

# JAMES WHARTON CLAIMS VICTORY IN THE FIRST BARCELONA RACE AS PREMA SECURES TEAM TITLE

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**James Wharton's** weekend in **Barcelona** started on the right foot, as the **Australian** driver claimed his third win of the season in the **Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine** after securing his fourth pole position of the year. Wharton's win in Race 1 not only earned him a spot on the top step of the podium but also moved him ahead of **Brando Badoer (Van Amersfoort Racing)** in the overall championship standings, where he now holds third place. This result provided crucial points for the Grisignano di Zocco-based team, who celebrated clinching their third consecutive team title in the series organized by **ACI Sport** and **Alpine Racing**.

Thanks to a perfect start, following two additional formation laps due to **Yaroslav Veselaho's (ART Grand Prix)** car stalling at the pit lane entry, Wharton held the lead from start to finish. Behind him, **Tuukka Taponen (R-ace GP)** made a crucial move, overtaking **Rafael Camara (Prema Racing)** to claim second place. This result keeps the Finnish driver in the title hunt, while Camara, the current championship leader, strengthened his position with valuable points for both his individual title charge and Prema Racing's team victory.





Barcelona (ESP), SEP 27-29 2024 – Round nine of the Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine 2024 at Circuit Barcelona Catalunya. Start race 1. © 2024 Dutch Photo Agency.

Just off the podium in fourth place was Badoer, who maintained his position throughout the race. Behind the Italian, **Noah Strømsted (RPM)** secured fifth and was the top rookie of the race. The Dane was involved in a collision with **Pedro Clerot** (Van Amersfoort Racing) at the first corner, forcing Clerot to retire and triggering the race's only safety car period. **Théophile Naël (Saintéloc Racing)**, winner of the second race at the Red Bull Ring, finished sixth ahead of his teammate **Enzo Peugeot**, who was recognized with the Racelience Award for his stellar performance at the Austrian round. **Alessandro Giusti** (ART Grand Prix) finished eighth, while **Roman Bilinski (Trident)** and **Ivan Domingues** (Van Amersfoort Racing) rounded out the top 10.

The Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine returns tomorrow with the second qualifying session at 10:10, followed by Race 2 at 16:20, both of which will be broadcast live on YouTube.



Barcelona (ESP), September 27-29, 2024 – FRECA Round 9 at Circuit de Barcelona, Catalunya. Podium race 1. © 2024 Dutch Photo Agency.

#### James Wharton – Prema Racing

*"I'm really proud of what I achieved today. The car was fantastic, starting from qualifying where it was the fastest, and in the race, it helped me build a solid gap to those behind me. I was able to drive well and secure a great result. Now, we have three races ahead, and we aim to continue in this way."*

#### Tuukka Taponen – R-ace GP

*"As you can see, it's really difficult to overtake on this track. The key moment of the race was the start, where I got off the line really well and managed to pass Rafael. We maximized what we could*

*today, but we need to keep improving for tomorrow's race."*

**Rafael Camara – Prema Racing**

*"I'm fairly satisfied. It was a good race for the championship, even though my start wasn't great. We had a good pace throughout the race, and I kept constant pressure on Tuukka, but unfortunately, overtaking on this circuit is very difficult, especially in the final corners. Now we're fully focused on tomorrow's qualifying."*

**Noah Strømsted – RPM**

*"Today, I managed to get a good start, moving from seventh to fifth by the first corner. I stayed there until the end because overtaking here in Spain is quite tricky. I managed my tires and stayed with the group. We're bringing home more important points for both the rookie standings and the overall championship."*

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