

Saturday 3 July 2021

Hauger takes second F3 win from 12th in Spielberg after Nannini and Novalak crash from the lead

PREMA Racing's Dennis Hauger completed a remarkable win from 12th on the grid in Race 1 at Spielberg, making the most of a late collision between long-time race leaders Matteo Nannini and Clément Novalak.

Winning on home soil for the Red Bull Junior Team, Hauger crossed the line ahead of teammate Olli Caldwell and Charouz Racing System's Logan Sargeant to increase his lead at the top of the Drivers' Championship.

After losing reverse grid pole off the line, Sargeant had spent the majority of the race locked in a three-man brawl for first with Nannini and Novalak, while Hauger quietly picked his way through the pack. The American struggled to keep the pace, though, and fell behind Hauger and Caldwell just as Nannini dramatically collided with Novalak at the front.

AS IT HAPPENED

A regular on the front row during his 2020 title challenge with PREMA Racing, Sargeant was lining up from pole for the first time with Charouz, but the American seemed out of practice, dropping down to second when the lights went out. Sargeant initially got off well, but Nannini's start was simply stronger, with the HWA RACELAB ace braver on the brakes into the second turn.

Arthur Leclerc didn't enjoy the type of start he'd have envisaged either, the PREMA struggling to getaway and falling from fourth to P8 off the line. Making up the most places was Novalak, the Trident bolting from seventh to third.

Not that the field were allowed to get into any form of rhythm, as a Virtual Safety Car was required when Ido Cohen pulled to a stop for the second session in a row.

When action resumed, the Championship front three were locked in a battle for fifth, with Victor Martins leading Jack Doohan and Hauger, the PREMA impressively up from 12th.

Uncharacteristically, Martins appeared to crack under pressure and suffered a wide moment, dropping down to seventh.

CONTINUES

At the front, Nannini had been unable to break away from Sargeant and the American briefly reclaimed the position, but his move sparked a three-way brawl with Novalak getting involved from third. Going three-wide, Nannini came out on top with Novalak up to second.

The trio continued to exchange places and for a moment it was Novalak in first, but by Lap 14, order had been restored and Nannini was the leader once again, followed by Sargeant and Novalak.

Leclerc's race wasn't getting any better, with the Monegasque running wide and grazing the wall, before later retiring from the pits. Things were looking a lot better for his teammate, Hauger, the Norwegian barging past Doohan, Caldwell and Sargeant to steal a podium spot. Caldwell was able to follow his teammate through shortly after, making light work of the Charouz, while Doohan dropped down to ninth.

The Championship leader may well have been content with his lot, but was gifted first when Nannini clipped the back of Novalak during a fight for the lead and threw the pair of them into the gravel. Steering clear of trouble, Hauger pulled away with Caldwell in tow.

Nannini managed to recover for eighth, behind Doohan, but Novalak was plunged out of contention before eventually retiring. Unexpectedly returning to a podium position, Sargeant crossed the line with a strong 2.6s advantage over Martins.

There was plenty of further movement inside of the top 10 during a chaotic final few laps, with Jak Crawford and Caio Collet up to fifth and sixth, having started alongside each other in P8 and P9. After a series of impressive overtakes, Ayumu Iwasa finished in ninth, 10 places up from where he started, while Alex Smolyar completed the top 10.

After starting 18th, Jonny Edgar secured himself reverse grid pole with a P12 finish at the flag, meaning that he will start on the front row ahead of Enzo Fittipaldi, who was 11th.

THE KEY QUOTE – DENNIS HAUGER (PREMA RACING)

"I am really happy with the win. I started P12 and finished in P1 with a lot of fighting along the way. I just have to keep the rhythm now going into Race 2. I'll keep pushing."

CONTINUES

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

Hauger extends his points tally at the top of the Drivers' Championship to 87 points, ahead of Martins on 68 and Doohan on 62. Caldwell is up to third with 53 and Novalak is fifth with 49.

In the Teams' title fight, PREMA are first on 155 points, ahead of Trident on 111, with MP Motorsport in third with 108. ART are fourth with 82 points and Charouz are fifth with 28.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Jonny Edgar will look to make it two Red Bull junior wins from two when he lines up on reverse grid pole in the second race at the Red Bull Ring. Though Dennis Hauger is sure to fancy his chances once more as he starts from 12th for the second race in a row.

CONTINUES

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

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
2	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
3	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
4	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
5	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
6	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
7	Jack Doohan	Trident
8	Matteo Nannini	HWA RACELAB
9	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
10	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
11	Enzo Fittipaldi	Charouz Racing System
12	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
13	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
14	Kaylen Frederick	Carlin Buzz Racing
15	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
16	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
17	David Schumacher	Trident
18	Tijmen Van der Helm	MP Motorsport
19	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
20	Jonathan Hoggard	Jenzer Motorsport
21	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing
22	László Tóth	Campos Racing
23	Reshad de Gerus	Charouz Racing System
24	Rafael Villagómez	HWA RACELAB
25	Filip Ugran	Jenzer Motorsport
26	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
27	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
DNF	Clément Novalak	Trident
DNF	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
DNF	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
Fastest lap	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing 1:21.757 (Lap 5)

ENDS