



PRESS RELEASE

18.07.2026

Nakamura earns maiden F3 win after title rivals Ugochukwu and Slater collide



Jin Nakamura claimed his maiden win in the Championship and Hitech's first of the 2026 campaign, winning the Spa-Francorchamps Sprint Race. The Japanese driver started from the second row but made a great start to take P2, before going on to make one final pass en route to the top step. Rodin Motorsport teammates Brando Badoer and Pedro Clerot completed the podium in second and third.

AS IT HAPPENED

Badoer got a great start from pole while teammate Clerot covered off

Mattia Colnaghi into Turn 1, allowing Nakamura to sneak through into third place. The Hitech driver was alongside Clerot down the Kemmel Straight and made a move around the outside for second into Les Combes. Just behind them, title rivals Ugo Ugochukwu and Freddie Slater locked horns. The pair then made contact and ran into the gravel at Turn 6, leaving the Briton out on the race. His Campos Racing rival returned to the pitlane with suspension damage, before rejoining the race one lap down with their collision having brought out the Safety Car.

Racing resumed entering Lap 4, with Badoer getting a good launch. But going up into Eau Rouge and Les Combes, Nakamura rounded the Rodin driver to take the lead. Lap 5 and Clerot was on the attack into the final chicane, but Badoer held firm and retained second position ahead of his teammate.

With his title rivals out of the points, Nael set about making progress up the order. He cleared Taito Kato for P5 on Lap 7 along the Kemmel Straight. On to Lap 8 and Tuukka Taponen seized on an opportunity to steal seventh from Ernesto Rivera at La Source, but the Mexican driver fought back through into Les Combes with DRS.

The Safety Car was back out on Lap 8 after DAMS Lucas Oil's Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi got wide out of Turn 1 and collected a polystyrene board, dispatching debris across the racing line that needed clearing away. With two laps to go, the Safety Car was back in, and before racing resumed, Nakamura almost spun off the road as he opted to go back to full speed at the final chicane.

Behind the leaders, Kato battled back through on Nael to retake P5 around the outside on entry to Les Combes. The Frenchman returned the favour though before the end of the lap, making a bold move down the inside into the final chicane. But the ART rookie rejoined ahead of the Campos driver on corner exit

Up ahead though, Nakamura held onto the lead and claimed his maiden victory in F3 ahead of the Rodin teammates Badoer and

Clerot. Colnaghi crossed the line in fourth ahead of Kato in P5. Nael wound up sixth in front of Taponen and Rivera. Alessandro Giusti and Noah Stromsted completed the points down to 10th.

KEY QUOTE – Jin Nakamura, Hitech

"First win in Formula 3 for me, I'm super happy about that. We had really good pace so let's hope for another one tomorrow!"

THE CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

Ugo Ugochukwu retains the lead of the Championship on 104 points with Freddie Slater in P2 on 86. Théophile Nael remains third, going onto 65 points. Noah Stromsted is fourth on 58, with Brando Badoer fifth on 50 points.

In the Teams' Standings, Campos Racing remains at the top with 200 points, with TRIDENT second on 151 and Van Amersfoort Racing third on 113. Rodin Motorsport and ART Grand Prix round out the top five spots on 98 and 91 points respectively.

UP NEXT

The FIA Formula 3 Feature Race is set to get underway at 08:30 local time on Sunday morning, with Freddie Slater going from pole position and aiming for his maiden F3 victory.

FIA Formula 3 - Spa-Francorchamps - Provisional Classification - Sprint Race

1	Jin Nakamura	JPN	Hitech	
2	Brando Badoer	ITA	Rodin Motorsport	
3	Pedro Clerot	BRA	Rodin Motorsport	
4	Mattia Colnaghi	ARG	MP Motorsport	
5	Taito Kato	JPN	ART Grand Prix	
6	Théophile Nael	FRA	Campos Racing	
7	Tuukka Taponen	FIN	MP Motorsport	
8	Ernesto Rivera	MEX	Campos Racing	
9	Alessandro Giusti	FRA	MP Motorsport	
10	Noah Stromsted	DEN	TRIDENT	
11	Christian Ho	SGP	Rodin Motorsport	

12	Maciej Gladysz		POL	ART Grand Prix	
13	Louis Sharp		NZL	PREMA Racing	
14	Nicola Lacorte		ITA	DAMS Lucas Oil	
15	Bruno Del Pino		ESP	Van Amersfoort Racing	
16	James Wharton		AUS	PREMA Racing	
17	Yevan David		SRI	AIX Racing	
18	Enzo Deligny		FRA	Van Amersfoort Racing	
19	Kanato Le		JPN	ART Grand Prix	
20	Jose Garfias		MEX	PREMA Racing	
21	Fernando Barrichello		BRA	AIX Racing	
22	Gerrard Xie		CHN	DAMS Lucas Oil	
23	Matteo De Palo		ITA	TRIDENT	
24	Ricardo Escotto		MEX	AIX Racing	
25	Fionn McLaughlin		IRL	Hitech	
26	Woohyun Shin		KOR	Hitech	
27	Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi		THA	DAMS Lucas Oil	
28	HiYu Yamakoshi		JPN	Van Amersfoort Racing	
29	Ugo Ugochukwu		USA	Campos Racing	

NOT CLASSIFIED

DNF	Freddie Slater		GBR	Trident	
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OVERALL FASTEST LAP

Ugo Ugochukwu		USA	Campos Racing	
2:07.041 (Lap 5)				

OVERALL FASTEST LAP FOR POINTS

Jin Nakamura		JPN	Hitech	
2:07.218 (Lap 12)				

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.

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