

Friday 30 June 2023

Saucy claims first F3 pole after Aron loses lap for track limits

ART Grand Prix's Grégoire Saucy secured his first Formula 3 pole position in Spielberg after a dramatic Qualifying session around the Red Bull Ring. PREMA Racing's Paul Aron had ended the session fastest of all but dropped to P4 after losing his best time for exceeding track limits.

His demotion moved Saucy's 1:20.457 up into to P1 and PREMA teammate Dino Beganovic onto the front row. The Swede was just 0.004s off Saucy's pole time, while Championship leader Gabriel Bortoleto secured third place in his #5 Trident.

With patches of rain on the weather radars, everyone was out immediately at the green light. Caio Collet led the way as the rest jostled for track position, and the Van Amersfoort Racing driver set the first time to beat with a 1:21.078.

Franco Colapinto and Mari Boya went quickest consecutively for MP Motorsport before Aron secured the top spot for PREMA Racing on a 1:20.578. He shaved a few hundredths off that on his next effort, lowering the benchmark to a 1:20.518. Beganovic then edged just 0.003s ahead of the Estonian for P1 to cap off a frenetic opening 10 minutes.

Having been bumped down the order as others improved, Collet moved back up to P7 and was one of the only drivers to improve on their second run on their first set of tyres.

With 15 minutes gone, Beganovic headed up Aron, Gabriel Bortoleto, Josep María Martí and Gabriele Minì in the top five. After everyone returned to the pits to fit a fresh set of the soft Pirelli tyres, the track was busy once again with nine minutes remaining.

There were improvements throughout the field, but nobody could leap ahead of either PREMA driver prior to the final two minutes of the session. Colapinto moved up to third while Oliver Goethe went ahead of Bortoleto, fourth and fifth for Trident respectively.

On the final laps, the Championship leader improved to take provisional pole by 0.044s until Beganovic and then Aron usurped him again. The Mercedes junior managed to go fastest of all once more with a 1:20.283, while Saucy was one of the few late improvers ahead of the chequered flag.

There was one final twist though, with Aron losing his would-be pole lap for exceeding track limits. He wasn't the only driver to lose their lap. Nikita Bedrin had been inside the top five for Jenzer Motorsport but dropped down to P22 after the session finished.

It meant that Collet ended up fifth ahead of Zak O'Sullivan, Colapinto, Goethe, Kaylen Frederick and Christian Mansell inside the top 10. Gabriele Minì and Josep María Martí will start Saturday's Sprint Race on the front row, with the Campos Racing driver on reverse grid pole after ending Qualifying 12th.

The F3 Sprint Race is set to start at 10:00 local time tomorrow.

2023 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 6 QUALIFYING PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM	LAPTIME
1	Grégoire Saucy	CHE	ART Grand Prix	1:20.457
2	Dino Beganovic	SWE	PREMA Racing	1:20.461
3	Gabriel Bortoleto	BRA	Trident	1:20.474
4	Paul Aron	EST	PREMA Racing	1:20.521
5	Caio Collet	BRA	Van Amersfoort Racing	1:20.547
6	Zak O'Sullivan	GBR	PREMA Racing	1:20.566
7	Franco Colapinto	ARG	MP Motorsport	1:20.604
8	Oliver Goethe	DEU	Trident	1:20.642
9	Kaylen Frederick	USA	ART Grand Prix	1:20.653
10	Christian Mansell	GBR	Campos Racing	1:20.744
11	Gabriele Minì	ITA	Hitech Pulse-Eight	1:20.798
12	Josep María Martí	ESP	Campos Racing	1:20.819
13	Mari Boya	ESP	MP Motorsport	1:20.824
14	Luke Browning	GBR	Hitech Pulse-Eight	1:20.980
15	Sebastian Montoya	COL	Hitech Pulse-Eight	1:20.984
16	Jonny Edgar	GBR	MP Motorsport	1:21.072
17	Nikola Tsolov	BGR	ART Grand Prix	1:21.083
18	Taylor Barnard	GBR	Jenzer Motorsport	1:21.127
19	Hugh Barter	AUS	Campos Racing	1:21.142
20	Oliver Gray	GBR	Rodin Carlin	1:21.207
21	Sophia Floersch	DEU	PHM Racing by Charouz	1:21.267
22	Nikita Bedrin	ITA	Jenzer Motorsport	1:21.320
23	McKenzy Cresswell	GBR	PHM Racing by Charouz	1:21.362
24	Hunter Yeany	USA	Rodin Carlin	1:21.509
25	Ido Cohen	ISR	Rodin Carlin	1:21.518
26	Rafael Villagómez	MEX	Van Amersfoort Racing	1:21.520
27	Alejandro García	MEX	Jenzer Motorsport	1:21.934
28	Tommy Smith	AUS	Van Amersfoort Racing	1:22.262
29	Roberto Faria	BRA	PHM Racing by Charouz	1:22.375

NOT CLASSIFIED - 107%

	Leonardo Fornaroli	ITA	Trident	1:46.440
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