

PEDRO PIQUET STARTS THE SEASON WITH THE FASTEST TIME

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With rain and rather fresh temperatures of around 12 degrees Centigrade, the FIA Formula 3 European Championship got its 2016 season underway. In first free practice at the 3.841 kilometres long Circuit Paul Ricard, Pedro Piquet (Van Amersfoort Racing, 1:26.525 minutes) posted the fastest lap time ahead of Ryan Tveter (Carlin, 1:26.672 minutes) and Arjun Maini (ThreeBond with T-Sport, 1:27.301 minutes).

The FIA Formula 3 European Championship drivers had to cope with difficult conditions in free practice as rain set in shortly after the start of the session and intensified throughout the second half of practice. Pedro Piquet already set his fastest lap time in the opening minutes before rain got heavier. Ryan Tveter, Arjun Maini and Anthoine Hubert (Van Amersfoort Racing, 1:28.819 minutes) were among the other drivers to benefit from the conditions in the early stages, claiming second to fourth place respectively. Maximilian Günther (Prema Powerteam, 1:28.956 minutes), who emerged fastest from yesterday's official test day at the same venue, ended up fifth in the first session during the FIA Formula 3 European Championship season opener.

Mikkel Jensen (kfzteile24 Mücke Motorsport, 1:29.426 minutes), who was classified second yesterday, only 0.004 seconds down on Günther, now claimed sixth place from Alessio Lorandi (Carlin, 1:32.100 minutes). Raoul Hyman (Carlin, 1:32.887 minutes), Ben Barnicoat (HitechGP, 1:33.669 minutes) and Nick Cassidy (Prema Powerteam, 1:33.921 minutes) rounded out the top ten.