

# JAMES WHARTON SECURES POLE POSITION FOR BARCELONA RACE 1

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The first qualifying session of the **Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine** in **Barcelona** saw **James Wharton (Prema Racing)** claim the pole position with a fastest lap time of 1'35"458, marking his fourth pole of the season. The Australian driver managed to snatch the top spot from his teammate **Rafael Camara** in the final moments of the session, beating the Brazilian by just 10 thousandths of a second. Nevertheless, Camara, a Ferrari Driver Academy member, will start alongside Wharton on the front row for Race 1, where he could potentially be crowned series champion.

The Prema Racing driver has shown strong pace on the Iberian circuit since Friday's testing, consistently setting the fastest times. Camara replicated that form in the first official session, dominating Group A and finishing ahead of a quick **Brando Badoer**, who trailed by less than two-tenths. Behind the **Van Amersfoort Racing** driver, **Zachary David (R-ace GP)** delivered a solid performance, securing the third-fastest time and a spot on the third row. Another strong showing came from French driver **Romain Andriolo (G4 Racing)**, who clinched the fourth row in the closing stages, ahead of **Alessandro Giusti (ART Grand Prix)** and **Roman Bilinski (Trident)**, who took fifth and sixth, respectively.





Barcelona (ESP), SEP 27-29 2024 – Round nine of the Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine 2024 at Circuit Barcelona Catalunya. Rafael CAMARA #05, Prema Racing. © 2024 Dutch Photo Agency.

In Group B, Wharton quickly took control of the session before being briefly overtaken by **Tuukka Taponen (R-ace GP)**, who eventually settled for the second-fastest time. The Finnish driver will need to rely on his racecraft in today's first race, starting from the second row, as he must remain close to Camara to keep his title hopes alive. **Ugo Ugochukwu** (Prema Racing) also performed well, securing a third-row start alongside David after a session in which the American was consistently among the quickest drivers. Rookie standouts **Noah Strømsted (RPM)** and **Pedro Clerot (Van Amersfoort Racing)** also impressed, completing the top five in their group.

Engines will fire up again this afternoon at 15:05 for Race 1, which will be broadcast live on the official [YouTube](#) channel of the championship.

#### **James Wharton – Prema Racing**

*"We found a different track compared to yesterday's testing. Seeing the lap time that Rafael set was both concerning and motivating. Once I was on track, I saw from the dashboard that things were going really well, thanks to a perfect car. I have to thank the team for the great work they've done."*

#### **Rafael Camara – Prema Racing**

*"I'm happy to be starting from the front row. The car was perfect, and I did my job. Now we're focused on the race, where we aim for the points that matter for the championship."*

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