



PRESS RELEASE

25.07.2026

Nael takes impressive Budapest victory as Slater ties Ugochukwu on points



Campos Racing's Théophile Nael claimed his second victory of the season with an impressive performance from sixth on the grid to win the Budapest Sprint Race. The French driver's excellent start put him in contention early on before later overtaking Kanato Le for the lead. He went on to win the race, while the ART Grand Prix rookie took his maiden podium in second, as Ernesto Rivera made it two Campos cars on the rostrum in P3.

AS IT HAPPENED

It was a great start from fourth place for Gerrard Xie, who took the lead before getting up to Turn 1. Le settled into second ahead of Nael with Ernesto Rivera in fourth. But the Safety Car was called upon following a collision at the front of the field. Jin Nakamura hit the rear of Xie heading into Turn 2 before going into the side of Maciej Gladysz.

Nakamura and Gladysz were out of the race, while Xie continued on to the pitlane with a right rear puncture, before coming back out the at the back of the field. Racing resumed on Lap 4 and Le led Nael away with Rivera in third ahead of Mattia Colnaghi, with Brando Badoer in fifth.

In the battle for sixth, after multiple laps of pressure, Ugo Ugochukwu made his way past Nicola Lacorte with the help of DRS into Turn 1. On Lap 8, Ugochukwu was up to fifth with another move at the opening corner, this time on Brando Badoer.

There was a change for the lead on the next lap with Nael, having been within DRS range for several laps, making an impressive late move on Le at Turn 1. On to Lap 11 and Le had managed to stay within DRS range of Nael, while Rivera had closed in on the top two.

It was bad news for Ugochukwu however, as he was given a five-second time penalty for leaving the track and gaining an advantage on the opening lap. At the same time, his pace was starting to fall off with Badoer right on his rear with DRS. Lap 14 of 19 and Le had managed to stay within DRS range of Nael, while Rivera dropped back, leaving the top two to fight for the lead.

For Ugochukwu he was now two seconds behind Colnaghi, and Badoer dived to the inside of the Campos at Turn 1 to retake P5. Lacorte tried to follow him through but with the gap closing, the DAMS driver and Ugochukwu made slight contact, this allowed Taponen to make a move past the Italian for seventh.

The American driver was starting to fall through the field with Taponen

now demoting him to P7 on Lap 17 at Turn 2, while Lacorte made his way past later in the lap. Back at the front, Le was coming under pressure from Rivera for P2, but Nael was in a world of his own, winning by 2.7s to earn his second victory of the season.

Le held off Rivera to take his first F3 podium, while Colnaghi finished fourth ahead of Badoer and Taponen with Lacorte in seventh. James Wharton made it up eighth for PREMA Racing after starting in P15, with Fernando Barrichello going from P17 to ninth, as Freddie Slater took the last point once Ugochukwu's penalty was applied – leaving the top two tied on points heading into the Feature Race.

KEY QUOTE – Théophile Nael, Campos Racing

“P1 today, starting from P6, super happy, really good start, the pace was really good, managed to take it easy with the tyres, and push a bit more at the end, so extremely happy, and looking forward to tomorrow.”

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

In the Drivers' Championship, Ugo Ugochukwu and Freddie Slater are tied on 104 points heading into the Feature Race, with Théophile Nael closing the gap to the top two on 75 points. Ernesto Rivera is up to fourth on 64 points, while Noah Stromsted is fifth with 59.

In the Teams' Standings, Campos Racing maintain their lead on 243 points, with TRIDENT in second on a 170. Van Amersfoort Racing are third on 131 points, with ART Grand Prix fourth on 119. Rodin Motorsport are fifth on 104.

UP NEXT

The drivers will race one more time before the summer break with Sunday's Feature Race giving them one last chance to claim victory in Budapest. Lights out is scheduled for 08:40 local time.

FIA Formula 3 - Budapest - Provisional Classification - Sprint Race

	DRIVER		LICENCE	TEAM	
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	1	Theophile Nael		FRA	Campos Racing	
	2	Kanato Le		JPN	ART Grand Prix	
	3	Ernesto Rivera		MEX	Campos Racing	
	4	Mattia Colnaghi		ARG	MP Motorsport	
	5	Brando Badoer		ITA	Rodin Motorsport	
	6	Tuukka Taponen		FIN	MP Motorsport	
	7	Nicola Lacorte		ITA	DAMS Lucas Oil	
	8	James Wharton		AUS	PREMA Racing	
	9	Fernando Barrichello		BRA	AIX Racing	
	10	Freddie Slater		GBR	TRIDENT	
	11	Yevan David		SRI	AIX Racing	
	12	Louis Sharp		NZL	PREMA Racing	
	13	Alessandro Giusti		FRA	MP Motorsport	
	14	Taito Kato		JPN	ART Grand Prix	
	15	Jose Garfias		MEX	PREMA Racing	
	16	Enzo Deligny		FRA	Van Amersfoort Racing	
	17	Ugo Ugochukwu		USA	Campos Racing	
	18	Bruno Del Pino		ESP	Van Amersfoort Racing	
	19	Fionn McLaughlin		IRL	Hitech	
	20	Noah Stromsted		DEN	TRIDENT	
	21	Pedro Clerot		BRA	Rodin Motorsport	
	22	Christian Ho		SGP	Rodin Motorsport	
	23	Woohyun Shin		KOR	Hitech	
	24	Salim Hanna		COL	AIX Racing	
	25	Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi		THA	DAMS Lucas Oil	
	26	Hiyu Yamakoshi		JPN	Van Amersfoort Racing	
	27	Matteo De Palo		ITA	TRIDENT	
	28	Gerrard Xie		CHN	DAMS Lucas Oil	

NOT CLASSIFIED

	DNF	Maciej Gladysz		POL	ART Grand Prix	
	DNF	Jin Nakamura		JPN	Hitech	

OVERALL FASTEST LAP

		Tuukka Taponen		FIN	MP Motorsport	
					1:36.516 (Lap 19)	

OVERALL FASTEST LAP FOR POINTS

		Tuukka Taponen		FIN	MP Motorsport	
					1:36.516 (Lap 19)	

ENDS

About FIA Formula 3:

2019 marked the launch of the FIA Formula 3 Championship. An ambitious new project from the FIA and the former GP3 Series Organisation to form an official third rung of the Road to F1 ladder. Combining GP3 and European F3, the idea was to create a defined entry point for young and ambitious drivers to join the Formula 1 circus, and to give them the chance to take the path to join their heroes in the main paddock. With some of the world's best racing teams on board, and the hottest junior motor racing talent from across the globe filling their race seats, Formula 3 promised to be one of the most exciting championships in motorsport.

Designed as the perfect training ground for both F2, and ultimately, F1, our young drivers must showcase their skills both in speed and in tyre management, just like they will have to do when they move up the motorsport ladder. Notable F3 alumni include 2020 Champion Oscar Piastri, F1 rookie Arvid Lindblad and of course the F1 rookie class of 2024 that included F3 Champion Gabriel Bortoleto, Oliver Bearman, Franco Colapinto and Isack Hadjar. The Championship benefits from the FIA's excellence in the scrutineering of cars and the overseeing and running of events, while FOM's (Formula One Management) unparalleled expertise in broadcasting and marketing ensures that the Championship has a truly global reach and appeal. 2026 promises to be a thrilling spectacle from start to finish.

Email: Media@FIAFormula3.com

X: [@Formula3](#)