

UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX 2003

TESTING, FREE PRACTICE & FIRST QUALIFYING, Friday 26th September



TESTING

Giancarlo Fisichella	6 th	1:12.263	17 laps
Ralph Firman	7 th	1:12.762	46 laps
Björn Wirdheim	11 th	1:13.678	44 laps

FREE PRACTICE

Giancarlo Fisichella	15 th	1:12.849	8 laps
Ralph Firman	16 th	1:13.167	19 laps



QUALIFYING



GIANCARLO FISICHELLA 12th 1:12.227
CHASSIS NUMBER EJ13-05

"I didn't get enough laps in the morning, because I had a problem with the gearbox oil tank in testing and an engine blow-up during free practice. As I lost most of today's track time there wasn't enough time to do all the work we wanted on set-up. Considering that, qualifying was okay, the last part of the circuit was a bit damp when I went out. I hope we have these wet conditions again on Sunday."



RALPH FIRMAN 17th 1:19.383
CHASSIS NUMBER EJ13-04

"It's great to be driving the car again and I'm feeling fine. I was a bit unlucky with the timing of the rain in the qualifying session but hopefully it will do the same tomorrow! I think perhaps the deep grooved tyres weren't the best choice and the intermediates would probably have been quicker. It was good experience for tomorrow."



GARY ANDERSON

DIRECTOR OF RACE AND TEST ENGINEERING

"Fisichella had a problem with a split gearbox oil cooler which lost him a lot of time in testing although he was able to do a reasonable job at the end of the session. It was Ralph's first time back since his accident and he did a competent job, learning the track pretty well in both the wet and the dry and he got up to speed okay. Björn also did a good job with some tyre testing and adding to his F1 experience. His biggest handicap was probably me engineering his car as our test car engineer had to go back to the UK! Giancarlo had an engine failure early on in Free Practice which lost him most of that session as well and hurt his qualifying because we had a few things we wanted to try but never got them done. Qualifying was a bit disappointing but that was mainly down to the weather and also Giancarlo had to go out with a lower performance step engine. We took a gamble with Ralph's tyres and sent him out on extreme wets, which is always difficult in these conditions. We did the best we could, and hopefully Sunday will be wet and we'll get something out of it."



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BJÖRN WIRDHEIM

"Today was quite good. I like the circuit as although it is simple it is also quite technical. We were doing a lot of work for the race, it was nice to work with Gary Anderson and I hope I helped the team be better prepared for the weekend. It took a bit of time to get to know the circuit and I was running with quite heavy fuel loads until the very end of the test session. It was my second time in the car so I think I just need a bit more experience to be able to get the most out of it."

The spare car (chassis EJ13-02) is set up for Ralph Firman.