



Salim Hanna becomes the ninth different winner of the season

The PREMA Racing driver dominates Race 2 from start to finish

Imola, 5 September 2026

Salim Hanna converted pole position into victory in the second of the three races at Imola, becoming the ninth different winner of the 2026 FIA Formula Regional European Championship season. The PREMA Racing driver led from the first lap to the last. Behind him, Oleksandr Bondarev finished second on his series debut with Van Amersfoort Racing also taking top honours in the Rookie class, while CL Motorsport's Reno Francot took third, returning to the podium for the first time since his home race at Zandvoort last May.

MP Motorsport's Sebastian Wheldon finished eighth, gaining one point on championship leader Emanuele Olivieri. The R-ace GP driver, who moved to the top of the standings after winning Race 1, crossed the line ninth and now leads Wheldon by just two points.

PREMA Racing's Kean Nakamura-Berta and R-ace GP's Rashid Al Dhaheri finished 10th and sixth respectively and are now third and fourth in the standings, both remaining firmly in contention heading into the final stages of

the title fight.

RACE REPORT

With the top 12 drivers from the opening qualifying session lining up in reverse order, Hanna started from pole position and immediately took the lead. Jules Roussel made a good getaway from the front row and slotted into second, with rookie Bondarev completing the leading trio.

At the start of lap 2, Francot overtook Kabir Anurag to move into fourth. Al Dhaheri held seventh behind Alexander Abkhazava (MP Motorsport), with Mattéo Giaccardi (ART Grand Prix) and Wheldon close behind.

On lap 3, Olivieri passed ART Grand Prix's Alexandre Munoz at Tamburello to move up to 10th. Meanwhile, Bondarev got the better of Roussel to take second place. Trident Motorsport team mates Maksimilian Popov and Andrija Kostić then both went off at the same time, ending up in the gravel and bringing out the first Safety Car.

Hanna retained the lead at the restart, with Bondarev applying pressure behind him. Olivieri and Wheldon moved up to eighth and ninth respectively, behind Al Dhaheri.

Further back, MP Motorsport's Zhenrui Chi and Yuki Sano made contact. The Japanese R-ace GP driver came off worse, becoming stranded in the gravel. The Safety Car was deployed again, with racing resuming with just over 10 minutes remaining. Hanna resisted Bondarev's attacks and kept the rest of the field behind.

At the start of lap 13, Abkhazava made a small mistake at Rivazza and Al Dhaheri passed him to move into sixth. Shortly afterwards, Wheldon overtook Olivieri, relegating the Italian driver to ninth ahead of Nakamura-Berta. Francot, meanwhile, moved into third after passing his team mate Roussel.

G4 Racing's Marcus Saeter then went off, triggering a third Safety Car period. Racing resumed with one final lap remaining, but Hanna held on to the lead ahead of Bondarev and Francot.

Salim Hanna (PREMA Racing, winner): *"I'm extremely happy to have finally taken my first victory in this championship. It took a little time, but today was certainly very positive. Even though it was the reverse-grid race, we made a very good start and the car felt better than it did in qualifying. There is still plenty of room to improve both the car and my driving, but we had an*

opportunity to win today and we made the most of it. We executed everything well, and now we will work hard ahead of tomorrow's qualifying to find more pace. I want to thank the team, God, my family and everyone supporting me."

Oleksandr Bondarev (Van Amersfoort Racing, 2nd and Rookie winner): *"To be honest, it has been a really difficult year for us in Formula 4. I knew that stepping up to Formula Regional for the final two rounds of the season would be the right choice for me. I didn't expect to be on the pace so quickly. We were near the front in every session, including free practice, and we were also quite fast in qualifying. During the race, we were constantly applying pressure and I managed to complete an overtake. I'm extremely happy with the result. I have very little experience in this car compared with my rivals, so to be on the pace immediately is very encouraging. I can't thank Van Amersfoort Racing enough for welcoming me into the team and helping me prepare as thoroughly as possible."*

Reno Francot (CL Motorsport, 3rd): *"We had a really good start to the season, but then encountered some technical issues during the second part of the year. If you put those problems aside, the pace was still there. We managed to resolve them over the summer break and now we are immediately back on the podium. It feels good to be back, and hopefully we can achieve a few more results like this."*

Tomorrow's programme begins with Qualifying 2 from 08:45 to 09:20 CEST, which will set the grid for the third and final race of the weekend. The 30-minute-plus-one-lap race will get underway at 16:30 CEST and will be broadcast in more than 200 territories and streamed live on the Championship's official YouTube channel, @fiaformularegionaleu.

** Results are still provisional*

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