke of bad luck in qualifying. The first set of tyres wasn't properly balanced and so weren't any use. In addition, a fault with the electronics kept him penned in the pits for a good ten minutes.

"So I was only able to do one flying lap on the second set of tyres," he recalls. "But then I got caught in traffic because one of the other cars got stuck on a fast left-hand corner with a technical fault. I had to slow down by around 20kph which cost me two or three tenths." Under the circumstances, ninth on the grid was a creditable achievement.

But even in the first race, he was to find out how tight it can get on that first corner at Oschersleben. A collision in the starting pack upset his tracking and bent a flap on his front wing which adversely affected aerodynamic performance. "The car was no longer perfect but I was recording some decent lap times and managed to close up on the group just ahead." In view of the good starting position guaranteed by finishing eighth, namely pole for the Sunday race, he avoided taking any risks on the last few laps. "In any case, overtaking is notoriously difficult at Oschersleben," he emphasises. "Unfortunately, I was completely out of luck on Sunday."

He intends to compensate for that during the next race weekend in Imola. "I've still got two more chances to achieve my goal at Imola and Monza." And that can be summed up in one word: victory. "Over the last few races, I felt I had it in my grasp. But then it was snatched away. One day, though, my luck will turn."



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