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Schein captures first Patrón GT3 Challenge win at Mid-Ohio

LEXINGTON, Ohio (Aug. 9, 2010) – In just his seventh Patrón GT3 Challenge race, Alex Job Racing driver Michael Schein proved just what a good young driver he is by winning Round Nine of the Patrón GT3 Challenge presented by Yokohama at Mid-Ohio Sports car course.

Schein started second in the No. 23 Alex Job Racing Porsche GT3 and immediately put pressure on the polesitter Ross Smith for position. In fact, Smith went off into the turn three gravel on lap five. This allowed Schein to inherit the lead. By this time, Schein had a good lead over second-place driver Darrell Carlisle.

Unfortunately that lead was erased when the race went full course caution on lap nine. This was the first of three cautions in the 45 minute race. To earn his first platinum cup victory, Schein had to weather the pressure put on by the veteran Carlisle following each of three restarts.

“It was a great race,” Schein said of his win. “On the first restart, my tires were not as clean as they should have been. I locked up the front tires coming into turn one and the car did not really turn that much. I kind of learned my lesson there. From then on out, I made sure they were clean [on the other two restarts]. I was saying to myself, ‘don’t screw this up. You’ve got this and can bring it home.’ I put a gap on Darrell [Carlisle] and I was able to hold onto it [for the win].”

“He [Schein] ran a great race,” Team Owner Alex Job said. “He was running second and putting some pressure on Ross [Smith]. Ross made a mistake and went off. From there, Mike took the lead. He did everything right. He stayed with it and held off Carlisle, with no problems. Mike did a great job to win that race.”

“The restarts were a big learning experience for him. He was very nervous. I am sure he was thinking, ‘Geez, when are all of these restarts going to get over with.’ But, you know, this is a learning process for him. This was only his seventh race and his first season doing this. This is good experience for him. Fortunately, he was able to get through all of those restarts and hold off Carlisle.”

In the Round 10 race, Schein started second due to his lap time from Round Nine. For the first 21 laps of the 30 lap race, Schein looked poised to capture his second platinum cup podium finish of the weekend. He was running a solid second, with no serious pressure from the third place driver, when Schein’s No. 23 Porsche found the turn 10 gravel. This dropped Schein from second in class to eighth in class and 13th overall.

Over the next eight laps, Schein fought hard to regain some of the spots he had lost when he spun off. On Lap 29, he moved up one spot to seventh (12th overall). But, his stay in that spot was short lived because on the last lap Schein spun again in turn 13. Schein finished eighth in the platinum cup and 13th overall.

“I didn’t think I had a chance to catch Ross [Smith],” Schein said of his race before the turn 10 spin. “I had a good gap between me and Darrell and I just wanted to bring it home [with a good result]. But, unfortunately, I had that spin.

“I noticed coming into turns 10 and 11, it looked like Ross was behind another car and they kicked up some gravel. Right as I hit that gravel, the back end went away from me pretty quickly and I couldn’t catch it and I put it in the gravel. Obviously, everyone went by me. It was pretty unfortunate to come in first yesterday and last today. I’d like to be a lot more consistent than that. But, it happens I guess.”

“Mike did the same thing he did in the first race, he ran a solid second,” Job said. “But, this time, Ross did not make a mistake and unfortunately Mike did. Mike went off and finished eighth. Again, this is all part of the learning and maturing process. Mike has a lot of talent and a lot of determination. He’ll continue to improve and I am very proud of him.”

The Patrón GT3 Challenge will travel to Road America for the Time Warner Cable Road Race Showcase Aug. 20 - 22. It will be a double race weekend (Rounds 11 and 12).

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