

Saturday, 18 May 2024

León takes first F3 win after last-lap drama

Noel León took Imola Sprint Race victory for Van Amersfoort Racing on a dramatic day of racing. The Mexican driver finished second on the road after Campos Racing's Oliver Goethe overtook the VAR driver on the final lap at a Virtual Safety Car restart.

But, a time penalty for Goethe from a prior Safety Car restart infringement put León back ahead on the timesheets, while Tim Tramnitz made the podium for MP Motorsport in third position.

AS IT HAPPENED

Pole sitter Kacper Sztuka had León tucked into the slipstream from lights out and with the tow, the Mexican rounded the MP rookie to take the lead into the first chicane. Tramnitz followed through on his teammate to take second place before Goethe then moved himself up to third having started from sixth on the grid.

Contact for Campos' Mari Boya left the Spaniard spinning at Turn 6 and in the gravel. That brought out the Safety Car before the opening lap was completed.

León led the restart entering Lap 4 with a comfortable buffer over Tramnitz in second and the VAR driver's lead was 1.2s after the first lap back under racing conditions.

The Safety Car was back out on Lap 5 after Callum Voisin found the barriers on the exit of Turn 7. Contact with the Jenzer Motorsport car belonging to Charlie Wurz bounced the Rodin Motorsport driver wide and into the wall. He was out of the car and ok and the Austrian was later handed a 10-second time penalty for the incident.

León didn't get the same launch as first time around as racing got back underway on Lap 8, but despite his best efforts, Tramnitz couldn't find room to pass into the first chicane.

Further back, Sami Meguetounif went spinning into the gravel after the slightest of touches with the rear of Dino Beganovic's PREMA Racing car ahead of him into Turn 2. The Trident driver was left beached in the gravel and out of the race, requiring another Safety Car.

The Safety Car was withdrawn heading on to Lap 11, and León got a stronger restart to hold onto the lead comfortably this time around.

Gabriele Minì had been tucked up behind the ART Grand Prix car of Laurens van Hoepen, but the Italian driver finally cleared him into Turns 5 and 6 with a brave pass into the chicane.

With León over a second clear, Tramnitz was on the defensive from Goethe but with DRS, the Campos driver cleared his fellow Red Bull Junior Team member into Turn 2 on Lap 13.

There was a fourth Safety Car deployed on Lap 13, but it was quickly withdrawn, and racing resumed on Lap 15. Once again, León managed the restart perfectly to keep hold of the lead as the top three broke clear of the chasing pack.

Beganovic was able to pass Sztuka for fourth with two laps to go, as the Swede made his way by the MP rookie into the first chicane. Browning tried to follow the PREMA through but suffered contact with the Polish driver that broke his front wing and left him in the gravel at Turn 7.

The brief Virtual Safety Car which was withdrawn on the final lap allowed Goethe to catch León unawares and take the lead out of Turn 15. The German led through the final corners to earn the Imola Sprint victory on the road, but a time penalty for him and Tramnitz for a prior Safety Car infringement left both with a five-second time penalty.

León therefore regained the win ahead of Goethe and Tramnitz, who remained on the podium despite their penalties.

Beganovic ended up fourth ahead of Sztuka and Mini, who passed van Hoepen on the final lap for sixth. Arvid Lindblad was eighth ahead of Nikita Bedrin for AIX Racing and Santiago Ramos of Trident rounding out the points in 10th.

KEY QUOTE – Noel León, Van Amersfoort Racing

“Super happy with the win. At the end it was a little bit tricky with Ollie, but we managed things quite well, had a good start and then managed from there. Really happy, thank you to the team for an amazing car and let’s hope tomorrow that we can finish in the points.”

CONTINUES

THE CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

With the top two in the Championship failing to score points on Saturday, Gabriele Minì joins Luke Browning and Leonardo Fornaroli at the top of the Standings on 37 points apiece. Dino Beganovic is fourth for PREMA Racing a further two points behind, while another podium for Tim Tramnitz puts the MP Motorsport driver fifth on 29 points.

In the Teams' Standings, PREMA Racing lead the pack on 98 points ahead of Trident who move onto 61. ART Grand Prix are third as Campos Racing go level with them on 49 points. Hitech Pulse-Eight are in fifth, a further two points behind.

UP NEXT

The Formula 3 Feature Race from Imola is set to get underway at 08:30 local time on Sunday morning. Who will lead the Championship heading to Monte Carlo?

CONTINUES

2024 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 3 SPRINT RACE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM
1	Noel Leon	MEX	Van Amersfoort Racing
2	Oliver Goethe	DEU	Campos Racing
3	Tim Tramnitz	DEU	MP Motorsport
4	Dino Beganovic	SWE	PREMA Racing
5	Kacper Sztuka	POL	MP Motorsport
6	Gabriele Mini	ITA	PREMA Racing
7	Laurens van Hoepen	NLD	ART Grand Prix
8	Arvid Lindblad	GBR	PREMA Racing
9	Nikita Bedrin	ITA	AIX Racing
10	Santiago Ramos	MEX	Trident
11	Leonardo Fornaroli	ITA	Trident
12	Christian Mansell	AUS	ART Grand Prix
13	Nikola Tsolov	BGR	ART Grand Prix
14	Alexander Dunne	IRL	MP Motorsport
15	Sophia Floersch	DEU	Van Amersfoort Racing
16	Joshua Dufek	AUT	AIX Racing
17	Matias Zagazeta	PER	Jenzer Motorsport
18	Max Esterson	USA	Jenzer Motorsport
19	Cian Shields	GBR	Hitech Pulse-Eight
20	Piotr Wisnicki	POL	Rodin Motorsport
21	Joseph Loake	GBR	Rodin Motorsport
22	Martinius Stenshorne	NOR	Hitech Pulse-Eight
23	Charlie Wurz	AUT	Jenzer Motorsport
24	Tommy Smith	AUS	Van Amersfoort Racing
25	Sebastian Montoya	COL	Campos Racing
26	Luke Browning	GBR	Hitech Pulse-Eight

NOT CLASSIFIED - 107%

DNF	Tasanapol Inthraphuvasak	THA	AIX Racing
DNF	Sami Meguetounif	FRA	Trident
DNF	Callum Voisin	GBR	Rodin Motorsport
DNF	Mari Boya	ESP	Campos Racing

OVERALL FASTEST LAP

Oliver Goethe	DEU	Campos Racing	1:33.596 (Lap17)
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FASTEST LAP ELIGIBLE FOR POINTS

Oliver Goethe	DEU	Campos Racing	1:33.596 (Lap17)
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ENDS

GOETHE MOVES BACK TO P1 AFTER SAFETY CAR PENALTY OVERTURNED

18 May 2024



Following the conclusion of the FIA Formula 3 Sprint Race at Imola, Campos Racing's Oliver Goethe has been reinstated as the Sprint Race winner. It comes after the removal of the five-second time penalty that was applied immediately after the conclusion of the Sprint Race.

Goethe initially was found to have breached Article 40.7 of the 2024 FIA Formula 3 Sporting Regulations, specifically failing to stay above the minimum time during the Safety Car procedure.

The Stewards examined available timing data evidence following the Sprint Race along with the race control messaging system.

After taking into account all of the information, the Stewards ruled that the penalty assigned to Goethe in-race was invalid due to the timing matrix not reflecting changes made to Article 40.7 of the 2024 Sporting Regulations at the start of the season. Because of this, the penalty applied to Goethe in the race was incorrect, and as a result of its removal, moves him back to P1.