

Alex on podium in maiden Indy Pro Race

Isle Of Man Sports Aid Foundation backed Alex Lloyd successfully completed his maiden race in the Infiniti powered Indy Pro Championship at Saint Petersburg on the 1st and 2nd April 2006. Weather conditions were consistent over the days having pleasant blue skies and temperatures of around 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

The 21 year old BRDC McLaren Autosport winner raced with AFS Racing and was extremely quick in the pre-race testing and pulled out a qualification of second position.

“Qualifying went well for us. We were P1 for session 1 and lost pole with just a few minutes to go in session 2. I think with a few changes to the car we could have held on to pole but with this being my first race I am happy to be on the front row.” Alex stated after qualifying.

In race 1 on Saturday 1st April Alex made a good start down to turn 1. After just a couple of laps it became clear Alex had a slow puncture on the left front tire, and so he came into the pits. Upon entering the pits it was discovered by the team that the front wing end plate de-laminated and it was this that cut the tire. The team changed the tire and replaced the front wing and Alex was back on his way. Unfortunately this meant he was 2 laps down when he rejoined the race, at which point it was just a matter of going as quickly as possible to get the best position as the result from race 1 determines the grid for race 2. Alex eventually crossed the line in 10th.



“Race 1 was very disappointing for us. The front wings are very flimsy and we were very unfortunate for the debris to cut the wheel. Because race 2's grid is formed from the result from race 1 this is a double blow but I am still confident of a good result as we are improving the set up of the car every time out.”

Sunday the 2nd April saw Alex complete a morning warm up followed by the second race of the weekend. Starting in P10 Alex had a lot of work to do. He got a great start making up a few position into turn 1. He followed this up by another at turn 4. By the end of lap 1 Alex was up to 6th. Over the next few laps Alex was on a charge, catching and passing his way up to 3rd

position. For the remainder of the race Alex was glued to the bumper of 2nd place car but due to his set up being particularly quick in the slow, twisty sections but not so good on the straights Alex just couldn't quite get close enough to make the pass stick.

After a tremendously exciting race Alex brought the AFS car home in a great 3rd place delivering the first ever podium finish for the team.

"What a great race!" grinned Alex. "The whole race was full of excitement. It was the longest race of my career at over an hour and I spent the whole race pushing 110% to make up the places from our p10 grid slot. The first half of the race was fantastic. I was able to charge through the field. It was when I got into 3rd place it became clear that our set up meant it unable to pass the car in front because I just couldn't get close enough on the straights even though lap on lap I was much quicker. Nevertheless I am very happy with this result as it's my first Indy Pro race and in fact my first race for nearly 10 months. Also to give the team their first podium is a fantastic feeling and I can't thank them enough. They gave me a great car all weekend and we are all very confident to be able to put a deal together to complete the season."

The next round of the championship is on the 26th April at the legendary Indianapolis Motor Speedway on the weekend of the Indy 500.



Clerical Medical backed Alex in the AFS Racing Indy Pro car

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