Report IndoorKarting WorldChampionship 2008

Monday, August 4:
Today was the big day, the start of the championship. But besides a briefing there was not much to do today. Only in the afternoon, the qualifications for the first race took place. About that session, I wasn't that happy. I couldn't do better than 6th place in my group and the pace of Ruben Boutens, Bart Van de Vel and Steven To were to strong. My kart wasn't that bad, but without brakes it isn't easy to drive a good time. So there was more possible if I had brakes.

Tuesday, August 5:

Race 1:
I was very motivated at the beginning of that day. I got kart number 21 and I knew that was a good one. Unfortunately, this kart had the same problem of the kart I had yesterday, no brakes. So, even without brakes, I was quite amused that it went very well. I was sixth whole the race. But when I did my stop, I came back on the track as 5th, just behind Fabio Konrad and Jeroen Van As. After 5 minutes, I made my move on Konrad. I was completely next to him on the inside, but still he pushed me against the barriers. Because of this, I lost 2 places and I could start all over. Konrad didn't even get a warning for that. 1 lap later I was able to Pass Kevin Leitz (who passed me because of Konrad) again. But Jeroen Van As passed Konrad and I couldn't catch him anymore. In the last curve, I did one last desperate move and I nearly got Konrad, but I was just 0.01 second slower than him on the finish line. The result was 6th, but I should have been 4th. The winner was Bart Van de Vel, 2nd was Ruben Boutens and 3rd Steven To.

Race 2:
The starting grid of this race depended on the fastest lap of race 1, and that wasn't really good for me. I had the 12th fast time of that race, so I started this race from the back of the field. I pitted immediately in the first lap. When I came out of the pits, I got stuck behind Camille Verstraete. When I tried to overtake her on the inside of a corner she blocked my way when I was half next to her. I was a bit unlucky that I had the wrong reflex at that moment. I should have pushed the throttle on that moment, and then nothing would have happened, but I pushed the brakes instead. The result of that was that I pushed her on the back of her left side, and she spinned around. And because of that, I got a drive through penalty. Although it wasn't completely my fault, I got punished. But I can also understand that the organisation won't punish anyone 'who was pushed around' by someone, despite it was also a bit her fault. Result of

that race was 14th . And this was the only race I really had a good kart from the beginning. 1st was Bart Van de Vel, 2nd was Fabio Konrad and 3rd Steven To.

Wednesday, August 6:

Qualifying:
Once again, I was in the group together with Bart and Fabio. But there were also 2 other big names in my group. Felipe Vieira and Werner Truegler. In qualifying I didn't get what I expected. A 6th place was to few if I still wanted to make the final race. But my kart wasn't really a good one so in the race I had to give everything of myself.

Race:
In the race, it went much better. In the second lap I overtook Truegler and after that I was able to follow Bart Van de Vel and Yoann Mathurin. But Felipe Vieira and Fabio Konrad were too fast to follow. When I was stuck behind a driver who was one lap down and didn't let me pass, I lost the connection with Yoann and Bart. After that, Yoann made his pitstop and I knew that he was slower than me if he hadn't someone in front of him to follow. So I kept on driving for another 25 minutes until I made my pitstop. The difference with Bart was just over 7 seconds by then. When I left the pits, I was 6 seconds ahead of Yoann and than I gave everything of myself to catch Bart. But when Bart made his pitstop, I was still 5 seconds behind him. I was able to close in, in the last part of the race. But on the finish line I was still 5 seconds behind him. So, I was 4th that race. 1st was Konrad, 2nd Vieira and 3rd Van de Vel.

Thursday, August 7th:

Qualifying:
Disaster struck ! I had to drive with kart number 3, one of the worst karts there are. So, in qualifying I was the slowest of all drivers. So in the final lap of that session I came into the pits and changed my kart. I got number one and I was glad that was a decent kart.

Race:
I had to start last. But thanks to the support of my family and friends and the will to make it to the final I was able to move to the front. I made my stop in lap one and after that I battled myself up to the front. I'd made a lot of passes and took all the risks I could take. I passed Dirk Ahrens, Jonathan Elliot, Tibor Herman, Jordan Howart, Camille Verstraete, Kenny Geldhof and Fabio Konrad. The rest of the drivers I passed thanks to their stops. It was really an

unbelievable race and I think it was my best race ever. And if I believe my family and friends, it was amazing to watch also. 5th place was the spot I worked so hard for and I was extremely exhausted after the race. But it wasn't for nothing because that place was enough to make it to the finals. Unfortunately, my teammate Kei Yuge didn't make it to the finals. But, just like me, he had very much bad luck. In this race Romano Franssen of Holland was 1st, 2nd was Kristof Van de Parre and 3rd Kristof De Ryck.

Friday, August 8th :

Qualifying:
A déjà vu of yesterday. Once again I got the worst kart of all. So I did the same thing like yesterday. I changed my kart and started the race as 20th (last).

Final Race:
In spite of yesterday, I didn't have a good second kart. Number 19 was even worse then number 8. So, I wasn't able to do anything in that race. After 15 minutes, I changed my kart again. And this time I got number 2. Finally ! A good kart. After 15 minutes of fun and overtaking others, disaster struck again. The belt that lets accelerate the kart broke down and because of that, I blew my engine. Because of this, I lost 5 laps, and my race was over. I got kart number 14 as replacement, but that was also a very bad one. I gave everything of myself and managed to drive some good lap times. But more than that wasn't possible anymore. 19th place in the race and 19th in the general standings is not what I expected of this championship, but if you see how much bad luck I had, I think I can be happy with what I've done.
I want to congratulate Sidney Vannieuwenhove with his 1st place in the final race and Greg Laporte with his victory overall. He is the deserved World Champion ! Also congrats to Bart with his 2nd and Romano with his 3rd place.