




31 May 2026

Popov takes pole for FIA FREC final race at Spa



Maksimilian Popov became the fourth different pole-sitter of the season after securing the first pole position of his single-seater career in the FIA FREC Qualifying 2 at Spa. The Trident Motorsport driver – who had earlier lost the point for 10th place in Race 1 after receiving a five-second penalty for forcing Reno Francot off the track – edged out R-ace GP's Rashid Al Dhaheri by 0.046s, with the Emirati driver setting the fastest time in Group A.

Race 1 winner Alexandre Munoz (ART Grand Prix) will line up on the second row of the grid alongside one of the revelations, RPM's Jan Przyrowski.

Group B

In sunny conditions but with the track still damp, Group B was first to head out. MP Motorsport's Alexander Abkhazava moved to the top of the timesheets midway through the session with a 2:13.771, before Popov went even quicker with a 2:13.202, 0.052s clear of Munoz. Abkhazava ended up third, while Rodin Motorsport's Alex Ninovic and Marcus Saeter (G4 Racing) completed the top five, with just 0.185s covering the quintet.

Group A

In Group A nobody was able to better Popov's benchmark. As the chequered flag fell, Al Dhaheri emerged fastest with a 2:13.248, edging out Przyrowski by just 0.004s. Emanuele Olivieri (R-ace GP) followed in third, only 0.003s ahead of Championship leader Sebastian Wheldon (MP Motorsport). RPM's Miguel Costa completed the top five.

Maksimilian Popov (Trident Motorsport): *"I'm very happy with the car today. The track was still a bit damp after the overnight rain, with a few puddles remaining in some areas, so it was important to find the right lines and know where you could really push. I managed to put together two very consistent laps that were extremely close in terms of lap time, and the car felt fantastic throughout the session. I'm really grateful to the team because they did an amazing job. The last month has been quite difficult for us and we struggled a bit with our pace, but now we're finally back at the front. It feels great to secure my first overall pole position in FIA FREC, and I'm delighted with the result."*

Rashid Al Dhaheri (R-ace GP): *"The first Qualifying session was quite difficult because there were a lot of new factors to deal with, particularly in terms of track positioning and making sure you were in the right place to benefit from a"*

track positioning and making sure you were in the right place to benefit from a tow. We didn't really know what to expect. This time, we came into the session straight from a wet race, so as a driver you have to adapt very quickly to changing conditions and switch back to a dry-weather mindset, even though the track wasn't completely ideal. There were a few things that weren't perfect, both with the car and with our track positioning, but I think we managed to get the job done. In the end, securing a front-row start at Spa is a very good result. Sometimes starting from pole isn't necessarily the biggest advantage here – I learned that last year. The most important thing is to be at the front, take any opportunities that come our way and maximise the result. I think the race is very open."

The final race of the weekend is scheduled to start at 14:20 CEST and will be streamed live on the official FIA Formula Regional European Championship YouTube channel (@fiaformularegionaleu), as well as broadcast by over 80 broadcasters worldwide, including ACI Sport TV. **Where to watch.**

** Qualifying 2 results are still provisional.*