

Aron fastest in interrupted final practice session for F3 Macau Grand Prix



Estonian Paul Aron was fastest in final practice for the Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix – FIA F3 World Cup on Friday, but numerous interruptions left drivers struggling to get any meaningful running done.

The 40-minute practice session around the famous Guia Circuit had barely got going before the first trouble hit when Aron himself helped trigger the first red flag after misjudging his line around the Melco Hairpin.

The SJM Theodore PREMA Racing ended up understeering towards the barrier on the outside and, although able to stop before making contact, he was unable to manoeuvre himself to get around the bend. With his car blocking the circuit, multiple drivers including Oliver Goethe and Sophie Flörsch were stuck in a line behind him.

A Virtual Safety Car period was called to help marshals move the cars around to free up the traffic jam, but in the end, it was decided that a red flag was required since the recovery was taking too long.

While the focus was on the incident at Melco, other drivers had already hit trouble – with Hitech Pulse-Eight duo Luke Browning and Alex Dunne both returning to the pits with minor car damage. Browning had a dislodged front wing which was replaced, while Dunne needed a new wing and a repair of left-front suspension.

The session resumed with 28 minutes remaining, but there were several periods where drivers had to back off because of a VSC incident. First Browning had gone down the escape road at Lisboa and needed help to get going again, while a couple of minutes later Tommy Smith and Mari Boya both had similar moments at the same corner.

With 15 minutes to go, ART Grand Prix driver Nikola Tsolov brought out the second red flag after he clipped the wall at Moorish Hill and came to a halt with a damaged car.

This run of incidents meant that, when the session resumed with six minutes to go, no drivers had completed a fully representative flying lap. But drivers were able to finally get two flying laps in the end, with Aron setting his best lap of 2m06.327 seconds as he took the chequered flag – just edging out Browning by 0.029 seconds.

Provisional pole position man Gabriele Minì did not take to the track for the final restart after damaging his left rear wheel in a brush with the wall and deciding against fitting a fresh set of tyres.

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Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee
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