

Saturday 8 May 2021

Caldwell steers clear of trouble for maiden F3 win in Barcelona

Olli Caldwell benefitted from not one, but two, front row crashes to take his first ever victory in Formula 3, winning out over Victor Martins in Race 2. The PREMA Racing ace picked up the pieces as first, David Schumacher and Enzo Fittipaldi, and then, Matteo Nannini and Dennis Hauger, collided in front of him from the lead.

The two crashes came in a similar place within a matter of laps, with all four finishing outside of the points. Having seen the chaos unfold in front of him, Martins opted not to challenge Caldwell too strongly and calmly crossed the line behind the Briton.

ART Grand Prix's Frederik Vesti was the third beneficiary, taking his fifth podium in F3, ahead of Trident's Clement Novalak, who was up from P11.

Juan Manuel Correa scored points in F3 for the first time, making up five places from P15 to finish 10th. The most impressive climb of the day came from Caldwell's PREMA teammate, Arthur Leclerc, who magnificently rose to 12th from P28, having suffered a puncture at the end of Race 1.

AS IT HAPPENED

With the temperature rising to 42 degrees ahead of Race 2, the field were in for a sweltering afternoon of action under the Spanish sun. The heat didn't stop Fittipaldi from pulling away coolly, as Nannini eased forward to put pressure on Schumacher for P2. After a hairy start, the Trident racer was afforded some breathing space as Martins gave Nannini a scare from fourth.

Behind them, minor contact between Novalak and Alex Smolyar resulted in a puncture for the Race 1 winner. Losing control of his ART as a result, Smolyar collected the back of Logan Sargeant and sent them both curtailing into the gravel trap. Both drivers clambered out of their cars unharmed, but a Safety Car was required to clear up the debris.

Fittipaldi made a second clean getaway of the afternoon when action eventually resumed on Lap 5, as the top five all held onto their positions.

Martins was swallowed up by PREMA duo Hauger and Caldwell when DRS was enabled. Meanwhile, the third PREMA of Arthur Leclerc was up to 22nd from P28, having suffered a puncture in Race 1.

CONTINUES

Schumacher had remained within DRS range of Fittipaldi at the front and was harrying the rear wing of the Charouz. His hard work paid off on Lap 12 with a late scamper at the end of Turn 1, the German spotting a gap and swerving down the inside.

The Trident had taken the lead, but couldn't build any form of a gap, as Fittipaldi searched for an opening that would allow him to get back ahead. The Charouz pulled back alongside side him heading into Turn 1, but the duo got too close and came to blows, with Schumacher skidding into the barriers and out of the race.

Nannini was gifted the lead from third, while Fittipaldi fell down the order, before retiring during the subsequent Safety Car period. The HWA RACELAB driver was confident on the brakes when racing resumed, holding off the PREMA of Hauger superbly.

Remarkably, history repeated itself with two laps to go as Nannini and Hauger came together in the same place as the previous leaders. The duo remained on track but plummeted to the back of the field, handing the lead to Caldwell, who scurried ahead.

Martins briefly looked down the side of the PREMA from P2, but opted to air on the side of caution, allowing Caldwell to cross the line unchallenged for his first win in the third tier.

Race 1 podium finisher Caio Collet completed the top five ahead of Novalak and Vesti. Red Bull junior quartet Jonny Edgar, Ayumu Iwasa, Jack Doohan and Jak Crawford took the next four positions, with Correa completing the top 10.

KEY QUOTE – OLLI CALDWELL (PREMA RACING)

"That was a crazy race, I think the reverse grids are really showing that it is going to crazy this year, which means that it will be good to be consistent.

"I am really happy with that. I had to hang on at the end with the tyres, but it was definitely a good result with all of the carnage that happened."

WHAT'S NEXT?

Hauger will get a chance to make amends from pole in Race 3 on Sunday, which is set to begin at 12.05 local time.

CONTINUES

2021 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 1 RACE 2 PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
2	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
3	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
4	Clément Novalak	Trident
5	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
6	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
7	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
8	Jack Doohan	Trident
9	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
10	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
11	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
12	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
13	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
14	Reshad de Gerus	Charouz Racing System
15	Pierre Louis Chovet	Jenzer Motorsport
16	Tijmen Van der Helm	MP Motorsport
17	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing
18	Kaylen Frederick	Carlin Buzz Racing
19	Rafael Villagomez	HWA RACELAB
20	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
21	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
22	Filip Ugran	Jenzer Motorsport
23	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
24	László Tóth	Campos Racing
25	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
26	Matteo Nannini	HWA RACELAB
DNF	Enzo Fittipaldi	Charouz Racing System
DNF	David Schumacher	Trident
DNF	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
DNF	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
Fastest lap	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing 1:36.973 (Lap 10)

ENDS

Hauger and Leclerc receive post-race time penalties

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PREMA Racing duo Dennis Hauger and Arthur Leclerc have both received 10s-time penalties following incidents in Race 2 on Saturday at Barcelona.

Hauger collided with race leader Matteo Nannini at Turn 2 in a battle for first place, which caused them both to spin off track and ended the Italian's race.

Having considered the matter extensively, the Stewards determined that Hauger was wholly responsible, having lost control of his PREMA after hitting the apex at Turn 1. With the penalty applied, Hauger remains 25th.

The Norwegian's teammate, Leclerc, also received a 10s-time penalty for a Safety Car infringement.

After studying data evidence, the Stewards found that the Monegasque exceeded the minimum delta time in four consecutive marshalling sectors under Safety Car conditions on Lap 16. With the penalty applied, Leclerc drops from 12th to 24th.