

MKR wrote a Hollywood story in Zolder

Most – Incredible tenaciousness and an intense desire to endure any trouble were shown by the North Bohemia based truckracing team MKR Technology in Zolder, Belgium. The opening race of the European Truckracing Championship's round eight was red-flagged after a nasty 'crash of the year', left two trucks literally scrapped. Unfortunately, one of them was Markus Bösiger's. Normally, the Swiss pilot defending Czech colours would have retired from the racing weekend after the Saturday's dramatic race but the team did not throw in the towel. With the approval of their opponents, they had a spare truck transported from the Czech Republic, worked on it overnight to do all necessary adjustments and finally, Bösiger rewarded them with a win on Sunday. Ultimately, tears of sorrow turned into tears of joy.

In the past the Zolder racing circuit used to bring above-the-average point gains to MKR Technology. This time there was more space for dramatic scenes and a story not unlike those written by Hollywood film makers. Critical moment came right with the start of the main race on Saturday. Mika Makinen of Finland showed his 'Demolition MAN' act, as he moved across from the right and into the truck of Markus Bösiger, who hit the retaining wall at full speed. The hard hit got the five-and-a-half-ton truck spinning on the home straight. Bösiger's rear axle literally catapulted the truck of the young Hungarian pilot Benedek Major, who also crashed into the concrete wall. The trucks hadn't reached the first corner before the red flag appeared to stop the race. Both trucks were completely destroyed, which put any further participation out of the question. *'You can see that the cabins of the trucks are really well made because they resisted such a big impact. This is why we are both alive. In these moments you can do nothing as a driver so all you can rely on are the safety measures that are in place,'* said Markus with a relief.

After a new start the cup race was taken control of by Spain's Antonio Albacete before Major's colleague Norbert Kiss and Markus Oestreich on third place. Bösiger's team-mate Adam Lacko claimed fourth position. The Čeladná native thus took care of the best Czech result of the Saturday half.

For safety reasons due to the damaged barrier Saturday's races had to be taken single file on the home straight. The following handicap race was won by Jochen Hahn ahead of Reinert and Kiss. While in the cup race David Vršický had been forced to retire earlier, in the handicap race bad luck struck Adam Lacko. A hose behind the truck's framework got literally pinched, caused an oil leak and sent him to the pit lane after merely three laps. *'In qualifying and super pole we did well. The truck was running great and I could deliver a good lap time. In the cup race I finally finished fourth but the handicap race didn't bring me any luck at all as I had to retire. It's a shame because I believe I could have finished third out of fourth again at least,'* added Adam Lacko.

Despite Bösiger's truck ended up completely destroyed, his team went on fighting. The team had a spare truck, used for exhibitions, ready at their Židovice technology centre. As soon as all the competitors agreed that MKR Technology could use it for the next races, battle against time started. Not everyone would be able to withstand such pressure, but MKR came out of the experience even



stronger as a team. Would they be able to bring the truck to Zolder and make it a full-fledged racing truck? No one from the MKR team had even the slightest doubt. Finally, the impossible had come true, Markus Bösiger could participate in the morning warm-up and didn't miss the qualifying round either. *'It's an indescribable moment. Many thanks to the team for what they did for me. I didn't think that anybody could make sacrifices like that. Some guys from the Czech Republic brought a reserve truck here overnight which we normally use only for exhibitions and during the morning the team of mechanics worked on it in preparation for the first race - they had to change a half of the components on it to make it a racing truck,'* said an emotional Markus Bösiger.

Surprisingly, Sunday's qualifying was won by David Vršecký. Having claimed pole position, the Czech rival used his advantage in the cup race and turned it into victory. After the Saturday's accident which left the wall along the finish straight destroyed, the trucks were not allowed to overtake in this section in lap one, which also meant that the pilot on the top of the field avoided the initial battle over front positions. Therefore, positions within the elite ten from the super pole didn't change much in the main race. Only Adam Lacko dropped from fifth to sixth as he got passed by the Championship's leading man Albacete of Spain. Vršecký was accompanied to the podium by Oestreich and Kiss. Bösiger crossed the finishing line on eighth, securing a front-row start for the last handicap race.

Similar to Vršecký, the skilled Markus Bösiger used his pole position to the maximum. The Swiss pilot gave nobody else a chance to pass him, though tough battles were playing out behind him. For a short time it even looked that the greatest wish would come true, as both MKR Technology's pilots Bösiger and Lacko were holding the two top positions. Unfortunately, one of Lacko's rear tyres burst and he lost the place. Eventually, Albacete and Kiss followed Bösiger to the finishing line. *'Adam's position was unsustainable but he showed that he is a great fighter by managing to hold onto a sixth place finish. He didn't give up which in fact summed up our weekend at Zolder completely. I am extremely proud of all the guys in the team because they really put all their effort in and it showed with a fantastic result,'* added the team's boss Mario Kress with satisfaction.

This time Zolder wasn't too generous to MKR in terms of points but the team managed to prove its immense strength to the entire truckracing world. Following the Belgian round Antonio Albacete built up on his lead (340), Jochen Hahn (319) is currently second and Markus Oestreich (274) third. Right below the podium is David Vršecký (241). Adam Lacko (181) maintains sixth position in the overall ranking and his colleague Markus Bösiger (146) follows right behind him. *'A great 'thank you' goes to all our competitors. Without their approval we wouldn't be able to bring the spare truck. If the top positions were at stake they wouldn't probably be so outgoing, yet we mustn't forget that without their support we wouldn't be able to write a story like this,'* expressed Mario Kress his gratitude to his competitors.

There are two events left before the season's end. The penultimate round in Jarama, Spain, is planned for the 5/6 October.

**MERITOR**

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