

Friday 31 March 2023

O'Sullivan leads the way around Albert Park

Zak O'Sullivan hit the ground running in Melbourne, topping the opening session of the weekend for PREMA Racing. The Briton set a 1:33.470 at the end of the session to head the field into Qualifying.

MP Motorsport's Mari Boya leapt up the timing sheets late on with a 1:33.528 putting him second ahead of Grégoire Saucy, who bounced back from an off-track moment to finish the morning third-quickest for ART Grand Prix.

It was a very busy track right away as drivers ventured out right away to get to grips with the Albert Park circuit. Gabriele Minì went to the top of the times early on, setting a 1:39.103 with his first effort, but conditions continued to improve rapidly. His next lap was a 1:35.515 to go quickest by 0.6s ahead of Hitech Pulse-Eight's Luke Browning.

Grégoire Saucy had an offroad excursion at Turn 4, running through the gravel on corner exit before rejoining in his ART Grand Prix #8 car. The Red Flag was out with just over half an hour remaining following a crash for Jonny Edgar. The MP Motorsport driver lost the rear going through the fast Turn 10 chicane, spinning into the outside barriers.

Practice resumed with 20 minutes of the session to go. A brief yellow flag for Campos Racing's Hugh Barter was thrown at the final corner after he ended up sideways. Picking up a bit of the grass on corner entry left him spinning, but he was able to resume without issue.

The timing screens were lit up with purple inside the final 15 minutes with drivers improving all the time. Gabriel Bortoleto, Zak O'Sullivan, Josep María Martí and then Minì took turns at the top in quick succession. The latter's 1:33.941 restored him to the top of the pile, as Browning filtered in behind once again in P2.

Bortoleto found just enough improvement in the final five minutes of the session to go quickest from Minì, 0.025s quicker than the Italian. That was quickly beaten by Martí who set a 1:33.731 with three minutes to go but didn't stay there long. O'Sullivan put himself in P1, lowering the time to beat to a 1:33.495. There were late improvements, but nobody beat O'Sullivan's time but himself. The Briton went 0.025s quicker at the chequered flag to set a 1:33.470 and end Practice in P1.

F3 Qualifying in Melbourne is set to begin at 14:00 local time.

CONTINUES

2023 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 2 FREE PRACTICE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM
1	Zak O'Sullivan	GBR	PREMA Racing
2	Mari Boya	ESP	MP Motorsport
3	Grégoire Saucy	CHE	ART Grand Prix
4	Josep María Martí	ESP	Campos Racing
5	Gabriel Bortoleto	BRA	Trident
6	Luke Browning	GBR	Hitech Pulse-Eight
7	Gabriele Minì	ITA	Hitech Pulse-Eight
8	Hugh Barter	AUS	Campos Racing
9	Leonardo Fornaroli	ITA	Trident
10	Paul Aron	EST	PREMA Racing
11	Dino Beganovic	SWE	PREMA Racing
12	Nikola Tsolov	BGR	ART Grand Prix
13	Hunter Yeany	USA	Rodin Carlin
14	Caio Collet	BRA	Van Amersfoort Racing
15	Christian Mansell	GBR	Campos Racing
16	Oliver Goethe	DEU	Trident
17	Sebastian Montoya	COL	Hitech Pulse-Eight
18	Franco Colapinto	ARG	MP Motorsport
19	Ido Cohen	ISR	Rodin Carlin
20	Taylor Barnard	GBR	Jenzer Motorsport
21	Kaylen Frederick	USA	ART Grand Prix
22	Rafael Villagómez	MEX	Van Amersfoort Racing
23	Nikita Bedrin	ITA	Jenzer Motorsport
24	Sophia Floersch	DEU	PHM Racing by Charouz
25	Oliver Gray	GBR	Rodin Carlin
26	Piotr Wisnicki	POL	PHM Racing by Charouz
27	Roberto Faria	BRA	PHM Racing by Charouz
28	Jonny Edgar	GBR	MP Motorsport
29	Tommy Smith	AUS	Van Amersfoort Racing
30	Alejandro García	MEX	Jenzer Motorsport

ENDS

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