

Mattighofen/Orechova Poton, May 22, 2011

## TURBULENT RACES AT THE SLOVAKIARING: SPERRER AND KLEIN EACH GRAB A VICTORY!

Last weekend was the second race weekend in the KTM X-BOW BATTLE, this time at the Slovakiaring near Bratislava, and in stark contrast to the previous year, the weather was perfect. Summer temperatures, brilliant sunshine and correspondingly warmer asphalt meant that times were pulverized in the Friday afternoon training session. There was a repeat of the familiar picture from the Salzburgring with the Class 3 drivers setting the tone: Marko Klein from Team Sportfahrer-Zawotec managed to finish just in front of EX rally champ Raphael Sperrer (on the track for his own Team Gendarmerie Racing). But it wasn't, as expected, Jim Gebhardt (CCS Racing) in third but instead Sebastian Grunert (All-Sports) who was once again the fastest man in a Class 2 auto. The Class 1 went to a newcomer: Michael Wretschko grabbed the best start position for a series car, which by the way also entered by Team Sportfahrer-Zawotec. Incidentally, Wretschko was not the only rookie at the Slovakiaring: The KTM X-BOW BATTLE was again able welcome many new entries, among them the Czech drivers Martin Novotny and Jan Ondrak, or the Austrians Robert Habatzi and Dario Pejic. The latter, by the way, was driving the PLusCity "VIPcar" in which PlusCity boss Ernst Kirchmayr allows his business partners, customers or well-known celebrities to have a unique racing experience.

### **Race One, May 20, 2011:**

"Full House" on the Slovakiaring: 30 drivers were on the track for training, 29 entered the first race and even though the first corner of the new racing circuit is known to be treacherous, the entire field got off to a good start going round the fast right hander. The third race of the current season was definitely memorable because of the thrilling fight for the overall win between Marko Klein and Raphael Sperrer, who right from the start exchanged the lead at least once in every lap. It was never clear who would get their nose in front right up to the end of the race but it was finally Raphael Sperrer who celebrated the victory. It must be said though that he was ripe for putting in a top performance on the racing circuit following his remarkable rally career (among others six times Austrian national champion). "When one is able to shine it is always naturally great", Sperrer said, adding rather modestly "Not too bad for a rally driver. But I'm not yet sure if I will race the whole season because actually I'm driving customer Gusti Eder's car and after he comes back from his shoulder injury I won't be racing any more". Marko Klein was satisfied with his second place, because he also had problems with the boost pressure. "You can't be dissatisfied. Raphael drove very well and second place is also very good!" Third was Jim Gebhardt who just managed to hold off Sebastian Grunert, the winner in the Class 2. Reini Kofler rolled over the finish line in fifth place and the former Red Bull Junior drove a standard series model KTM X-BOW R to an impressive fourth in his class and fifth overall.

Ernst Kirchmayr was sixth (and second in Class 2) while “Bernie Silverstone” was seventh. Neither of them was able to stick with the speed of the leaders in each of the individual classes. Jürgen Pipp was strong again but a small mistake put him back at ninth place. And KTM Board Member Hubert Trunkenpolz came home in tenth place after he and Gerhard Trinker delivered a sensational fight for a top 10 finish that lasted practically the entire race. Rudy Lemmens, the double winner from the Salzburgring came in second in Class 1 behind the already mentioned class winner Michael Wretschko. Third in the series class was Czech driver Martin Novotny from Team RaceTool. His team boss, by the way, mutated into the one with the least luck this weekend – his trouble began in the final lap of this first race when he ended up in the gravel after an attack on Ernst Kirchmayr going into the final corner.

Marko Klein grabbed another pole position for the second race of the weekend with his very impressive lap time of 2:13.819. But it was again Raphael Sperrer who won the start and also Jim Gebhardt was able to slip past Klein in the extra long start-finish straight on the Slovakiaring. But then the feared chaos broke out behind the leading trio. Jürgen Pipp was given a nudge and went into a spin in front of the field charging down on him. Many drivers had to take evasive action and either escape to, or end up in the gravel. While Pipp and a couple of the other drivers were able to extract themselves, it was all over for some of the others like Christoph Schrezenmeier, Eyke Angermayr and Pavel Heinik before the race had really got underway. Then a fight developed between Sperrer and Klein out of the three-way battle at the start of the race and it was finally Klein who took the victory. Jim Gebhardt, who at the weekend also contested a number of Porsche races critically self analyzed his own performance with a bit of a smirk: “Our car was fast enough, it looks like the weak point was with the driver!” Sebastian Grunert was never in danger as he was once again the winner in Class 2 and again faster than Reini Kofler, whereas Bernie Silverstone and Ernst Kirchmayr (second in Class 2) exchanged places. Class 1 ended up with exactly the same result as the previous day with Wretschko in front of Lemmens and Novotny. Third place in Class 2 went to Uwe Schmidt, who, as one of its first customers, was underway with a new KTM X-BOW R. After the race he was generous in praise for the new car. “The car simply drives better than the standard version. My decision to switch to the ‘R’ was the best, simply super. I’m satisfied.”

## The Results:

Race 1, May 20, 2011:

01. Raphael Sperrer (Class 3), 25:16.819 Minutes (11 Laps)
02. Marko Klein (Class 3), + 1.172 Seconds
03. Jim Gebhart (Class 3), + 14.154
04. Sebastian Grunert (Class 2), + 15.515
05. Reini Kofler (Class 3), + 46.225
06. Ernst Kirchmayr (Class 2), + 58.890
07. "Bernie Silverstone" (Class 3), + 1:07.063
08. Klaus Angerhofer (Class 2), + 1:07.572
09. Jürgen Pipp (Class 3), + 1:11.865
10. Hubert Trunkenpolz (Class 3), + 1:31.674
11. Gerhard Trenker (Class 2), + 1:32,057
12. Michael Wretschko (Class 1), + 1:35,433
13. Rudy Lemmens (Class 1), + 1:37.403
14. Christoph Schrezenmeier (Class 2), + 1:49.827
15. Uwe Schmidt (Class 2), + 1:49.928
16. Wolfgang Fritsch (Class 3), + 1:50.320
17. Martin Jansa (Class 3), + 1:51.762
18. Martin Novotny (Class 1) + 1:57.256
19. Hubert Schmalnauer (Class 2), + 2:02.426
20. Eyke Angermayr (Class 3), + 2:02.622
21. Sehdi Sarmini (Class 1), + 2:27.519
22. Pavel Heinik (Class 2), + 1 Lap
23. Jakub Havrlant (Class 1), + 1
24. Jan Ondrak (Class 1), + 1
25. Ferdinand Madrian (Class 3), + 1
26. Ondrej Bach (Class 1), + 1
27. Helmuth Jacobi, (Class 1), + 1
28. Robert Habatzi (Class 1), + 1
29. Dario Pejic (Class 1) + 2 Laps

Race 2, May 21, 2011 Mai 2011:

01. Marko Klein (Class 3), 25:04.319 Minute (11 Laps)
02. Raphael Sperrer (Class 3), + 2.651 Seconds
03. Jim Gebhart (Class 3), + 27.771
04. Sebastian Grunert (Class 2), + 33,710
05. Reini Kofler (Class 3), + 52.027
06. „Bernie Silverstone“ (Class 3), + 1:03.838
07. Ernst Kirchmayr (Class 2), + 1:23.183
08. Jürgen Pipp (Class 3), + 1:52.935
09. Michael Wretschko (Class 1), + 1:54.076
10. Rudy Lemmens (Class 1), + 2:02.634
11. Martin Jansa (Class 3), + 2:04.607
12. Uwe Schmidt (Class 2), + 2:04.787
13. Martin Novotny (Class 1) + 2:14.964
14. Jakub Havrlant (Class 1), + 2:16.229
15. Hubert Schmalnauer (Class 2), + 2:16.818
16. Gerhard Trenker (Class 2), + 2:17.034
17. Sehdi Sarmini (Class 1), + 2:22.595
18. Wolfgang Fritsch (Class 3), + 2:32.158
19. Jan Ondrak (Class 1), + 1 lap
20. Ondrej Bach (Class 1), + 1
21. Robert Habatzi (Class 1), + 1
22. Helmuth Jacobi, (Class 1), + 1
23. Dario Pejic (Class 1) + 2 laps
- DNF Pavel Heinik (Class 2)
- DNF Klaus Angerhofer (Class 2)
- DNF Christoph Schrezenmeier (Class 2)
- DNF Eyke Angermayr (Class 3)