

Saturday, 18 July 2020

## **Pourchaire becomes first double winner of 2020, taking Budapest Race 1 victory**

Formula 3's youngest race winner Théo Pourchaire became the Championship's first double winner of the season, taking a resounding Race 1 victory at the Hungaroring by a mega margin of 11.9s over Championship leader Oscar Piastri.

For the second race in a row, Pourchaire was handed first when the race leaders collided in front of him, but there would be no safety car escort to the chequered flag, as he enjoyed in Spielberg. Polesitter Alex Smolyar and Logan Sargeant came to blows from the front row into Turn 1 on the opening lap of the race.

With more than 20 laps to go, and Championship leader Piastri directly behind him, Pourchaire had to display nerves of steel. Pulling away at a rate of a second a lap, he displayed a maturity well beyond his tender age of 16.

Despite his involvement in the Lap 1 incident, Sargeant was able to cling onto third and kept MP Motorsport pairing Bent Viscaal and Richard Verschoor at bay behind him, with the Dutch duo more focused on squabbling amongst themselves.

Clément Novalak was mightily impressive around the Hungaroring, making the most of the chaos around him to climb 17 positions for ninth place. Behind him, David Beckmann recovered well from a difficult Qualifying session to climb four places and take the final points position, and reverse grid pole.

### **AS IT HAPPENED**

Rain had continued to fall overnight in Budapest, stopping in time for the race, but this left the track in a damp and dusky condition for F3, and it showed at the start.

Polesitter Smolyar had initially made a strong getaway but was thrown out of contention when Sargeant lost the rear of his car at Turn 1. The American just couldn't find the grip as he entered the corner and collided with the front wing of the Frenchman's ART machine.

Calan Williams and Frederik Vesti were caught up in the collision and ended up tangled into one another at the corner as well, ending their races.

**CONTINUES**

Smolyar and Sargeant managed to get going again despite the damage. The American somehow held on to third, but Smolyar fell to the back of the field.

The safety car was deployed as the damage and debris were cleared off the track. When action resumed, Pourchaire kept the lead, but the running was once again halted after the rear of Liam Lawson's car caught fire, leaving a trail of oil from Turn 1 to Turn 2.

The race was red flagged to allow the marshals to clear up the oil and get the race back underway behind the safety car. The added wait allowed the track to dry that little bit more and Pourchaire was able to get away cleanly when the SC headed back in. PIASTRI did have a look down the inside but opted to air on the side of caution and sat behind.

Pourchaire set two fastest laps in a row to increase his margin at the front of the field to 1.7s, as DRS was enabled.

With the win quickly slipping away from him, PIASTRI's focus was forced to switch to defending second from his teammate, Sargeant. The American wasn't safe himself: he was stuck in a DRS train with Fernandez, Verschoor and Viscaal. Verschoor made the first move, taking the inside line to pass Fernandez into fourth, and he was followed through by Viscaal.

Sargeant managed to pull away from the battling cars behind, but PIASTRI was struggling. The Australian had changed two of his tyres during the red flag period and hadn't quite got them up to temperature. PIASTRI also didn't have the advantage of DRS that those behind him did, with Pourchaire pulling further and further ahead in front of him, increasing the gap to a massive 10s.

PIASTRI would hold on though, and the only change to the order on the final laps was for fourth, as Viscaal dived ahead of Verschoor at the very last opportunity, on the final lap.

Pourchaire coolly crossed the line first ahead of PIASTRI and Sargeant, with Viscaal in fourth and Verschoor fifth. Fernandez took sixth ahead of Alex Peroni, Dennis Hauger, Novalak and David Beckmann.

PIASTRI holds on to the Championship lead with 62 points, ahead of Sargeant in second on 49. Pourchaire's win lifts him to third, six points behind. Vesti and Verschoor complete the top five. PREMA retain P1 in the Teams' Championship, on 148.5 points, ahead of Trident on 68.5. ART are third, followed by MP Motorsport and Hitech Grand Prix.

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**KEY QUOTE – THÉO POURCHAIRE (ART GRAND PRIX)**

“I am really happy to win my second race in Formula 3 - the second race in a row. It is Race 1 this time, so it comes with more points. I qualified in P3 and had a really good start. I was P1 all of the race, and at the end I was quite fast. I want to thank the team for the car and thank Sauber Academy as well.”

**WHAT'S NEXT?**

Beckmann will be looking to add a race win to his collection of podiums for Trident, when the German starts on reverse grid pole in Race 2 tomorrow, at 9.45am.

**ENDS**