



Practice at Orange County Speedway Is Bitter Sweet for the Gorilla

Kirila Race Update 7-21-08

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This weekend brought our team to the Orange County Raceway in Rougemont, North Carolina for a race with the PASS Series. After coming off a 7th place finish at Nashville on the 4th of the July weekend. The team was feeling the momentum.

With NASCAR having the weekend off, there were many of the race dignitaries hanging around the Orange County Speedway making this a high profile event and an opportunity to showcase our talents..



Gene with Tony, Chris and Tony

During Friday's practice, the #05 was one of the fast cars and many of the influential race participants were whispering in driver's and crew chief, Tony's ear about how well and how fast we were. The weekend was worth the heads we turned during practice. The right people saw the talent.

With the car fast in hand, the team focused its energy on a great qualifying position because we knew we had the car to beat. Our 20 lap average was at the top of the field for fast speed and handling.

So with all the experts telling us how fast and how good the car looked, the team confidence built up throughout Friday and Saturday morning.

When the 2:00 practice began on Saturday, the crew sent Gene out onto the track for his mock qualifying run which would take advantage of the high-line groove through turns 1 and 2. Gene was one of the few cars who could run the high line. As the confidence of the team built and we could all smell a top 5 qualifying run, we put a more aggressive set-up on the car and sent the #05 out for another mock qualifying run. Gene headed out and made a first lap practice qualifier that easily placed him in the top 3 cars with his lap time. As Gene barreled around the track and was up high against the fence coming out of turn 2 he brushed the wall which

snapped the nose around and the side of the car slapped the wall hard which ended the weekend for the #05. Gene was not injured.

TOUGH LESSON

The team recognized its mistake in making set-up changes and then asking the driver to get the most out of the car without permitting him to get the feel for the new set-up and changing track conditions from practice the night before. This practice has been noted by the team but as we were all reminded by the driver, he is not going to let us forget it.

While the team is extremely disappointed that it couldn't fly its true colors in the 200 lap race, we were all pumped up that we now have a competitive car and a driver who can qualify and run as a top 5 contender at this high level of racing. We can't wait to get it all back together and shoot for the next race. We still feel like we have momentum on our side.



Concentration



#05 Fast on the Track

Our driver doesn't like the fact that we did not race but told the crew to keep their heads up because we were just one foot from the best qualifying run of the season. Meaning the wall was one foot from being in the correct place as Gene exited turn 2. The forward looking statement was insightful and put the crash in perspective. The motivating comment showed real maturity from the 15 year old and showed evidence that Gene was a leader.

Many of you enjoy receiving the photos of Gene, the car and the crew so I have added a few this week.

We love to get your feedback so keep it coming!!
Thanks for all your support!