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Plenty of excitement to the very end: David Beckmann takes spectacular win in Sochi

- Trident driver David Beckmann secures third GP3 win
- Incredible charge in Race 1: Beckmann storms his way up from P15 to P5
- David: "It was just amazing to win the race on the last lap"

David Beckmann's first weekend at the Sochi Autodrom could not have gone any better with an impressive performance right from the very first session. "The best comes last," as everyone knows, and so it was with Beckmann as he clinched his third victory of the season in the second race at the 5.85-km circuit next to the Black Sea. In Race 1, the Trident driver had made an impressive charge up the field in extremely tricky conditions, moving forwards from grid position 15 to fifth place.

Sunday's win was a real thriller with Beckmann in the role of hunter, tackling the race from fourth on the grid. The Trident driver immediately went into third place at the start and then put pressure on the driver in second place, who promptly locked up. Beckmann was now in P2 and began to hunt down race leader, Joey Mawson. He kept trying to pass the Australian until the very end, and the final showdown came on the last lap. Beckmann threw down the gauntlet on S1 and finally accomplished his goal in Turn 13 when he took the lead with an excellent manoeuvre, securing victory at the finish line.

Beckmann's performance in the first race was also impressive. The signs had not looked good initially at the start, as he was 15th on the grid. However, throughout the whole of the weekend, the total package of team, car and driver had shown that 18-year-old Beckmann would be able to fight for a place up front. And that's how it turned out. He gained a lot of ground immediately at the start. However, he was forced to run wide briefly while in a scrap and had to brake hard on the kerbs, flat-spotting three of his four tyres. Strong vibrations then set in, making huge demands physically on him to the very end. Nevertheless, he improved position and managed to take the chequered flag in P5 under the toughest of conditions.

It was clear on his first outing in practice that he and the Sochi Autodrom are a match made in heaven. Like most of the other drivers in the field, the German had to get used initially to the track layout and conditions. The tarmac offered little grip, so practically all of them made the odd mistake or two. But Beckmann was feeling good, and his hot time on used tyres had been the fastest in the field so far. He had some bad luck in qualifying, however. A problem with the accelerator and another technical issue meant that he only qualified 15th for the first race.

With fifth place in Race 1 and victory in the second race, Beckmann continued his impressive series of triumphs in GP3. The statistics show that Beckmann has secured the most points in the second half of the season following his move to Trident. He is on 107 points and has led the classification during the second half of the season.

He now has quite a long break before heading to Abu Dhabi for the season grand finale (23rd - 25th November).

Three questions for David Beckmann**David, congratulations on taking your third win of the season. How was your race?**

I moved up into third place immediately after the start and then also managed to pull past Laaksonen, who locked up in the corner. After that, it was just a matter of putting pressure on the leader. I know Joey Mawson well from our time together in Formula 4 and am well aware that he's a tough nut to crack. He was very strong, especially in the third sector. I saved my DRS for the end, waiting to seize my chance. I thought I was out of luck following a brief VSC period but sensed I had a chance still on the final lap. We had a really great scrap on the first sector, but it wasn't quite enough. I made my decisive move with four turns to go before the end and was able to pull out a lead on him of more than half a second. It was just amazing to win the race on the last lap. The team are mega happy. This victory means even more to me than the other two in view of all that excitement until the very end.

Your charge in Race 1 was no easy task to accomplish...

No, that's true. I managed to make a brilliant start and was already tenth after the first lap. I overtook a whole series of drivers with each successive lap of the race. The last nine laps, however, were just awesome. The driver in front of me tried to outbrake me, and I had to take evasive action as a result. I braked on the kerbs as I was doing so and flat-spotted three of my tyres. The vibrations were so powerful that I couldn't quite see the entrances to the turns or the signs around the track. Nevertheless, I still managed to clinch fifth place. That was the most physically exhausting race of my career to date. I had no time to get my strength back on the straights. I also just narrowly missed posting the fastest race lap. I could have easily achieved that under normal circumstances.

The season finale will be in Abu Dhabi. How do you expect to do there?

My self-confidence has received a major boost as we head to Abu Dhabi, and obviously, I'll be buoyed by the impetus of this terrific weekend in Sochi. But still, I generally do well in Abu Dhabi. I was there for three days earlier in the season to take part in rookie testing. The whole circuit is very impressive and the layout just tremendous. It's a lot of fun, and the track configuration really suits me. The grand finale of the Formula 1 season will also be happening there when the eyes of the world will be on the circuit. Many partners, sponsors and the entire Formula 1 circus will be at the track. It's going to be a mega end to the season.

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