

## JAK CRAWFORD SCORES TOP FIVE IN FIRST CAREER USF2000 EVENT WEEKEND

*“14-year-old Jak Crawford turns heads in Indy”*



**May 15, 2019** – Jak Crawford’s first two events in the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship are officially part of the record now. Competing in rounds three and four of the series after turning fourteen at the beginning of the month, Crawford secured a top five finish on Saturday, rebounding from a difficult opening day Friday but showing speed throughout the event weekend.

Immediately following the Indianapolis Grand Prix, Crawford travelled ten miles west to the Lucas Oil Raceway for a Road to Indy series test in preparation for next week’s only oval race on the USF2000 calendar. With his first test proving to be a success, Jak posted the fastest time of the third and final sessions and the fourth fastest time of the day and he looks forward to competing on the oval track next week.

This success was the cap on the crown of a great first weekend in USF2000 competition. It could not have started out better with the first practice session at the Grand Prix track at Indianapolis Motor Speedway as Jak dominated the wet weather session and topped the charts for every lap he was on track. However, the good lap times would not continue after the rain stopped falling on Friday. Once the track dried, Crawford’s lack of track experience and the team’s starting setup would push Jak’s laps down the order to only a mid-pack pace. By the final practice of the day, the Crawford/DEForce team combo would continue to push and ended the day with the sixth best time, and have some better hope heading into the qualifying sessions and the first wheel-to-wheel action of the weekend the next day.

Friday included two qualifying sessions and round three of the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship. Both qualifying sessions ended with Jak setting the fifth quickest lap time and inside row three starting position for rounds three and four. In the second of two qualifying session, a big mistake was made on a flying lap that could have netted the youngster a front

row starting spot, so the team was confident in their speed and were looking forward to the first green flag that afternoon. The first race later on that day did not start so well for the young Texan. At the end of the long front straightaway and just after the green flag, Jak would nudge into the car in front of him under heavy braking entering the first corner. A handful of cars including Crawford's #52 ReMax backed DEForce Racing car would immediately fall to the tail of the field.

"I accept the blame for bumping the third place car," said a stand-up Crawford after the race. Yet, upon review of the video after the race it was clear the driver Jak bumped into broke very early in the corner after being squeezed inside by another competitor. The fact that it was a clear racing incident would not lessen the blow.

Falling back to 16<sup>th</sup> position Jak slowly battled his way forward in a race with no caution periods. By the first corner of the final lap, Jak was in the sixth position passing ten cars along the way towards the front. This would be short-lived however as the driver Jak had just passed in turn one drove back along the right side of his #52 in the turn two left hander making contact and causing significant damage, parking both cars in the gravel trap and ending their races.

Crawford would go on to say, "I am disappointed with how it ended, but I raced well. Passing cars is not as easy as passing karts so to pass ten cars over fifteen laps was a lot of work, but I am very happy with how I progressed forward in my first race."

The next day would be the home of round four as well as race day for the NTT IndyCar Series. The weather was dry as well but the temperature was even cooler than the already cold Friday and the crowds were much larger. Jak would once again start from the fifth position, but this time the start was less chaotic and by lap two Jak found himself in fourth position where he would stay the remainder of the race as positions 1-2-3-4 were separated by only a few car lengths the entire race.

Unlike the race the previous day where Jak could have used a single yellow flag, there were no less than three full course caution periods in this race. Crawford would have to hold off very aggressive drivers from the fifth position every restart and did so like a pro. The last caution was the least timely of all especially with a car that took a few laps to come on strong. Previous to the last yellow, Jak had just closed on the tail of the third place driver and was faster at the time but only a few corners later, the last yellow flag would fly before Jak could make a move and a bid for his first USF2000 podium.

"This series feels a little like F1 because of the teams. There is a nearly unbeatable team and one team that can almost tangle with them. Then there is our team and one or two others. I am hopeful that I can personally catch the team at the top before the end of the season at least for one or two wins," expressed a confident Crawford. Getting the new racer on tracks where the best team's drivers have less test time, might just help his cause.

All in all, it was a good first weekend and Jak made an impression that few expected except for those who know his racing talent's best. They can be sure that he is not done making his mark in the series and has his goals set high for the remainder of 2019.

Jak Crawford would like to thank new marketing partners; ReMax LLC and AmCap Home Loans as well as the long-time sponsors OMP, Bell Helmets, Palmetto MDR and Speedsportz Racing Park. Big shout out to DEForce Racing for all the hard work in car preparation and maintenance as well as their trackside support program

For more information on Jak Crawford please follow him on Facebook: @jetpakjakcrawford and on Instagram: jakcrawford52. Jak's marketing website is [jetpakjak.com](http://jetpakjak.com).

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