

27 September, 2019

Shwartzman secures Sochi pole to set up title showdown

Russian goes quickest in PREMA 1-2-3, ahead of Daruvala and Armstrong

Robert Shwartzman switched on the styled when it counted, scoring his first pole position since Round 1 in Barcelona, to put himself within touching distance of the FIA Formula 3 crown. The Russian was rampant on home turf, fighting off strong sprints from both of his teammates to finish at the peak of a PREMA Racing 1-2-3. Jehan Daruvala secured second in the dying embers, while Marcus Armstrong settled for third.

With the title at stake, PREMA duo Shwartzman and Daruvala were first out on track and set fast flying laps, but both had to settle for a place beneath Free Practice pacesetter Marcus Armstrong.

Despite them starting so strongly, Niko Kari continued his upward turn of form to snatch provisional pole from the grasp of PREMA, climbing ahead of them with a lap of 1:53.845. Shwartzman found another gear shortly after to leap to the peak of the times, just ahead of Armstrong and the Finn.

The cars dived into the pits for a freshen up ahead of the second stint and Kari returned in similarly determined fashion, once again going top thanks to a purple sector 2. This forced Shwartzman to find further pace once more and yet again he obliged, returning to P1 with a time of under 1m 53s.

Armstrong attempted to better his teammate, but a slight wobble lost him time and he could only manage second. Meanwhile, Kari looked to have given it all he had, as slow second and third sectors cost him.

When the chequered flag was waved, the two title challengers had one last shot at pole and went head-to-head. Daruvala crossed the line first and briefly took P1, but he was shunted to second when Shwartzman nailed the perfect lap, firing in three purple sectors.

The title challenger now holds a 37-point lead in the Championship with just 44 left to play for. He starts ahead of his main rival Daruvala tomorrow, followed by the third PREMA of Armstrong. Kari and Christian Lundgaard complete the top five, ahead of Jake Hughes, Pedro Piquet, Leonardo Pulcini, Jüri Vips and Max Fewtrell.

The enthralling title battle could come to a close tomorrow morning, when racing returns at 10.15am (local time).

2019 FIA Formula 3 Championship Round 8 – Qualifying provisional classification

DRIVER	TEAM	LAPTIME	LAPS
1 Robert Shwartzman	PREMA Racing	1:52.583	14
2 Jehan Daruvala	PREMA Racing	1:52.775	14
3 Marcus Armstrong	PREMA Racing	1:52.853	13
4 Niko Kari	Trident	1:53.191	12
5 Christian Lundgaard	ART Grand Prix	1:53.274	14
6 Jake Hughes	HWA RACELAB	1:53.340	12
7 Pedro Piquet	Trident	1:53.349	13
8 Leonardo Pulcini	Hitech Grand Prix	1:53.451	13
9 Juri Vips	Hitech Grand Prix	1:53.530	13
10 Max Fewtrell	ART Grand Prix	1:53.539	13
11 Felipe Drugovich	Carlin Buzz Racing	1:53.550	12
12 Logan Sargeant	Carlin Buzz Racing	1:53.643	12
13 Richard Verschoor	MP Motorsport	1:53.824	14
14 Bent Viscaal	HWA RACELAB	1:53.842	12
15 Raoul Hyman	Sauber Junior Team by Charouz	1:53.877	14
16 Devlin DeFrancesco	Trident	1:53.882	13
17 Yuki Tsunoda	Jenzer Motorsport	1:53.938	13
18 Ye Yifei	Hitech Grand Prix	1:53.943	13
19 Teppei Natori	Carlin Buzz Racing	1:54.001	12
20 Sebastian Fernandez	Campos Racing	1:54.046	12
21 Lirim Zendeli	Sauber Junior Team by Charouz	1:54.112	14
22 Fabio Scherer	Sauber Junior Team by Charouz	1:54.145	13
23 Liam Lawson	MP Motorsport	1:54.557	13
24 Simo Laaksonen	MP Motorsport	1:54.757	13

25	David Schumacher	Campos Racing	1:54.889	13
26	Andreas Estner	Jenzer Motorsport	1:54.912	13
27	Keyvan Andres	HWA RACELAB	1:55.068	11
28	Alessio Deledda	Campos Racing	1:56.251	12
29	Leong Hon Chio	Jenzer Motorsport	1:57.166	10



Robert Shwartzman
(PREMA Racing)



2019 FIA Formula 3 -
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Classification

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