



## **Munoz claims maiden FIA FREC victory in wet Race 1 at Spa**

*The ART Grand Prix driver converted pole position into a lights-to-flag win*

Spa, 30 May 2026

Alexandre Munoz converted pole position into his maiden FIA Formula Regional European Championship victory at Spa-Francorchamps, becoming the fifth different race winner in the first six races of the season.

The French rookie came out on top in the opening race of the weekend, which had been postponed due to adverse weather conditions and later took the place of the reversed-grid Race 2 after the latter was cancelled.

Munoz prevailed in the first wet race of the season which featured three Safety Car periods. The ART Grand Prix driver held off Rashid Al Dhaheri (R-ace GP) and PREMA Racing's Kean Nakamura-Berta, who joined him on the podium in second and third respectively.

Behind them came Yuki Sano. The Japanese driver secured his best result of the season with R-ace GP's second entry.

Championship leader Sebastian Wheldon followed in fifth. Fresh from a double victory at Zandvoort last weekend, the MP Motorsport's driver secured another solid points finish to maintain his advantage at the top of the standings.

With the rain stopping, the race started behind the Safety Car on a wet track. When racing got underway, Munoz led the pack with Al Dhaheri immediately looking for a way past. However, the Frenchman defended firmly to retain the lead. Behind them, Nakamura-Berta ran close to Al Dhaheri in third, ahead of Wheldon.

Further back, Sano overtook Alex Ninovic (Rodin Motorsport) to move into fifth, while CL Motorsport's Reno Francot had contact with Maksimilian Popov. Emanuele Olivieri (R-ace GP) also made progress, passing Rodin Motorsport's Gabriel Gomez to climb to eighth.

With 18 minutes remaining, there was a second Safety Car intervention after Dion Gowda crashed into the barriers at Turn 11. Racing resumed with just under 10 minutes left on the clock, with Munoz opening a small gap at the front. Behind him, Nakamura-Berta began to pressure Al Dhaheri for second place.

The race was neutralised once again less than a lap later, this time to recover Zhenrui Chi's stranded MP Motorsport car from the gravel. At the final restart, Al Dhaheri launched another attack on Munoz, but the ART Grand Prix rookie held firm and remained in control to the chequered flag. Al Dhaheri then had to fend off the advances of Nakamura-Berta in an intense but clean fight for second place. The R-ace GP driver held on to secure the runner-up spot, while Nakamura-Berta completed the podium in third, setting the fastest lap of the race and finishing just 0.437s behind the winner.

Olivieri delivered a strong recovery drive to finish sixth behind Wheldon. Next came the Rodin Motorsport trio of Ninovic, Reza Seewooruthun and Gomez, while Trident Motorsport's Popov completed the top 10.

**Alexandre Munoz (Race 1 and Rookie winner):** *"The wet conditions were a completely new experience for us this weekend with the new car, but the pace was really strong from the start of the race. The car felt fantastic in the opening stages and I was able to build a gap of almost two seconds to the cars behind. The race became quite intense towards the end, especially after the final Safety Car when Rashid was right behind me. It was all about managing the restart, staying focused and defending when necessary. In the end, we got the win, and that's what matters most. Now the goal is to carry this momentum into tomorrow."*

**Rashid Al Dhaheri (R-ace GP, 2nd):** "To be honest, I'm a little bit greedy because I think we could have finished one position higher. We had a really good battle out there and it was quite entertaining as well. We hadn't done any running in wet conditions this weekend and, in general, we still have limited experience in the wet with this new car, so I think the team did a great job giving me a package capable of fighting at the front. At the end of the day, it's always easy to look back and think about what might have been, but we came away with second place, which is still a very strong result. We'll keep working hard and I'm confident that our first win will come soon."

**Kean Nakamura-Berta (PREMA Racing, 3rd):** *"It was quite an interesting race. It was my first time driving in wet conditions at Spa, in any car, so there was a lot of adapting and improvising, especially at the start. It was also quite chaotic because we didn't really know what the weather was going to do, but fortunately the rain never became too heavy and we were able to get the race underway. We looked quite competitive in the early stages and were putting Rashid under some pressure before the first Safety Car. After that, though, I struggled a little on the restarts. Still, it's good to be building some momentum again. We had a decent result at Zandvoort and another solid one here with third place. We'll keep moving forward, keep collecting points and stay patient. If we continue working like this, the results will come."*

Attention now turns to Qualifying 2, scheduled for 09:55 CEST on Sunday. The session will determine the grid for Race 3 set to get underway at 14:20 CEST.

Both Qualifying and the race will be streamed live on the official FIA Formula Regional European Championship YouTube channel (@fiaformularegionaleu) and broadcast by over 80 broadcasters worldwide, including ACI Sport TV. [Where to watch.](#)

*Race 1 result is still provisional.*

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