

Sunday 5 March 2023

Bortoleto leads Trident 1-2 after late heartbreak for Minì

Gabriel Bortoleto brought home his first Formula 3 victory on his debut weekend in the Championship. Meanwhile, a time penalty and late Safety Car appearance relegated pole-sitter Gabriele Minì to eighth.

Starting second on the grid, Bortoleto assumed the lead early on, before fellow rookie Minì dispatched him for the lead on Lap 10. Keeping within touching distance of the Hitech Pulse-Eight driver, the Trident was in a prime position to benefit when the Safety Car bunched the field back together and was promoted to the win.

Oliver Goethe ensured a strong haul of points for Trident, taking his maiden podium in second, whilst Dino Beganovic showed what he was made of, getting his elbows out to slice his way through to third.

AS IT HAPPENED

Minì and Bortoleto had each other for company on the front row but it was the Trident that got the better start. He snatched the lead into Turn 1 as Minì fell behind ART Grand Prix's Grégoire Saucy.

Further back, Jonny Edgar attempted to do the same. The MP Motorsport driver managed to make up five places in the opening two laps to get into the points.

Despite DRS being activated after one racing lap, Bortoleto didn't need to worry as the Brazilian driver was already two seconds up the road by Lap 2. Looking to avenge his start, Minì went brave on the brakes around the outside of Saucy through Turn 4 to reclaim second.

Hugh Barter's race came undone on Lap 5 after Edgar clipped his right rear tyre in the battle for 10th, forcing the Campos Racing driver to limp back to the pits with a puncture.

The Safety Car was deployed on Lap 7 following contact at the hairpin between MP's Mari Boya and Van Amersfoort Racing's Tommy Smith. The Australian resumed but Boya was forced to pull off track and retire.

At the Safety Car restart, Minì made swift work of Bortoleto to regain the lead. However, the Italian's race soon turned on its head, as the Hitech Pulse-Eight driver was awarded a five-second time penalty for incorrect positioning in his box on the grid.

Having started down in P17, Luke Browning was making moves left right and centre. The Hitech Pulse-Eight made it up to eighth, following Sakhir Sprint Race winner Josep María Martí through on Trident's Leonardo Fornaroli, who's tyres were fading quickly.

Fornaroli's teammate Oliver Goethe climbed up into the podium positions, swooping around the outside of Saucy for third.

The third Hitech Pulse-Eight of Sebastián Montoya was on a charge of his own, sailing past Fornaroli for ninth along the main straight. The Italian then immediately lost out again to PREMA Racing's Paul Aron and Zak O'Sullivan, before sustaining a puncture after his right rear tyre was grazed by Nikola Tsolov.

Beganovic continued his progression up the order from eighth on the grid. The Ferrari Academy junior got the switch back done on Saucy for fourth at Turn 4.

Out front, Mini's efforts to build a gap and hold on to a podium spot disintegrated on the penultimate lap. At the tail end of the field, Smith went too deep into Turn 1, locked up and made contact with PHM Racing by Charouz's Roberto Faria – triggering the Safety Car.

With his advantage wiped away, there was nothing the Alpine junior could do, as Bortoleto was promoted to the victory and claimed the point for the fastest lap. Goethe's efforts were rewarded with second, as rookie Beganovic joined them on the podium.

Saucy added more points to ART's total in fourth, as Browning made up 12 places to secure his first F3 points finish in fifth. Martí finished sixth for Campos Racing, after starting 11th. Frederick was seventh, whilst Mini was forced to settle for eighth.

Montoya put in another storming fight back through the field in ninth and Franco Colapinto rounded out the top 10, after Aron received a five-second time penalty for track limits, dropping the Estonian to 11th.

KEY QUOTE – Gabriele Bortoleto, Trident

"Very, very happy to win my first Feature Race in Formula 3. It's an amazing start to the season, I hope we can keep up like this and thanks to everyone supporting us this weekend. Thanks to Trident and to everyone from Brazil as well. I'm very happy, we keep going like this!"

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

Bortoleto leaves the opening round with the Drivers' Championship lead, sitting atop with 26 points. He's three points ahead of his teammate Goethe, while two top four finishes mean Dino Beganovic sits in third on 22 points.

In the Teams' Standings, Trident start their 2023 campaign off strong with 52 points, 24 points ahead of PREMA Racing. ART Grand Prix are close behind in third on 22 points.

WHAT'S NEXT?

F3 will return at the end of the month when the Championship takes its first visit down under to Australia. Round 2 gets underway at Melbourne's Albert Park Circuit from March 31 – April 2.

CONTINUES

2023 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 1 FEATURE RACE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM
1	Gabriel Bortoleto	BRA	Trident
2	Oliver Goethe	DEU	Trident
3	Dino Beganovic	SWE	PREMA Racing
4	Grégoire Saucy	CHE	ART Grand Prix
5	Luke Browning	GBR	Hitech Pulse-Eight
6	Josep María Martí	ESP	Campos Racing
7	Kaylen Frederick	USA	ART Grand Prix
8	Gabriele Mini	ITA	Hitech Pulse-Eight
9	Sebastian Montoya	COL	Hitech Pulse-Eight
10	Franco Colapinto	ARG	MP Motorsport
11	Paul Aron	EST	PREMA Racing
12	Zak O'Sullivan	GBR	PREMA Racing
13	Christian Mansell	GBR	Campos Racing
14	Caio Collet	BRA	Van Amersfoort Racing
15	Nikola Tsolov	BGR	ART Grand Prix
16	Taylor Barnard	GBR	Jenzer Motorsport
17	Nikita Bedrin	ITA	Jenzer Motorsport
18	Oliver Gray	GBR	Rodin Carlin
19	Ido Cohen	ISR	Rodin Carlin
20	Rafael Villagómez	MEX	Van Amersfoort Racing
21	Sophia Floersch	DEU	PHM Racing by Charouz
22	Hunter Yeany	USA	Rodin Carlin
23	Jonny Edgar	GBR	MP Motorsport
24	Piotr Wisnicki	POL	PHM Racing by Charouz
25	Roberto Faria	BRA	PHM Racing by Charouz
26	Hugh Barter	AUS	Campos Racing
27	Leonardo Fornaroli	ITA	Trident
28	Tommy Smith	AUS	Van Amersfoort Racing
29	Alejandro García	MEX	Jenzer Motorsport

NOT CLASSIFIED

DNF	Mari Boya	ESP	MP Motorsport
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OVERALL FASTEST LAP

Gabriel Bortoleto	BRA	Trident
1:50.743 (Lap 2)		

FASTEST LAP ELIGIBLE FOR POINTS

Gabriel Bortoleto	BRA	Trident
1:50.743 (Lap 2)		

SAKHIR POST-FEATURE RACE PENALTIES

5 March 2023



Paul Aron has received a five-second time penalty following the Sakhir Feature Race. The **PREMA Racing** driver was penalised for causing an avoidable collision with teammate Zak O'Sullivan at Turn 11. The penalty drops him behind O'Sullivan to P12.

Oliver Gray has been handed a five-second time penalty for track limits violations. The penalty puts the **Rodin Carlin** driver down to 21st.

Tommy Smith has received two separate penalties. The **Van Amersfoort Racing** driver was involved in two incidents resulting in contact. The first was at Turn 8 on Lap 7 and the second coming at Turn 1 that resulted in his retirement from the race.

For the first incident, Smith was handed a three-place grid penalty for the Melbourne Sprint Race. For the second incident, the VAR driver was assigned a 10-second time penalty that will be converted to a three-place grid drop for the Melbourne Sprint.