

**Alex Lloyd**  
**Superfund Euro F3000 Championship**  
**Nurburgring, Germany – October**  
**30/31<sup>st</sup> 2004**

There were 2 races at the Nurburgring, to complete the Championship season. The races were supposed to be in sunny Cagliari, but the venue was changed at the last minute, the reason stated to be political problems.

The Nurburgring's weather lived up to October/November expectations – the circuit being 2000 feet above sea level - and was for much of the time shrouded in mist, below the cloudbase, cold and wet, and there were doubts the races would go ahead, at first.



However the visibility improved on Friday, and, despite this being his first visit to the Nurburgring F1 circuit, and despite it being his first proper run in the wet in the F3000 car, Alex ended the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday practice session quickest by over a second, having been dominant throughout the session.

At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the two Friday practice sessions, he also led by the same margin, pipped in the final minutes by Ippolitti, who was on a new wet tyre run. Ippolitti will figure again in this report.

Alex was essentially untouchable in the wet.

On Friday afternoon, qualifying for Sunday's race took place – an hour's session, wet but drying - just slicks by the end of it.  
Alex qualified on pole.

On Saturday morning, the weather was as misty and wet as before, and the first outing was qualifying for Saturday's race. Fully wet session – Alex was again fastest by around a second, with around 12 minutes of the session remaining, when the session was red flagged for an incident. The drivers could use a new set of wet tyres at this stage, but it was decided that Alex was so much quicker, that he basically could not be caught, so he would stay on his older tyres. This proved to be a mistake, as the Austrian, Norbert Siedler, on his new tyres was able to post a time to demote Alex to 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the end of qualifying, and Alex's team mate, Jonny Reid, used new tyres and promoted himself to 3rd. This was to prove costly.

The track was partly dry by the start of the Saturday afternoon race. In fact all drivers on the "odd" side of the grid would start from a completely dry grid position, but all the "even" drivers would start from a still-wet grid box. Alex radio'd in to say that it was very slippery off the dry line, and that he was anticipating losing 5 or 6 places on the start. And so it proved when the red lights went out, with all the drivers on the dry side of the grid streaming past the pack on the inside of the grid.



As the cars tiptoed around the first corner – a tight hairpin – Ippolitti, who had started further back on the dry grid, decided to try and stay wide, on the dry part of the track and then cut back inside the cars ahead. A clumsily-executed move saw him chop across Alex, who could not avoid him, and he dislodged Alex's front wing, which then came off and wedged under the car, lifting his front wheels and taking him off the track and out of the race. Sadly, speed did not translate into a win.

The picture below captures the moment before Ippolitti – the number 2 car – turns in on Alex



Sunday was even colder, still wet, but a drying track. Alex was again quickest in these conditions in the morning warm-up.

The track continued to dry, and the race would be run in fully dry conditions. As a race, it was packed with incidents, mostly poor driving. The championship hung on this race, with Pastorelli or Siedler needing to win the race, the current leader, Del Monte, needing only to score one point.

Pastorelli got the jump on Alex off the line, and basically that is how the race ended,

Alex's car not quite quick enough in the dry to catch Pastorelli, who won the race (and with it the championship) with a good drive. Alex kept the pressure up the whole race long, giving Pastorelli no breathing space, but the car simply wasn't quick enough.

"The trouble was that we missed yesterday's race, so I had done no dry running" Alex explained. "JVA produce a great car, wet or dry, but all the testing and qualifying was done in wet or damp conditions, so our setup in today's race was not good enough to match the Draco cars – we were too soft and understeery. If we'd just had a couple of dry laps under our belts, we'd have sorted it.

"There is a complex of slow boring 2<sup>nd</sup> gear corners, which you cannot attack" he continued "and if your car has understeer there, you can do nothing about it, you just have to wait until you can get the power down, and that is where I lost out to Pastorelli – I could try and make it up at the chicane and the corners where I can attack them, but 2<sup>nd</sup> place was the best I could do on the day. Yes, I'm disappointed not to have come away with a brace of wins, after being so dominant again through the weekend, but for different reasons, the cards just didn't fall our way in the races. There are always lots of "what-if's" – the trick is to learn from them. I have to hand it to Draco Racing today, though. Both drivers on the podium, and both were quicker than our car. They got it right on the day, and we didn't, end of story"

In summary:

Practice 1 (wet) – Alex quickest by 1 second

Practice 2 (wet) – Alex 2<sup>nd</sup> (did not use new tyres) by 1/10<sup>th</sup> (having dominated by 1 sec for 30 mins)

Qualifying for Sunday (wet, drying) – Alex pole by 3/10<sup>ths</sup>

Qualifying for Saturday (wet) – Alex 2<sup>nd</sup> (wrong decision not to use new wets at the end)

Sunday warm up (damp, drying) – Alex quickest by 3/10ths

Race 1 Saturday (dry line) – DNF – taken out at 1<sup>st</sup> corner – picture above

Race 2 Sunday (dry) – 2<sup>nd</sup>. (Setup not good enough for the dry conditions)

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES:

Superfund Euro F3000 series – engine Zytec, 3 litre V8, 460 HP, chassis Lola, tyres Avon

Team: John Village Automotive, Chesterfield, UK <http://www.team-jva.com>

Superfund web site: [www.superfund-euro3000.com](http://www.superfund-euro3000.com)

Alex's web site: [www.alex-lloyd.com](http://www.alex-lloyd.com)

Formula 3000 web site: [www.formula-3000.net/2004\\_e09\\_index.php](http://www.formula-3000.net/2004_e09_index.php)

