

Sunday 28 August 2022

Maloney bounces back to bring home first win in Trident 1-2

After being caught up in a big crash during Saturday's Sprint Race, Zane Maloney recovered in style around Spa-Francorchamps to secure his first victory in Formula 3 and put smiles on the faces of his Trident team. The Bajan rookie led his teammate Roman Stanek to the line to claim the Italian team's first double podium of the season in the Feature Race.

Oliver Bearman went two-for-two to throw down the gauntlet to his title rivals, with third place putting him on the cusp of Championship leader Hadjar. Oliver Goethe kept himself out of trouble to take fourth with some valiant defending in his second F3 weekend, whilst Jonny Edgar made sure all three Tridents finished within the top five.

Pole sitter Caio Collet had looked to be on for a podium but was unable to pull a big enough gap to mitigate a five second penalty and dropped to sixth. David Vidales was a man on a mission, moving up 11 places to claim seventh, as William Alatalo claimed back-to-back points finishes for Jenzer for the first time in their 2022 campaign. Alexander Smolyar and Reece Ushijima rounded out the top 10.

AS IT HAPPENED

Having become the seventh different driver to take pole this season, Collet lined up on the front row alongside Maloney whilst four of the top five in the Championship standings found themselves sitting P20 or lower.

The whole field got away cleanly and immediately Maloney tried to come out on top in a drag race down the Kemmel Straight. Both drivers were hungry for the lead as the Trident tried to dive down the outside of Collet at Les Combes, tapping wheels the Bajan driver took a trip over the kerbs and rejoined from the runoff in the lead. Their duel left third-placed Pizzi with nowhere to go and the Charouz Racing System driver took avoiding action through the gravel, dropping down the order.

Maloney's time out front didn't last for long, as he was ordered to give the place back by his team. In the meantime, Goethe had gotten past Collet for P2, forcing the Trident to drop down to third behind the MP in order to return the position.

Disaster soon struck for title contender Martins. The ART Grand Prix driver found himself collected in chaos ahead as Kush Maini overshot the corner sending him into the side of Pizzi, tagging Ido Cohen and Martins. The contact forced the Frenchman to pull over into retirement at Radillion, bringing out the first Safety Car appearance of the day.

CONTINUES

As a result, in only his second F3 weekend, it was up to Goethe to get racing back underway on Lap 5. Going early on the restart and getting out of shape into the final chicane gifted Collet the chance to fly past the Campos Racing car into the lead and left the door open for Maloney and Stanek to find their own ways through.

No sooner than the action resumed did the Safety Car return to the track after Grégoire Saucy and Josep Maríà Martí touched wheels, resulting in the early retirement of a second ART car. This left the job up to leader Collet when the green flags were waved on Lap 10. Opting to go early on the restart couldn't stop Maloney from pulling himself through into the front of the field around the outside of Les Combes.

Having been handed a five second penalty for rejoining the track unsafely, Collet knew it was time to be strategic as he battled with Stanek for second. Whilst the Czech driver backed out of his first attempt at a move, it wasn't long before he found his way through on the Brazilian, who decided not to put up too much of a fight.

Just behind the leading trio, there was a three-car battle unfolding for the final spot on the podium as Bearman eventually found his way through on Edgar and set out to close the gap to Goethe for provisional third. He wasn't the only one making moves, as Vidales' confidence behind the wheel of his Campos car shone through, going aggressive on the brakes to dive past Smolyar for eighth.

As the penultimate lap began, it was Bearman's time to strike as Goethe went too deep into Turn 1. The pair flew up side-by-side into Eau Rouge, but the Prema Racing driver cautiously decided to back out and go again one lap later. With the advantage of DRS this time around, the Ferrari Academy junior sailed past Goethe to claim his second podium of the weekend.

However, it was all about Maloney, who took the chequered flag over a second clear of his teammate Stanek and a whopping 5.6s ahead of the third-placed Brit – much to the delight of the whole Trident team, who had worked to rebuild his car following the previous day's incident.

Despite his best efforts to carve his way through the field, Arthur Leclerc missed out on points in P11, ahead of fellow title contenders Isack Hadjar in P14 and Jak Crawford in P20.

KEY QUOTE – Zane Maloney, Trident

“Obviously very happy to get the first win in F3. Who would have thought that would happen after yesterday, so amazing job to the team – this win is only for them. Honestly, they've done an amazing job, they didn't have any sleep and I was able to go out there and win for them. So big celebrations tonight and thank you for everyone's support and also in Barbados as well for all the support.”

CONTINUES

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

As several Championship contenders leave Spa-Francorchamps with little to no points to their tallies, Bearman's consistency has thrown the title fight wide open. While Isack Hadjar continues to lead the way in the Drivers' Championship on 106 points, it's the PREMA driver who has skyrocketed up into second on 105. Only five points separate the top four, with Victor Martins and Arthur Leclerc dropping down a place each, as Roman Stanek's third podium of the season has reignited his hopes in fifth on 96.

PREMA Racing now sit a comfortable 86 points clear of their nearest rivals Trident, who move up from fourth to second and become only the second team to reach the 200-point mark. MP Motorsport and ART Grand Prix drop down to third and fourth respectively, as Hitech Grand Prix hold firm in fifth.

UP NEXT

There's no time to rest as the penultimate round of the 2022 season is only a few days away, with the 30-car field heading to the twisty Zandvoort circuit from September 2-4.

CONTINUES

2022 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 7 FEATURE RACE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Zane Maloney	Trident
2	Roman Stanek	Trident
3	Oliver Bearman	PREMA Racing
4	Oliver Goethe	Campos Racing
5	Jonny Edgar	Trident
6	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
7	David Vidales	Campos Racing
8	William Alatalo	Jenzer Motorsport
9	Alexander Smolyar	MP Motorsport
10	Reece Ushijima	Van Amersfoort Racing
11	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
12	Franco Colapinto	Van Amersfoort Racing
13	Zak O'Sullivan	Carlin
14	Isack Hadjar	Hitech Grand Prix
15	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
16	Kaylen Frederick	Hitech Grand Prix
17	Jak Crawford	PREMA Racing
18	Brad Benavides	Carlin
19	Rafael Villagómez	Van Amersfoort Racing
20	Nazim Azman	Hitech Grand Prix
21	Francesco Pizzi	Charouz Racing System
22	Josep María Martí	Campos Racing
23	Christian Mansell	Charouz Racing System
24	Enzo Trulli	Carlin
25	László Tóth	Charouz Racing System
26	Federico Malvestiti	Jenzer Motorsport

NOT CLASSIFIED

DNF	Grégoire Saucy	ART Grand Prix
DNF	Ido Cohen	Jenzer Motorsport
DNF	Victor Martins	ART Grand Prix
DNF	Kush Maini	MP Motorsport

Fastest lap Zane Maloney | **Trident**
2:07.838 (Lap 12)