

Saturday 19 March 2022

Hadjar takes maiden victory in Sakhir after Bearman penalised

Hitech Grand Prix's Isack Hadjar took his maiden victory in Formula 3 after PREMA Racing's Oliver Bearman was handed a post-race penalty for violating track limits.

Bearman led the majority of the race after moving past reverse grid pole-sitter Zak O'Sullivan in the early stages and took the chequered flag in first place. However, the Stewards handed the British driver a five-second time penalty moments after he took the chequered flag, moving him back to second, with Hadjar promoted up to the top spot.

The fight for the podium positions was fierce, but the final spot ultimately went to MP Motorsport's Alexander Smolyar following a battle that lasted several laps between multiple drivers.

AS IT HAPPENED

As the red lights disappeared to signal the start of the race, O'Sullivan was forced to defend from Bearman on the run into the first corner. The duo came close to making contact, however both avoided a coming together.

Further back in the pack, however, others were not so lucky. Roman Staněk and Qualifying pace-setter Franco Colapinto collided, and both were forced to return to the pit lane for repairs, which all but eliminated them from contention.

Arthur Leclerc, who was one of the biggest movers in the race, found himself up in ninth following the opening handful of laps after starting from 13th, winning battles with Grégoire Saucy and Caio Collet.

Saucy's race would soon come undone, after he and ART Grand Prix team-mate Victor Martins collided at Turn 1. While battling for eighth place, both drivers sustained damage and returned to the pitlane, but both were forced to retire.

Moments after the team-mates came together, up front, Bearman made his overtake on O'Sullivan stick through Turn 4 and was released into the lead. Bearman's team-mate Leclerc continued his charge behind, progressing into seventh with an overtake on David Vidales. Soon, the Monegasque driver would pass the sole remaining ART of Correa, allowing him to set his sights on a top five finish.

On lap 10, Hadjar progressed into third place past Smolyar, before the two hunted down Zane Maloney in third. However, Maloney had moves of his own to make. As O'Sullivan's pace began to drop, he fell into the clutches of the following pack, with Maloney and Hadjar swiftly moving past the Williams Racing Driver Academy member.

As Hadjar then overtook Maloney for second, Smolyar put O'Sullivan in his rear mirrors, and was soon ahead of Maloney for third, demoting the Barbadian driver to fourth place. Leclerc, now running in fifth after also moving past O'Sullivan, closed right up to the back of Maloney on the final lap.

The duo battled for position and took part in a drag race to the finish line, but it was Maloney who managed to keep his nose in front to secure fourth, as well as the extra point for the fastest lap. Leclerc was fifth, with pole-sitter O'Sullivan dropping to sixth.

Collet was seventh for MP Motorsport, while American Kaylen Frederick was eighth. As the sole ART car left in the field, Correa was ninth following a late battle with Frederick, while Campos Racing's Vidales rounded out the top ten.

KEY QUOTE – Isack Hadjar (Hitech Grand Prix)

“A good start to the season with the race win. It wasn't on the track, but still good points for the Championship.

“I think we did a really good race as a team, the car was working really, really well. I had some cool fights with the other drivers so a great start to the season.”

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

Hadjar leads the Drivers' Championship after the opening race of the season with 10 points, one ahead of Bearman. Smolyar and Maloney are tied on eight, with Leclerc behind them on six.

In the Teams' standings, PREMA Racing are first with 15, ahead of Hitech Grand Prix on 13 and MP Motorsport on 12. Trident are fourth with eight and Carlin fifth with five.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Van Amersfoort Racing's Franco Colapinto will lead the field for the start of the first Feature Race of the 2022 season on Sunday, with Stanek alongside him on the front row. The race will get underway at 11:45 local time.

2022 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 1 SPRINT RACE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Isack Hadjar	Hitech Grand Prix
2	Oliver Bearman	PREMA Racing
3	Alexander Smolyar	MP Motorsport
4	Zane Maloney	Trident
5	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
6	Zak O'Sullivan	Carlin
7	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
8	Kaylen Frederick	Hitech Grand Prix
9	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
10	David Vidales	Campos Racing
11	William Alatalo	Jenzer Motorsport
12	Reece Ushijima	Van Amersfoort Racing
13	Jonny Edgar	Trident
14	Ido Cohen	Jenzer Motorsport
15	Kush Maini	MP Motorsport
16	Nazim Azman	Hitech Grand Prix
17	Rafael Villagómez	Van Amersfoort Racing
18	Ayrton Simmons	Charouz Racing System
19	Francesco Pizzi	Charouz Racing System
20	Enzo Trulli	Carlin
21	Brad Benavides	Carlin
22	László Tóth	Charouz Racing System
23	Hunter Yeany	Campos Racing
24	Roman Staněk	Trident
25	Franco Colapinto	Van Amersfoort Racing
26	Niko Kari	Jenzer Motorsport
27	Jak Crawford	PREMA Racing
28	Josep María Martí	Campos Racing
DNF	Grégoire Saucy	ART Grand Prix
DNF	Victor Martins	ART Grand Prix
Fastest lap	Zane Maloney	Trident
		1:51.231 (Lap 3)

CONTINUES



MEDIA RELEASE

ENDS

Notes to editors

A selection of high-resolution images from this session is now available via our [media platform](#), along with a variety of driver interviews, press conference transcripts and the FIA Formula 3 media kit.

About the FIA Formula 3 Championship™

THE F3 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP LOGO, FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP, FIA FORMULA 3, FORMULA 3, F3 AND RELATED MARKS ARE TRADEMARKS OF THE FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE AND USED UNDER LICENCE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.