

Lloyd Claims Dramatic First Victory With AFS Racing At The Famous Indianapolis Motor Speedway

21 year old Alex Lloyd claimed his and the team's first victory with AFS racing in the Indy Pro Series on Saturday July 1st at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Alex had a successful test day on the Friday morning, and was just 5 hundredths from fastest time, putting him second overall. Qualifying also took place on Friday in the afternoon in extremely high temperatures. The 45 minute qualifying session was just gradually getting faster and faster, and Alex put in a quick time of 1min25.6 missing pole by a mere seven hundredths of a second, which Alex found extremely frustrating.

"I am disappointed not to be on pole. To be honest we struggled a bit with set up and I just didn't feel comfortable in the car. There are maybe 5/10ths in this car that we haven't yet unlocked. But I am glad to be on the front row and with a few alterations overnight I think we can be very competitive." Alex said.

Race day was on Saturday 1st July, with no warm-up, just straight into the race, which took place in the afternoon. Track temperatures were exceeding 133 degrees Fahrenheit.

Alex unfortunately woke up on race day feeling extremely dehydrated and generally unwell. This continued to persist throughout the morning leading up to the race. At 1.45pm Team Owner Gary Peterson and Alex took a trip over to the medical centre so Alex could get checked out, and they immediately hooked him up to an Intravenous Drip, putting fluids back into his body. He remained in the medical centre still hooked up to the drip until 2.10pm, with driver introductions taking place at 2.22pm; it was cutting things extremely short!

"I couldn't believe it," said Alex. "To be in the medical centre knowing all the other drivers were getting into their cars to drive to the grid was unbearable. There was a time when I wasn't sure we were going to make it on time but I knew no matter what happened, I was going to give it my best shot. When I finally made it into the car and the engines started I knew I was there to do a job. As a driver you just have to drive through any problems you are having and that's what I did. I was determined not to let this affect our race."

The race proceeded and Alex lost 4 places at the start as his engine became flooded with fuel,

"Unfortunately these cars have a habit of doing this. I put my foot down and the car just spluttered and didn't go anywhere. I watched 4 guys fly past me ... suddenly after being on the front row I was down in 5th. I knew from then on I had to give it everything I had to fight my way back to the front."

He began to pick them off one by one, making his way through the field and up to second place. Alex was gaining speed lap by lap, edging nearer to the race leader, Graham Rahal, setting the fastest lap of the race along the way. Alex was closing, but there didn't appear to be enough laps left to make it to the front.



However, a yellow flag was pulled out with 5 laps to go, which bunched the field of cars together for the final few laps, and Alex saw his chance. On the restart, Rahal ran a little wide at turn 1 and Alex took full advantage of the mistake to snatch the race lead. He then pushed hard for the final 2 laps to take a truly memorable victory. Alex's team mate, Phil Giebler, had qualified 10th and battled up to 7th place by the finish, completing a great weekend for the AFS team.

"This has been one of the most eventful days of my life" beamed Alex. "With everything that happened before the race and then the problems at the start, it certainly made for an exciting race. I am just so thrilled to win here at Indianapolis on the F1 weekend and I can't thank the team enough. They have all worked so hard and it is great to be able to give them their first victory. We really deserved this win. We have been so fast the last few races and things just haven't gone our way, but today was our day. It was a day where we really had to fight, and for that reason this is my most memorable win so far in my career.

We missed the pole by 7/100ths of a second yesterday, but today we sorted one of yesterday's two problems. We had a battle on our hands from the outset, but we were the quickest car out there, and the quickest car won. Justice was done."

The next round of the Championship is at the Nashville Oval on the 15th July.

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