

Ahvenisto test day was immediately full of drama. As usual, the idea of putting all formulas in the same test heats was not a good idea... I truly hope the organizers, Rata-SM and AKK come to their senses and put some regulations here!

In Formula Fords, Markus Ollila was hit by bad luck for the second race in a row. This time the misfortunes started already in testing. Having spun out after the hill top (notoriously dangerous - and expensive - place to miss) he was hit in the front by Risto Tonteri's F3, and then straight into the mid-body by a Formula Renault. With the extremely high speeds at this location of the track, the damage was very severe. The car's tubular frame was bent and in practice the right side and front were totaled.

During the day it was not only Ollila who suffered. I counted 3-4 crashed F Renaults, and 2-3 crashed F3s. The light system (that replaces track flags) was typically late or at times not functioning (last session the red light in one location kept flashing through the session). Many times one could come around a bend (typically blind bend, as often in Ahvenisto) to find a car blocking the track. It seems the monitoring system used does not allow immediate reaction like a track marshall with flags might.

Personally I think it is very bad that organizers continue with this approach of having only one test heat for formulas. The speed differences are all too great. Making matters worse was that some FF drivers do not seem to look in their mirrors at all, so there are plenty of dangerous events. Too bad it struck one of the best drivers in the Zetecs this time, it could have been others too. Separating the test heats for winged and un-winged formulas is a safety factor that hopefully is put to practice ASAP. Over the past seasons, there simply has been too many accidents due to this.

The same practice is rampant at the nation's "free testing days" across tracks like Alastaro and Ahvenisto. Here hopefully AKK or some regulating body could put in some safety guidelines. I remember last year a session where a go-kart, a formula car, several saloons and a truck (!!!) were on-track at the same time at Alastaro. The track owner simply stated "well, everybody has the right to go on track". Surely there should be some safety considerations?

In both cases (race practice and so called free practice) everybody would benefit from a more organized session management. A test session can be 15min to be effective, and being able to

Drama starts in tests at Ahvenisto

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drive on a clean track with even paced cars allows one to collect data fast. A 15min focused session is definitely worth more than a 20-30min mixed session.

Let's hope the race weekend at Ahvenisto will continue under the guidance of some more lucky stars, the start was not good.