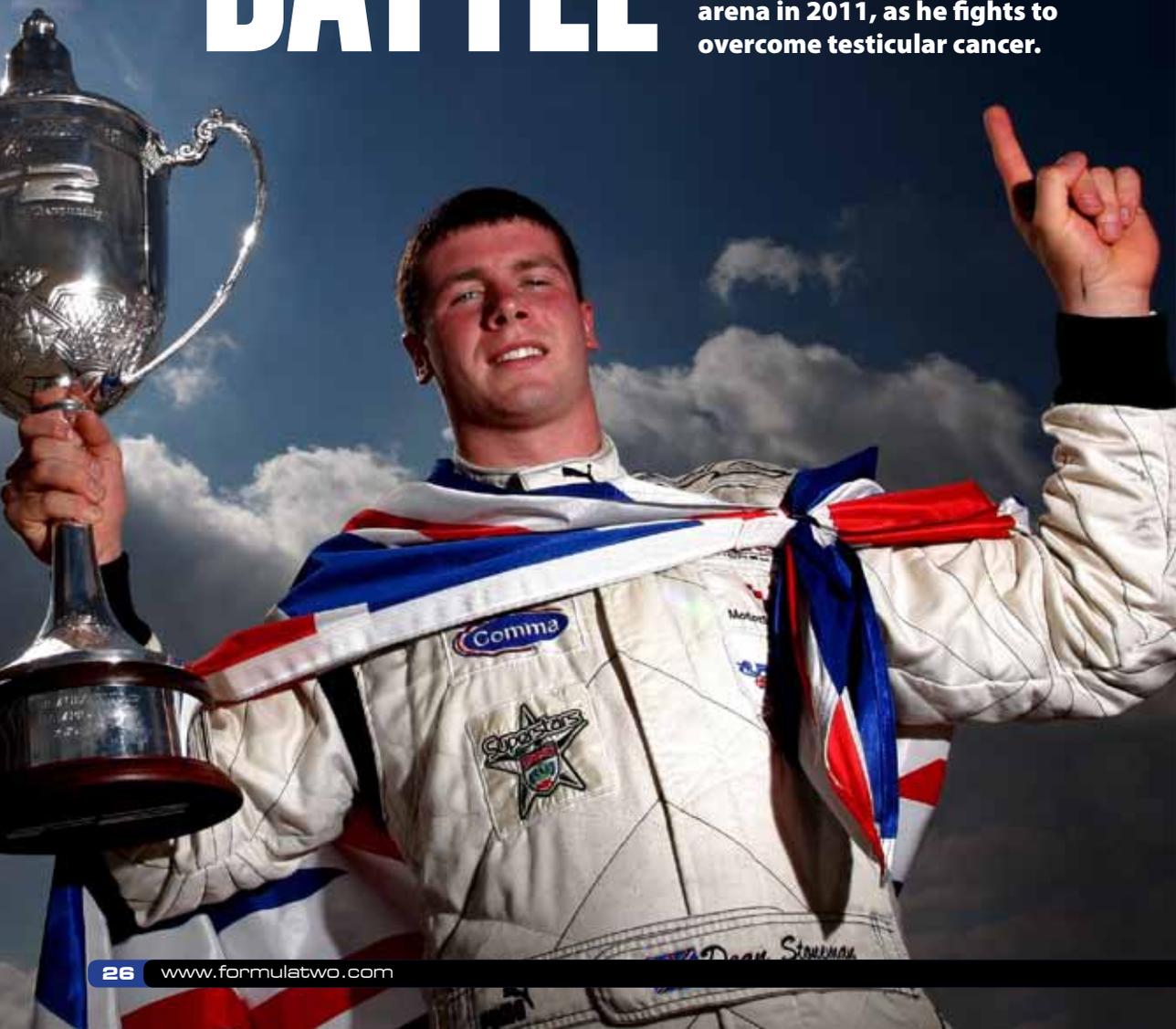




THE GREATEST BATTLE

Reigning Formula Two champion Dean Stoneman has stepped out of the motorsport arena in 2011, as he fights to overcome testicular cancer.



On his path to clinching the 2010 Formula Two title, Dean Stoneman became well known in the F2 paddock for his focus, strength and steely determination. With six victories, 13 podiums and an eventual 42 point advantage over closest rival Jolyon Palmer, Dean was the class of the field, and the British racer further proved his talent when he finished fifth quickest in his prize rookie test with the Williams F1 team last November.

Dean's commanding performance in F2 and F1 machinery landed the Southampton-based driver a prime seat with the ISR team in Formula Renault 3.5 for 2011. However, the 20-year-old's hopes of adding another international title to his Formula Two crown were put on hold in January, when he was diagnosed with testicular cancer.

In order to concentrate his complete attention on returning to full health, Dean withdrew from motorsport and began immediate treatment for the disease, which affects around 2,000 people in the UK each year, at Southampton General Hospital.

Thanks to an early diagnosis and the single minded approach that served him so well on the race track, Dean has responded well to an intensive course of chemotherapy. Although treatment is ongoing, his specialist medical team are pleased with the progress he has made so far.

"The team at Southampton General Hospital have been totally outstanding, for which Dean's family are very grateful," praised Stoneman's manager Steve Noakes. "Dean is showing the same character and determination we have become used to seeing him display on the track."

Dean has been overwhelmed by the support shown to him from the motorsport community during this challenging time. Hundreds of fans have offered messages of encouragement, the British Racing Drivers' Club have included him in their Superstars programme, and the ISR Formula Renault 3.5 team have held an option on Stoneman returning to the team in 2012.

"It's been incredible to get so many cards, texts and emails from people wishing me well," Dean commented. "I would like to thank everybody who has shown me so much kindness. I would also like to thank Igor Salaquarda and Peter Berry at ISR Racing for being very supportive and the BRDC for including me again this year in the Superstars programme. It's given me even more reason to return to full health and get back racing."

As well as using his determined attitude to overcoming his own illness, Dean is hoping to inspire other sufferers in a similar situation, after agreeing to become a youth ambassador for the Wessex Cancer Trust - an independent charity that has raised around £20 million over the last two decades. The Wessex Cancer Trust supports and improves cancer services in Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands.

"It was very flattering to be approached to be part of the Wessex Cancer Trust," Stoneman added.

"If I can help or inspire in anyway others like me on the road to recovery then that's fantastic. I have received such incredible treatment, so would like to take this opportunity to give something back."

Throughout his ongoing treatment, the thoughts and support of all those in the Formula Two community have been with Dean, and he makes a welcome return to the F2 paddock at Silverstone to present the trophies for this weekend's races. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope to see this bright young talent back on the racetrack next season. ■

To make a donation to the Wessex Cancer Trust visit www.wessexcancer.org. You can also leave messages of support for Dean via his official Facebook page, www.facebook.com/deanstonemanf1.

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