



MantisSport Grabs Defeat From The Jaws Of Victory

Connecticut Valley Region played host to PCA club racers at scenic Lime Rock Park April 28th and 29th. MantisSport made their first visit to Lime Rock for this event which is the first club race of the season in Zone One.

After a very successful test at Mosport on April 9th courtesy of our friends at Bartling/Group 88, The MantisSport / Pfaff Porsche Cayman S appeared to be up to the task at Lime Rock. After struggling to meet the strict noise regulations at Lime Rock Park (90 db) on Friday, Ernie Jakubowski set a quick time on his second hot lap in qualifying Saturday to claim the Cayman's first class pole of it's short career. From here our weekend went downhill in a hurry.

The car was good, no better than good, as we continue to refine the set-up and gain more experience. Ernie got a good start in Saturday's sprint race and was running strong in second place at the half way mark when he pulled into the pits with an oil leak. This began a hectic two hours to diagnose and repair a missing camshaft seal, which caused oil to leak onto the exhaust system. MantisSport crewmembers Richard Burpee, Gunner Jakubowski and Ernie worked frantically to repair the car in time for our 4:30 Enduro start. We made it with 2 minutes to spare.

With the advantage of using our earlier qualifying result to grid the one-hour Enduro all looked well for MantisSport to claim the first victory for the Cayman S racecar this weekend. Ernie was running well and lapping with some faster "C" class cars for the first 10 minutes, turning respectable 1:02's on the mile and a half circuit and maintaining a 20 second lead in "D" class. Then the lead began to dwindle as lap times approached the 1:04 area.

I made the call to have him pit earlier than we had intended as I thought there might be something wrong with the car at the 22-minute mark of the race. We checked the tire pressures and cooled off the driver and then I made a fatal mistake, I sent him out one minute early. I never second-guessed myself, as I have never mistimed a pit stop in my life! As a result of my error Ernie was black flagged and forced to sit in the penalty box for the one minute that I miss-judged. The long and frantic day had taken its toll on the MantisSport team and I was at the helm of the sinking ship.

Preparation + Passion = Performance



Ernie also showed signs of frustration and made a rather quick exit from the penalty box at the far end of the pit lane. When I stormed into the tower at the end of the race to inquire as to why we were penalized the race steward quietly asked me where I would like him to start. Not a good sign. I had no choice but swallow my pride and thank him for his clear and concise assessment of our performance.

The result was a disappointing second place finish, our first podium but not the result we knew we were capable of on this weekend. Was Ernie pushing too hard for our first victory? Were we all stressed after our trying day? Was I guilty of assuming that we could do no wrong? Probably yes to all, but in order to win you first must lose and lose we did at Lime Rock. Even with our lead dwindling and all of the team members tired after our busy afternoon I still believe we had our first victory in-hand and I let it slip away. Lesson learned.

This lesson we now take to Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on May 13th and 14th. After spending more time in the car at our home track, Mosport, during UCR's first Driver Education weekend the MantisSport team heads to Mid-Ohio with renewed enthusiasm and confidence. We will be joined there by our friends, Tim Sanderson will make his second start of the season in his 996 "C" class car, Scott Gerard and Bill Comat will drive Mike Mallais' 944 "I" class car and Niagara Region's (but UCR regular) Brion Charters will be there as well with his "E" class 944 turbo.

Mid-Ohio is a track Ernie has some experience on, he claimed two victories in "G" class last year there. The car is better every day as we continue the development process, the team and it's crew chief have suffered the embarrassment of defeat and it is forecasted to rain all weekend which may give us an advantage over our turbo-charged competitors. I feel really good about this weekend.

Stan Carmichael

MantisSport

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